

# BOARDROOM CHATTER

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## Board of Education

Mrs. Tammy Fraley, President  
Mrs. Debra Frank, Vice President  
Dr. Edward Root  
Mr. Robert Farrell  
Dr. David Bohn  
Mr. Jeffrey Blank, Interim Superintendent  
Mr. Omaer Naeem, SMOB

## INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### ***Present Proclamation Recognizing February as African American History Month***

The school board presented a proclamation to the Allegany County Chapter 7007 of the NAACP recognizing February 2020 as African American History Month. They are committed to honoring African Americans and recognizing their contributions to the history and culture of the United States.

### ***Present Proclamation Recognizing February 3-7, 2020, as National School Counseling Week***

The school board presented a proclamation recognizing February 3-7, 2020, as National School Counseling Week as designated by the American School Counselor Association. School counselors are employed in public schools to help students reach their full potential, and they are actively committed to helping students explore their abilities, strengths, interests, and talents as these traits relate to career awareness and development. School counselors also help parents focus on ways to further the educational, personal and social growth of their children, and they work with teachers and other educators to help students explore their potential and set realistic goals for themselves. School counselors seek to identify and utilize community resources that can enhance and complement comprehensive school counseling programs and help students become productive members of society. Comprehensive developmental school counseling programs are considered an integral part of the educational process and enable all students to achieve success in school.

### ***Recognize School Counselor Essay Contest Winner***

The school board recognized Allegany High School senior, Paige Sevinsky, for her essay written in recognition of her school counselor, Mrs. Amy Llewellyn, in conjunction with National School Counseling Week 2020. She earned a \$500 scholarship for her efforts.

### ***Present Proclamation Recognizing February as Career and Technology Education Month***

The school board presented a proclamation recognizing February as Career and Technology Education Month as designated by the Association for Career and Technical Education. CTE provides Americans with a school-to-careers connection and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity in business and industry and contributes to America's leadership in the international marketplace. The ever-increasing cooperative efforts of career and technical educators, business and industry stimulate the growth and vitality of the local economy and that of the entire nation by preparing graduates for career fields forecast to experience the largest and fastest growth in the next decade. CTE gives high school students experience in practical, meaningful applications of basic skills such as reading, writing, and math, thus improving the quality of their education and giving all students

## CONSENT AGENDA

The school board voted unanimously to approve the following consent agenda:

- Approve minutes for Open Session on January 14, 2020.
- Approve routine personnel actions for the period of January 1-31, 2020.
- Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of January 1-31, 2020.
- Receive monthly financial report for January 2020.
- Approve bus contract award to Mrs. Nellie Rader and Mrs. Deanna McGlade for the 2020-2021 year.

leadership opportunities in their fields and in their communities. ACPS urges all citizens to become familiar with the services and benefits offered by the CTE programs in the community and to support and participate in these programs to enhance their individual work skills and productivity.

## INSTRUCTIONAL UPDATES

### *2020-2021 Programs of Study*

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, provided the school board with several instructional updates. She noted that the 2020-2021 High School Programs of Study includes [two new electives](#) - Introduction to Agriculture and Natural Resources and Wildlife and Forest Management, both worth a half credit.

The Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP) is a CTE completer program that gives high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to “earn and learn” while gaining valuable experience as a youth apprentice. It consists of four credits and is designed to lead to sustainable employment and further education based on high-demand career pathways. The ACPS Youth Apprenticeship Coordinator will mentor students hired by approved employers. Participating students must complete a minimum of 450 hours of paid work-based learning under the supervision of an eligible employer. In addition, students will be enrolled in an apprenticeship related instruction course. To be eligible for the program, students must be 16 years old or older, have reliable transportation, be on track to graduate, have good attendance, and have two academic references. The AMP program is offered at each of ACPS’s comprehensive high schools and the Career Center.

The Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) is a state-approved CTE completer program, which is currently offered in 22 of Maryland’s 24 school systems. TAM will be offered to ACPS juniors during the 2020-2021 school year at the Career Center. The program prepares students for further education and careers in the education profession and consists of four high school credits that focus on teaching as a profession, human growth and development, learning theory, and curriculum and instruction. Students can earn six articulated credits from FSU, and there is the potential for scholarships and articulated credit at other Maryland higher education institutions. Parents and students could potentially save thousands of dollars through these agreements if they pursue post-secondary education at FSU or another Maryland institution of higher education.

Additionally, ACPS is collaborating with ACM to offer a one-year career program in Computer Technology Cybersecurity to seniors who are on a partial schedule. This is a certificate program and is designed to enable students to seek employment at the program’s completion. School system staff is in the preliminary stages of development of this pilot but anticipate being able to offer at least nine college credits each semester for a total of 18 credits. Students may need to attend ACM for at least one semester to finish the one-year program, which is a total of 30 credit hours. Successful completion of this program qualifies a student to apply for a Certificate in Cybersecurity. All credits are transferable to the Computer Technology associate degree program. Students must earn a “C” or better in the required computer courses.

Current computer science courses offered by ACPS include Exploring Computer Science, Computer Literacy, AP Computer Science Principles, Web Design I and II, College Computer Literacy, and College Computer Logic. The implementation of a robotics elective course at the high school level to enhance these offerings is being proposed for the 2021-2022 school year.

Finally, Dr. Kalbaugh updated the school board on the Middle School Programs of Study. In the creative arts technology education section, grade 6 includes Introduction to Computer Science, which will use CSUnplugged to teach students the process of problem solving and Code.org to teach students the fundamentals of computer science. Grade 7 includes Fundamentals of Computer Science Algorithms and Problem Solving, which will use Scratch as an online computer programming language. As students create with Scratch, they will learn to think creatively, work collaboratively, and reason systematically. Grade 8 includes Robotics and Computational Thinking, which will utilize EV3 robotics kits designed to teach core computer programming logic, reasoning skills, and computational thinking using a robotics engineering context. The implementation of a creative arts class in computer science at the middle school level is being proposed for the 2021-2022 school year. Currently, students participate in a co-curricular rotation in computer science.

### ***Monthly Financial Report***

Mr. Larry McKenzie, ACPS Chief Finance Officer, provided the school board with an update of the monthly financial information from January 2020 on the areas of the budget that are subject to volatility.

- Legal fees are up this month as the result of a student discipline issue.
- The cost for substitutes is trending well this year compared to last year and will likely result in a surplus in this category.
- Equipment costs are lower than last year; however, this is due to timing and the funds will be spent.
- The cost of non-public placement tuition is trending well and will likely result in a surplus in this category.
- Transportation costs are trending almost the same as last year and will likely result in a positive variance.
- Utility costs are lower than this time last year.
- Retirement costs are trending the same as last year. They are a bit over budget but the school system will likely have enough of a surplus in other categories to cover this.
- Healthcare costs continue to trend well.

### ***Draft State Aid – FY 2021 Revenue Update***

Mr. McKenzie provided the school board with an update on FY 2021 Draft State and local aid. State aid is broken down into the following areas: foundation programs, transportation grants, compensatory education, limited English proficiency, special education, guaranteed tax base, supplemental grants, and net taxable income adjustment. “Wealth” impacts aid as it is used to gauge a county’s ability to fund school activities based upon its own resources. The formula is intended to be a wealth equalizer between state and local resources for education. School district wealth is formula driven and takes into account the following measures: 50% of the personal property base, 100% of the net taxable income base, and 40% of the real property base. Allegany County currently ranks 21<sup>st</sup> in terms of per pupil wealth, so the majority of its educational aid comes from state sources.

District wealth impacts all aid categories except transportation. District wealth is computed on a per pupil basis and compared to the state average, so enrollment has a direct impact on state aid. Allegany County had a K-12 enrollment decline of 93 students, or a reduction of 1.16%. Total enrollment was 7,955.25. The number of students who qualify for free and reduced price meals dropped by 2.74% or 119 students to 4,227 or 53.13% of K-12 enrollment. The number of special education students decreased by 63 students to 1,357 or 4.44%. Special education is now 17.06% of K-12 enrollment. The state’s overall enrollment increased by 11,196.75 to 874,268 or 1.30% from last year’s total of 863,071.25.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) is considered the legal minimum that local governments are obligated to appropriate to their school systems. In FY 2020, county government funded the school district at \$30,734,338, which, although higher than FY 2019, was considered to be at MOE. MOE is determined by taking the prior year’s local appropriation divided by the number of K-12 students within the district and then multiplying that sum by the current year’s enrollment. Local governments are required by law to increase MOE if they have failed to meet a five-year moving average Education Effort Index. As a result, in FY 2021, draft information indicates that the county will likely be required to increase its per pupil MOE by 2.5%.

Finally, Mr. McKenzie outlined several FY 2021 budget considerations. Healthcare remains a concern for FY 2021, although claims have trended at prior year levels for the year. Negotiations are pending with all four bargaining units, and contracts for each unit are open this year. Restricted revenues for certain programs may be reduced. There also may be a shift in the rank and make-up of some Title I schools that could have staffing implications within those schools. From a legislative standpoint, PSSAM and MABE are monitoring several bills, which could potentially impact school system finances. To that end, Kirwan Commission recommendations and the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future legislation will dominate education discussions this session.

## NEW BUSINESS

### ***Superintendent Search Update***

The school board voted unanimously to work with the Maryland Association of Boards of Education to conduct a search for a permanent Superintendent of Schools, who will need to be in place by July 1<sup>st</sup>. The first step in this process will be to design a survey for a variety of stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the community to determine what is important to them in a leader. Updates on this process will be provided as the search progresses.

### ***Vote to Meet in Executive Session on March 3, 2020, as Necessary***

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, pending any appeals or unfinished business. The public Open Session will follow the Executive Session at 6 p.m. at the central office on Washington Street.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### ***Consider Second Reading of Policy for the Methodology for Supplement Not Supplant (File: DFAB)***

The school board voted unanimously to approve the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is “to describe how the school system allocates state and local funds.” The policy states, “The BOE works to ensure that Title I schools receive the same amount of state and local funding they would receive regardless of their Title I status. Title I funds are used to supplement, not supplant, state and local funds. Federal law prohibits recipients of federal funds from replacing state, local, or agency funds with federal funds.”

## CONSTITUENT COMMENTS

### ***Mrs. Carmen Jackson, President NAACP Chapter 7007***

Mrs. Jackson addressed the school board to thank them for the recognition that they provide the NAACP with each February honoring African American History Month. She feels that this recognition is important, not only because it is a relatively new one in the past several years, but because it provides students with the opportunity to learn about and understand diversity and shows that schools, educators, and the community cares about inclusion. In addition, this year there were diversity programs or speakers in all three of the comprehensive high schools, which in Carmen’s opinion, is a great milestone in ACPS.

### ***Mr. Josh Cook, Fort Hill Teacher***

Mr. Cook addressed the school board regarding the importance of the selection of a permanent superintendent as it will not only impact students, but also staff. He requested that a survey be developed and sent to all ACPS staff with the topic of this survey being “Mr. Blank’s Job Performance as Interim Superintendent”. Mr. Cook said that he imagines that the results could provide valuable data for the school board to use when making their decisions. He suggested asking questions in areas such as morale, day-to-day operations, support, educational impact, and a final pointblank question of “Do employees want Mr. Blank to continue as the permanent superintendent”.

## SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REPORTS & COMMENTS

### ***Omaer Naeem, Student Member of the Board***

Omaer updated the school board on the following items:

- ACASC's next General Assembly, scheduled for February 6, 2020, at Fort Hill High School will focus on College and Career Readiness. The State SMOB will be in attendance.
- The MASC will host a legislative session on February 8, 2020, where members will vote on the next State SMOB.
- ACASC has been working for more than a year with the health department and the Caporale Group on a underage drinking and non-medical use of prescription drug abuse campaign.
- ACASC members are engaged with the 2020 Census Committee to help spread the word among their peers on the importance of completing the census.

### ***Mr. Robert Farrell***

Mr. Farrell noted that he, along with all board members, recently attended the PACE reception in Annapolis. While there he had the opportunity to speak with leaders about ways to reduce transportation costs and make them more efficient. He noted that there is a possibility of changing the ACPS bus fleet over to propane as one avenue to reduce costs.

### ***Dr. David Bohn***

Dr. Bohn responded to Mr. Cook's comments regarding his request for a survey of ACPS staff as it relates to the superintendent search and noted that he had suggested just that in the board's Executive Session.

### ***Mrs. Tammy Fraley***

Mrs. Fraley recently had the opportunity to attend an equity symposium on behalf of MABE where she learned a lot of useful information that she plans to share with ACPS staff. Topics at the symposium included diversity, mental health, and suicide prevention. Mrs. Fraley also noted that she is looking forward to working with the community on the search for a permanent superintendent of schools.