

# 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

### *Recognize Winner of 2020 Diversity Awareness Essay Contest*

The school board recognized the following students for their accomplishments in the 2020 Diversity Awareness Essay Contest, whose theme was "Chasing the Dream, Remembering the Journey."

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place: Roudell Moffett, Allegany High School senior, essay about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Alice Warner
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Hailey Snyder, Allegany High School junior, essay about Maya Angelou and Katherine Johnson
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Morgan VanMeter, Allegany High School junior, essay about Rosa Parks and President Barack Obama

The Allegany County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a multiracial organization committed to social justice and equality, sponsors this annual contest to promote diversity awareness and provide students an opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions.

### *Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Music in Our Schools Month*

The school board presented a proclamation recognizing March as Music in Our Schools Month, which is designated by the National Association for Music Education and focuses on the theme, "Music Changes Lives." The study of music contributes to the development of young people through heightened skills in listening, reading, self-expression, and creativity and is basic to a complete education. The study of music provides a competitive edge for successful educational reform while engaging students in individual and group activities, which develops creativity, problem-solving, and critical and evaluative skills. Music education helps students acquire skills in the production and performance of music, as well as gives them an understanding of history and culture. Music and other arts significantly enhance the morale and quality of the school environment, and music programs should be maintained and improved for all students, regardless of their socio-economic status or their abilities.

Ms. Hana Chitsaz, senior at Mountain Ridge High School, also performed a selected piece on the violin.

### *Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Youth Art Month*

The school board presented a proclamation recognizing March as Youth Art Month, which is designated by the National Art Education Association and focuses on the theme, "Take a Journey through Art." Art education contributes powerful educational benefits to all elementary, middle and secondary students and develops students' creative problem-solving and critical thinking abilities. Art education teaches sensitivity to beauty, order,

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Approve minutes for Open Session on February 4, 2020, and February 11, 2020.
- Approve routine personnel actions for the period of February 1-29, 2020.
- Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of February 1-29, 2020.
- Receive information technology report for the period of February 1-29, 2020.
- Receive monthly financial report for February 2020.
- Approve bus contract award to McCray Busing for the 2020-2021 school year.

and other expressive qualities and gives students a deeper understanding of multi-cultural values and beliefs. It also reinforces and brings to life what students learn in other subjects and interrelates student learning in art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics.

Student artwork is on display at the central office.

## INSTRUCTIONAL & FINANCIAL UPDATES

### *2020-2021 Academic School Calendar Process*

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, updated the school board on the 2020-2021 academic school calendar process. In January 2020, Governor Hogan announced that he would introduce legislation that would require Maryland public schools to begin their school year after Labor Day. This legislation, dubbed the Universal School Start Act of 2020, would undo legislation from 2019 that gave local school boards control over their academic calendars. The governor first enacted the post-Labor Day start with an executive order in 2016. When the order was in place, both Allegany and Garrett Counties qualified for waivers from the state to start earlier because of the region's weather conditions. To date, there has been no waiver language for the 2020 Act. However, if the same waiver language is used, Allegany County would not meet the requirement for the 2020-2021 school year. Per the original waiver, a district had to miss ten or more days for inclement weather during two of the last five years. ACPS weather closures for the past five years are as follows:

- 2019-2020 – 2 days closed
- 2018-2019 – 8 days closed
- 2017-2018 – 7 days closed
- 2016-2017 – 2 days closed
- 2015-2016 – 5 days closed

Dr. Kalbaugh noted that districts might not know if there will be a post-Labor Day requirement until the summer. Therefore, it is imperative that the school board approves both versions of the 2020-2021 school calendar. Dr. Kalbaugh also highlighted the differences between a pre-Labor Day and a post-Labor Day start, which is outlined below:

<b>DATE</b>	<b>20-21 PRE-LABOR DAY START</b>	<b>20-21 POST-LABOR DAY START</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Day for Teachers	August 19	August 31
School Opens	August 26	September 8
Pre-K and Kindergarten Begin	August 31	September 10
Parent Conferences	October 1 (schools closed)	October 1 (schools closed)
Principal Staff Development, Teacher Planning, Employee Health Fair	November 2 (schools closed)	November 13 (schools closed)
Thanksgiving Break	3-hr. Early Dismissal November 25; Schools closed through November 30	3-hr. Early Dismissal November 25; Schools closed through November 30
Christmas Break	Schools closed December 23-January 1	3-hr. Early Dismissal December 23; Schools closed through January 1
Supervisor Staff Development, Teacher Work Time, End of Marking Period	January 19 (schools closed)	February 2 (schools closed)
Parent Conferences	February 26 (schools closed)	March 10 (schools closed)
End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Marking Period, Teacher Work Time	3-hr. Early Dismissal March 26	3-hr. Delay April 13
Easter Break	April 1-5 (schools closed)	3-hr. Early Dismissal April 1; Schools closed through April 5
Last Day for Students (with built-in days)	June 4	June 14
Last Day for Students (with 5 built-in days)	June 11	June 21

### ***Restorative Practices Update***

Dr. Sarah Welsh, ACPS Equity and Student Outcomes Coordinator, updated the school board on equity and restorative practices in ACPS. Dr. Welsh explained that “positive” discipline means to train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self-control. She noted that the “School to Prison Pipeline” is the funneling of students out of school and into the streets and the juvenile correction system and perpetuates this cycle, depriving children and youth of meaningful opportunities for education, future employment, and participation in our democracy. Data trends show that disproportionality is the most prevalent in special education student groups and in students by race. Nationally, black male students represented 8% of enrolled students and accounted for 25% of students who received an out-of-school suspension, according to the Office of Civil Rights. And also, nationally, students with disabilities represented 12% of students enrolled and 26% of students who received an out-of-school suspension. Overall, the rate of removals for all students in Maryland declined between the 2009-2010 school year and the 2017-2018 school year. Despite this overall decline, the rate of disproportionate removal remained constant during this same time period. According to COMAR, “If the department identifies a school’s discipline process as having a disproportionate impact on minority students or a discrepant impact on special education students, the local school system shall prepare and present to the State Board a plan to reduce the impact within one year and eliminate it within three years.”

An analysis of MSDE data identified seven ACPS schools - one fully disproportionate and six in watch status. ACPS has a three-pronged focused action plan that includes implicit bias training; restorative practices training and roll out; and increased interventions and use with fidelity of multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Implicit bias training focuses on racial and gender bias, the Ruby Payne Framework for Poverty, and the Ruby Payne Emotional Poverty study. MTSS focuses on non-violent infractions utilizing growth mindset, ISI policies and procedures, and PBIS (Tier I), Check in/Check out and Check and Connect (Tier II), and Tier III which includes an integrated support plan, behavior plans/goals/and monitoring, and multiple pathways to RESTART for a more therapeutic environment.

By the end of the first semester, ACPS has conducted three rounds of training; all building-level administrators, guidance counselors, behavior specialists, PPWs, and central office content supervisors have had the opportunity for training; faculty teams and some instructional specialists at the seven disproportionate schools have been trained; and there was an introductory training for all IAs in January. Building leaders were provided with materials for the first leg of the staff roll out, and the two certified coaches facilitated full-staff introductory training at Washington Middle and Mountain Ridge in February. Certified coaches are preparing materials to disseminate to the building leaders for August including videos produced with ACPS staff and students. Dr. Welsh and the Assistant Supervisor of Special Education are currently working with FSU and USMx to create online courses for ACPS faculty and staff CE and training. There is also the potential for summer workshops.

According to COMAR, each Maryland public school will provide every student equitable access to the educational rigor, resources, and supports that are designed to maximize the student’s academic success and social/emotional wellbeing; each local school system’s procedures and practices provide for educational equity and ensure that there are no obstacles to accessing educational opportunities for any student; and achievement will improve for all Maryland students and achievement gaps will be eliminated. Restorative approaches are discipline models that are preventative and proactive; emphasize building strong relationships and setting clear behavioral expectations that contribute to the wellbeing of the school community; focuses on accountability for any harm done by the problem behavior; and addresses ways to repair the relationships affected by the problem behavior with the voluntary participation of an individual who was harmed. Some restorative approaches include conflict resolution, mediation, peer mediation, circle processes, restorative conferences, social emotional learning, trauma-informed care, positive behavioral intervention supports, and rehabilitation.

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

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

## INSTRUCTIONAL & FINANCIAL UPDATES CONT.

same each month; the cost of substitutes has increased; equipment costs continue to trend well compared to prior years; the cost of non-public placements has gone down as ACPS has fewer students requiring those services; transportation costs are trending the same as this time last year; utility costs continue to trend well; retirement fixed charges are within \$200 of the budget and will likely have a negative impact on the budget; healthcare costs are trending better than this time last year. Mr. McKenzie noted that those areas that have a positive variance would likely absorb those categories that may be over budget.

### ***Summary of FY 2021 Superintendent's Operating Budget***

Mr. McKenzie reviewed the school board's budget priorities and system budget considerations as well as FY 2021 budget assumptions. FY 2021 board budget priorities included:

- Preserve and enhance student programs and associated needs as much as possible based on student interest and enrollment, with an added focus on current and future CTE programs.
- Maintain and enhance school safety as much as possible considering local law enforcement recommendations and the Maryland Center for School Safety policies and regulations.
- Maintain and enhance licensed mental health service providers as much as possible.
- Make every effort 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, and give raises if possible.

The superintendent is required to take the initiative in the preparation and presentation for the annual school budget and seek in every way to secure the adequate funds from local authorities for the support and development of the public schools in the county. With the advice of the superintendent, the school board is responsible for preparing the school system budget in accordance with the state statutory and regulatory requirement for submitting its budget to the county government. The school board also sets the parameters for employee compensation and other terms of the pending collective bargaining agreements; identifies educational goals and objectives for the superintendent to implement; and engages the public in identifying budget priorities. The school board's budget hearing with county government is scheduled for March 26, 2020, at 1:55 p.m.

The FY 2021 budget allows a placeholder for good faith negotiations with the district's four bargaining units; will add four teachers within middle school content areas as needed; continues to fund the four mental health professionals and four security employees hired during FY 2020; continues to provide school-based athletic trainers at the three comprehensive high schools; provides for key personnel to assist with curriculum writing leading up to the MSDE curriculum vetting process which begins in 2022; and provides additional days for the P-TECH program coordinator for the fourth year of the program and an additional day for the technology infusion teacher.

The FY 2021 budget also allows for the purchase of the high school English textbook series for grades nine and ten; the purchase of the K-2 reading textbook series and the 3-5 math textbook series; provides funding for five additional Active Learning Labs; an increase in dual enrollment and P-TECH tuition costs; participation in the Maryland Apprenticeship Program; continues to provide school-based allocations at a constant level; provides an increase to athletic transportation allocations at each school; and provides appropriate funding for staff development opportunities as requested.

The FY 2021 Superintendent's operating budget, which totals \$116,369,085, by category is as follows:

- Transportation - \$6,394,577
- Administration - \$2,404,912
- Capital Outlay - \$290,000
- Fixed Charges - \$25,353,205
- Food Services - \$488,432
- Health Services - \$894,570
- Instructional Salaries - \$41,856,478
- Maintenance - \$1,894,300
- Mid-Level Administration - \$6,920,831
- Operations - \$7,996,511
- Student Personnel - \$700,100
- Textbooks and Instructional Supplies - \$3,227,486

Finally, Mr. McKenzie noted several things to consider regarding the FY 2021 budget. Negotiations are ongoing with all bargaining units. There has also been 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 that could potentially impact school system finances. And the minimum wage increases continue to be impactful to the budget.

### ***Consider Approval of FY 2021 Interim Superintendent's Operating Budget***

The school board approved the FY 2021 Interim Superintendent's Operating budget, with one additional request from board member, Dr. David Bohn, to include funds for a sit-down, catered event to honor retirees.

### ***Consider Approval of 2020-2021 Pre and Post-Labor Day Academic School Calendars***

The school board approved both the pre and post-Labor Day 2020-2021 academic calendar as proposed.

### ***Consider First Reading of Computerized Data Management Systems Policy (File: EH)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to identify responsibility for computerized data systems and record management, and set procedures which address the granting, changing, and termination of data access rights."

### ***Consider First Reading of Student Discipline Policy (File: JK)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to establish a framework of values, standards and expectations to guide the administration of student discipline."

### ***Vote to Meet in Executive Session on April 14, 2020, as Necessary***

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, April 14, 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. Please note that the school board will go back to meeting on the second Tuesday of each month as opposed to the first Tuesday.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

The Allegany County Board of Education has begun its search for a permanent Superintendent of Schools with assistance from consultants at the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE). Mr. William Middleton, the lead MABE consultant, provided an update to the school board outlining the process for this search. Mr. Middleton highlighted that the purpose of conducting a national search for a superintendent is to identify the best possible leader for the school system while ensuring that the process is fair, responsive, thoughtful, and legal.

The first step in this search process will be to gather stakeholder input regarding desired characteristics as well as potential challenges the superintendent may face. This information will be collected via an [anonymous survey](#) conducted by MABE and will consist of three questions geared towards learning what stakeholders find positive about ACPS, the top characteristics and qualifications the next superintendent should possess, and several challenges the new leader may face.

After receiving community and stakeholder input, the school board will develop the final desired criteria and characteristics for the permanent superintendent. The vacancy will then be advertised and applications will be reviewed during the month of April with structured interviews beginning in May. Typically, the top 6-8 candidates will be asked to sit for first-round interviews. A second round of open-ended interviews will follow in May to identify the finalists. The permanent appointment will be announced in June paving the way for the new superintendent to officially begin on July 1, 2020.

The survey must be submitted to MABE no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2020. Any questions regarding the superintendent search process or procedures should be directed to the school board president, Tammy Fraley, via email at [tammyfraleyboe@gmail.com](mailto:tammyfraleyboe@gmail.com) or by phone at 240-580-0682.

### ***Consider Second Reading of Legal Services Policy (File: BDG)***

The school board approved the second reading of the above policy in a 3-2 vote, with Dr. Bohn opposing it and Mr. Farrell abstaining. The purpose of the policy is "to identify how the school system obtains legal services."

The policy states, "The BOE is authorized and empowered to retain the services of an attorney to represent it in legal matters affecting the Board. Funds for the Board Attorney's retainer fee shall be placed in the annual budget. The Board Attorney should be knowledgeable concerning public school laws of the State of Maryland as well as the various civil laws affecting school board operations."

## SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER REPORTS & COMMENTS

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

Omaer updated the school board on the following items:

- ACASC recently held its third General Assembly. Members of the Executive Committee also had the opportunity to attend the MASC legislative session where they voted on the next State SMOB.
- ACASC is preparing for their next General Assembly, which is scheduled for April. At that meeting, members will vote on the next Executive Committee Officers and the local SMOB.
- ACASC is currently working on their underage drinking campaign, which just recently kicked-off.
- ACASC will soon also begin their campaign on the anti-use of non-medical prescription drugs.
- Students have recorded PSAs on the 2020 Census and school safety.
- Students attended the first meeting of the school year with the Interim Superintendent of Schools.

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

Dr. Bohn noted that he had the opportunity to participate in Read Across America as a guest reader and thoroughly enjoyed the event. He also indicated that the Interim Superintendent will begin dialogue with several automotive dealerships to form a partnership with skill areas at the Career Center to give students the opportunity to work in shops as interns or immediately following graduation.

### ***Mrs. Deb Frank***

Mrs. Frank attended ACEA's student discipline seminar, which she found to be very eye opening and noted that it was a good first step in this process. She also congratulated the Career Center for hosting a successful Open House. Finally, Mrs. Frank encouraged the community to complete MABE's survey to share their feedback on the search for a permanent superintendent.

## CONSTITUENTS' COMMENTS

### ***Mr. Evan West, ACEA UniServe Director***

Mr. West addressed the school board regarding the student discipline policy and thanked them for their collaboration with ACEA members and thanked Dr. Welsh for her work on restorative practices. He believes that these groups have had good conversations in an effort to resolve student discipline issues. Mr. West is hopeful that when the time comes for the school board and policy committee to review the regulations that accompany this policy they will continue to ask for valuable feedback from ACEA members to help bridge the disconnect and miscommunication between the board and building level administrators and classroom teachers.