

BOARDROOM CHATTER

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Enrollment Update

Mrs. Nil Grove, ACPS Chief IT Officer, updated the school board on the system's 2018-2019 preliminary enrollment. The data she provided considers only raw enrollment numbers and not full-time equivalency (FTE), which is a much more complicated calculation that considers many factors. September 30th FTE is what is used to determine ACPS's funding and Maintenance of Effort.

- Total enrollment (including pre-k): 8542
- Enrollment (K-12 only): 8071
- Difference (pre-k): 471

From September last year, total enrollment (including pre-k) has decreased by 87; enrollment (K-12 only) has decreased by 120; and pre-k has increased by 33.

Overview of Parent Meetings at Parkside, George's Creek

Dr. Cox held two parent meetings, one at George's Creek Elementary on October 15th and one at Parkside Elementary on October 10th, in response to the recent FEA study's recommendations to close Parkside and relocate George's Creek student to Westmar. Parents in attendance were given a copy of FEA's final report as well as enrollment information showing a decrease of 120 students, which could result in a \$1.6 million deficit from budget year to budget year.

Dr. Cox reassured parents that no school board takes pleasure in the prospect of closing schools, and even if the discussion begins, it is at least a year-long process before anything could be done. Additionally, he explained that per the report which estimated a savings of

\$900,000 a year in operating costs were different than deferred maintenance costs which are part of the capital budget.

INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES

Chinese Immersion Program

Overview

Dr. Molly Stewart, Principal at Braddock Middle School, and Mrs. Dee Blank, ACPS Supervisor of Elementary Education, provided the school board with an update on the Chinese Partial Immersion Program at West Side Elementary School and Braddock Middle School. In October of 2011, Race to the Top World Languages Pipeline Projects were awarded to districts through an application process. The project description was to support the implementation of new elementary world language programs. Grants were available for four local educational agencies for three years, and the language choices for grantees to select from included Chinese, Hindi, and Arabic. Spanish was not an option for districts requesting a dual language program as they require 59% or more of the students to be native Spanish speakers.

During the planning process, Dr. Stewart and Mrs. Blank had the opportunity to visit Montgomery County Public Schools to observe a school that had an established, successful Chinese Immersion program. In Allegany County, a local steering committee was formed to design the CHIP program. This committee included ACPS staff, interested community members, and staff from Frostburg State University-International Students Leadership. The charge of this committee was to make recommendations to the Superintendent on the following:

- Successful immersion program structures and designs
- Content of the ACPS CHIP
- Technology to support the program

Board of Education

Dr. Sara-Beth Bittinger, President
Mrs. Tammy Fraley, VP
Mr. Nicholas Hadley
Mrs. Laurie Marchini
Mr. Wayne Foote
Dr. David Cox, Superintendent
Ms. Eesha Bokil, SMOB

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve the minutes for school board meetings on September 11, 2018, and September 24, 2018.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of September 1-30, 2018.
3. Receive School Construction/Maintenance Report for the period of September 1-30, 2018.
4. Receive Information Technology Report for the period of September 1-30, 2018.
5. Receive Monthly Financial Report for September 2018.
6. Approve Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for School Facilities.
7. Approve coal bids for the 2018-2019 school year from Pine Mountain Coal Co. at a cost of \$100/ton for Braddock Middle School, Washington Middle School, and Fort Hill High School.

INSTRUCTIONAL & DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES CONT.

- Application/Lottery process
- Potential field trips or cultural experiences
- Public information

During the planning phase, volunteer international students from FSU also began to organize cultural events for all students at West Side Elementary School.

In January of 2012, ACPS completed and received additional funds through MSDE to secure a teacher from China to support the Chinese Partial Immersion Program as a guest teacher. These funds were made available through MSDE and the Confucius Institute-Hanban. The ACPS CHIP program helped to strengthen the relationship with FSU international students from China, who volunteered to offer an after school cultural program for students and visit the classroom during Chinese holidays to offer student authentic experiences.

In the summer of 2012, ACPS hired a teacher for the first cohort of the Chinese Immersion program at West Side. ACPS staff interviewed and selected a Hanban teacher to work collaboratively with the ACPS teacher. In August of 2012 the first cohort of kindergarten students began the program, and these students are currently in sixth grade at Braddock Middle School now.

Dr. Stewart also shared a data summary from the first cohort of the program. On the PARCC math exam, 64% of West Side Immersion students passed the exam. The county average was 47.6%, and the state average was 38%. On the PARCC English/Language Arts exam, 95% of West Side Immersion students passed the exam. The county average was 53.7%, and the state average was 42.1%. Additionally, 23% of the CHIP cohort one scored a level 5 on the math PARCC (Exceeding Expectations), which is more than double the county and state average.

This year, the program transitioned to middle school, with a focus on language and literacy. Students continue to participate in an immersion program, with 152-228 minutes of Chinese instruction per week. The middle school program has an interdisciplinary content focus based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language standards, world language standards, Maryland Common Core standards, and the Maryland State Standards for Social Studies. Learning resources available include Mandarin Matrix, Level Chinese, and WawaJoyReader, which are all in-line with the One Million Strong initiative. The program also continues to provide students with cultural experiences and opportunities.

Going forward, CHIP students will have the opportunity to earn a Chinese 1 credit in sixth grade; take Chinese 5/AP Chinese in high school; earn the Maryland Seal of Biliteracy; earn up to eighteen credits from FSU in Chinese or courses taught in an immersion style; and continue to explore Chinese culture through field trips, guest speakers, guests, and authentic experiences.

POLICY REGULATIONS

Attendance Policy Regulations Review (File: JED-R1)

The school board was updated on the regulations for the above policy, whose purpose is “to define the school system attendance policy.” The policy state, “Regular school attendance is expected of all students in ACPS. School attendance is directly related to school achievement. In order to maximize academic achievement, there must be a unified effort by all school staff, parents, students, and the community to improve overall school attendance. School administrators, teachers, and support staff are expected to make all reasonable attempts to assist students and parents in addressing those factors which cause students to be absent from school.

Backpacks, Bags, and Items at School Events Policy Regulations Review (File: ECAC-R1)

The school board was updated on the regulations for the above policy, whose purpose is “to provide for safety of students, staff, and the public by prohibiting and restricting the ability of persons attending school events from bringing dangerous, illegal, or prohibited items to school events.” The policy states, “Backpacks, large bags, coolers, and containers are prohibited at school activities open to the public such as athletic events, concerts, plays, assemblies, and graduations. Reasonable exceptions to this policy may be provided in the regulations. Any items are subject to search and are also subject to further search after admission.”

Discussion on Development of FY 2020 Operating Budget

In order to provide guidance and direction to the Superintendent in the preparation of his FY 2019 Proposed Superintendent's Operating Budget (approved on January 4, 2018), the school board approved the following four budget priorities, in no specific order or significance:

- Reduction of class size across the system to become more in tune with best practice.
- Limit the reduction of student programs and explore the possibility of the addition of an ROTC and the reintroduction of an Agricultural Education program based upon student interest and enrollment.
- Every effort should be made to provide employees with negotiated benefits, including salary and health insurance benefits, such that their take home pay would not be less due to increased employee shared costs of health insurance.
- Limit the use of the fund balance.

Consideration of 2018-2019 Board and Superintendent Goals

The school board approved the 2018-2019 board and superintendent goals, listed below:

- Increase student achievement and learner engagement
- Increase efficiencies in school system operations
- Improve employee morale through effective communication and meaningful professional development
- Promote the Allegany County Public School System in the county and throughout the state
- Support and promote programs that meet student needs

Consider First Reading of Backpacks, Bags, and Items at School Events Policy (File: ECAC)

The school board voted unanimously to approve the above policy. The policy purpose and statement is outlined under the Policy Regulations section of this newsletter.

Vote to Meet in Executive Session on November 13, 2018, as Necessary

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, November 13, 2018, pending any appeals or unfinished business. Please note, as a result of the holiday season, there will only be one meeting in November and one meeting in December. Both meetings will begin at 4 p.m.

REPORTS & COMMENTS

Ms. Eesha Bokil, SMOB

Eesha updated the school board on the following:

- ACASC Executive Board met to discuss the Underage Drinking campaign. Information on the campaign can be found on the school system's website [here](#). As part of this campaign, a second billboard will be located on Maryland Avenue from October 29th through November 25th in an effort to target the Allegany vs. Fort Hill Homecoming.
- ACASC continues to plan their next General Assembly, which is scheduled for November 9th.
- ACASC members gave tours of the new Allegany High School at the recent Employee Health Fair.

Sylvia Kellermeyer, Avery Samples, and Jude Gibson-Thoele, ACPS CHIP Students

In response to recent misinformation about the ACPS Chinese Partial Immersion Program, students Sylvia Kellermeyer (5th grade at West Side), Avery Samples (6th grade at Braddock), and Jude Gibson-Thoele (6th grade at Braddock), prepared comments in both Mandarin Chinese and English in support of the program and expressing their gratitude for having the opportunity to participate in such a beneficial program.

Melinda Thoele, Parent; Dr. Robert Hilderbrand, Parent; Duane Boyd, Parent; Jeff Fenlason, Constituent

These parents and constituents spoke individually but with a common theme of voicing support for the school system's Chinese Partial Immersion Program and its benefit to the students and community.

Joan Lease, Grandparent

Ms. Lease spoke to the school board as a concerned grandparent of a student who rides Bus #24, which she claims is overcrowded. The bus has the capacity to hold 66 passengers, according to the bus company. She is hopeful that the school board will look into this issue as she feels that it is a safety concern.