



By unanimous agreement, the Somerset County Board of Education met in an open public meeting at the J.M. Tawes Career & Technology Center, Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. to conduct a Budget Work Session and met in a closed session at 6:15 p.m. to discuss personnel and legal matters as permitted by the Maryland Open Meetings Act, S10-508(a)(9) of the State Government Article. Present were Chairman Willing, Vice Chairman Miles, Mr. Pruitt, Dr. Whittington, General Sumpter, Superintendent Dr. Karen-Lee Brofee, and Melissa Tilghman, recording secretary.

The regular Board meeting began at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chairman Willing, Vice Chairman Miles, Mr. Pruitt, Dr. Whittington, General Sumpter, Superintendent Karen-Lee Brofee, and Melissa Tilghman, recording secretary. Washington Academy & High School's student representative was excused from the meeting. Crisfield Academy & High School's student representative was present at the meeting.

### **REGULAR SESSION AGENDA**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Brofee at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

The roll was called by Melissa Tilghman indicating that all five Board members and the Superintendent were present. Student Board representative from Crisfield Academy & High School was also present. Washington Academy & High School representative was excused from the meeting.

**3. Declaration of Quorum**

Chairman Willing declared a quorum to be present.

**4. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Willing led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

A motion was called for by Chairman Willing, moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Mr. Pruitt, and passed to approve the March 17, 2009 Board meeting minutes. The motion was carried unanimously.

**6. Adoption of Agenda**

A motion was called for by Chairman Willing, moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Mr. Pruitt and passed to approve the amended agenda. The motion was carried unanimously.

**7. Student Activities Report**

The student Board members presented their reports and were thanked by the Board members.

**8. Public Participation**

Several community members spoke to the Board in regards to the lowering of Somerset County Public School's GPA. Karen Corbin was first to address the Board in response to Mr. Simpkins request to lower Somerset County's Public Schools' 2.0 GPA for the purpose of allowing those students having difficulty the opportunity to play sports. Ms. Corbin surveyed sixty (60) students and out of those sixty

only one was in favor of lowering the GPA.

Kirkland Hall, NAACP President, also addressed the Board members and expressed his views on the lowering of the GPA. Mr. Hall was in favor of raising the GPA standards for all students in the surrounding counties and commented that all students needed to be pushed to do better. Mr. Hall stated that parents should be held accountable.

Betty Collier addressed the Board regarding a High School Incentive Program. The incentive program is to promote attendance, rewarding students with no out of school suspensions, final grade will be used as exam grade. The incentives will be paid for through a grant and no local funding will be required. Ms. Collier was referred to Mr. Bloodsworth and Mr. Elebash.

James White, an employee of UMES, addressed the Board but first thanked the student Board members for presenting such informational reports and their responses to the lowering of the GPA. Mr. White is not in favor of lowering the GPA and feels that students should be required to learn and be encouraged to be all that they can be.

Sylvia Smith, former teacher, expressed her opinion of lowering the GPA. Ms. Smith first commended the SCPS teachers for the efforts in teaching the students how to be successful. She addressed the issue that students should take advantage of the afterschool programs. Ms. Nelson and Ms. Scott were thanked for the "Be There Campaign" that has been publicized on the television ads. Parents should install in children, learning values, and reinforce achievement goals.

Garland Hayward, 30 year retired teacher and a county commissioner. Unlike the previous spokespersons, Mr. Hayward feelings are just the opposite. He presented the athletic policy in Delmar. A student's motivation should go further than taking a test. Teachers and parents need to find ways to motivate students in finding engaging study practices. Mr. Hayward feels that if the GPA were dropped to at least a 1.7 those low achievers would be encouraged to play sports, seek tutoring, and obtain the guidance needed to improve.

The Board members thanked all spokespersons for voicing their concerns.

## **9. Carter G. Woodson Elementary School Report**

Ms. Welch gave a presentation created and featuring 5<sup>th</sup> grade WES students. The students gave the history of Woodson, outlined the school's modules and school activities. Several students were involved in the creation of the presentation. The focus was on MSA encouragement, PTO plans, and upcoming school events. The students even presented the weather forecast. The Board members thanked the principal for such an enlightening report.

## **10. 2008 Maryland Performance Recognition**

Somerset Intermediate and Woodson Elementary were recognized by the Maryland State Department for school improvement. Both schools received awards from the state and were presented with them at the Board meeting.

## **11. United Way Presentations**

Mr. Bloodsworth introduced Mr. Aaron Reid, United Way representative. Mr. Reid presented awards to all the schools in participated in the United Way funding and informed everyone that all United contributions will be distributed locally.

## **12. Parent of the Year**

Ms Scott began the Parent of the Year introduction by first emphasizing the importance of parent involvement in children's education. Ms. Nelson explained how parents were chosen as the Comcast Parent of the Year.

The two nominees were Paula Todd. Ms. Todd revived the Athletic Booster Club and is a member of women supporting women. Ms. Todd believes that kids who play sports have higher test scores, are less likely to try drugs, drink or smoke.

The other nominee was Robert Wells, parent of a Deal Island School student. Mr. Wells served as the PTA president. He has a great relationship with the community and a very influential parent. He coaches indoor and outdoor soccer and has raised funds for a sliding Board at Deal Island School in memory of a deceased student who attended the school.

Mr. Wells unexpectedly found out that he had been chosen as the Comcast Parent of the Year. The Board members thanked and congratulated both parents for supporting students' education.

## **13. Student Services Audit Report**

Ms. McLaughlin introduced Mr. Brian Bartel, MSDE Auditor. Mr. Bartel listed and thanked the various staff members for their assistance with the audit.

Mr. Bartel commended Ms. McLaughlin on student health services and recommended that we review and update our emergency protocol and increase HIV and alcohol prevention awareness.

Ms. McLaughlin was thanked by the Board members.

### **2007 Maryland Adolescent Survey**

Ms. McLaughlin gave a presentation on the results from the Adolescent Survey. The survey was given to 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. The purpose of the survey was to get data on many students had been introduced to alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade survey revealed that substance abuse had increased dramatically.

The goals developed from the survey data are to reduce teenage substance use and to change the trend of parents talking to their children less about drugs, alcohol, and smoking when they get older.

Mr. Pruitt requested an analysis of students and their opinions on safety and drug use at schools. The Board members thanked Ms. McLaughlin for the information.

## **Testing Calendar**

Ms. Carter explained the Calendar of events distributed to the Board members and asked if they had any questions. The calendar contains testing dates through the end of the year.

## **Policies**

### **Approval of the 500 Series Policies, Policies of Instruction**

It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by General Sumpter, passed to approve the following revisions to policy 500-12, Physical Education Guidelines for Secondary Schools. The motion was carried with a 4-1 vote. Dr. Whittington did not vote.

A motion was called for by Chairman Willing, moved by Vice Chairman Miles seconded by Mr. Pruitt, and passed to approve Policy #500-16, System Test Security Procedures. The motion was carried with 4-1 vote. Dr. Whittington did not vote.

It was moved by Dr. Whittington, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles and passed to approve Policy #500-17, Special Education. The motion was carried unanimously. Dr. Whittington questioned the suspension guidelines of Special Education students.

A motion was called for by Dr. Whittington, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles and passed to approve Policy #500-35, Using Copyrighted Material. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Policy 600 Series Policies, Student Services**

It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles, and passed to approve Policies #600-1 to #600-4. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion was called for Chairman Willing, moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Dr. Whittington and passed approve the Policy #600-5 (Communicable Diseases). The vote was unanimous.

It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles, and passed to approve the following policies: #600-7 (Attendance—Elementary & Secondary), #600-9 (School Hours) and #600-10 (Student Parking) . The vote was unanimous with all Board members in agreement.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Mr. Pruitt and passed to approve the following policies: #600-12 ( Student Dress Code) and #600-13 (Community Offenses by Students). The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion was called for by Chairman Willing, moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Mr. Pruitt and passed to approve Policies #600-14 (Student Tobacco Use), #600-15 (Student Alcohol and Drug Use) and #600-17 (Standards of Social Behavior).

It was moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by Dr. Whittington and passed to approve policies #600-31 (Personal Electronic Communication Devices) and #600-35 (Serious Threats of Violence).

Policy #600-36 (Fighting) was tabled until the following revisions were made: On-site anger management opposed to going to the Somerset County Health Department. It was the consensus of the Board to add to the policy, that refusal to attend anger management will result in a DJS referral.

It was moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by General Sumpter, and passed to approve Policy #300-39 (Student Behavior Interventions). The vote was unanimous.

### **Athletic Policy Community Response**

Mr. Bloodsworth submitted a revised athletic policy, #500-20. The revision included that students could play sports with a 2.0 average and one E. The student will be on academic probation until mid-term and will be given the opportunity to bring their grade up.

Chairman Willing questioned the policy changes. Mr. Pruitt and Dr. Whittington agreed to review the policy changes.

In regards to the Athletic Policy, #500-20, individual approval was taken and is as follows: Mr. Willing – Aye, Vice Chairman Miles – Aye, Mr. Pruitt – Nay, General Sumpter – Aye, and Dr. Whittington – Nay. It was determined that three Board members (Mr. Willing, Vice Chairman Miles, General Sumpter) were in favor of approving the policy with no changes while two Board members (Mr. Pruitt and Dr. Whittington) were not in favor of the approval.

### **TELL Survey**

Mrs. Smoker explained to the Board the purpose of the Tell Survey. The Tell Survey will be given to students questioning whether they have tried alcohol, smoking, or drugs.

### **Proposed 2010 Budget**

Dr. Brofee showed a presentation on the 2010 Proposed Budget. The presentation will be posted on the web for public view. A public hearing on the proposed budget will be held April 14, 2009.

## **14. A. Finance**

### **Monthly Finance and Food Service Reports**

Ms. Miller provided the monthly finance and food service reports to the Board. The Board members thanked Ms. Miller for the information.

### **B. Connect Ed. Purchase**

It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by General Sumpter and passed to approve the Connect Ed. Phone system purchase. The system will allow parents to be contacted automatically informing them of various topics, such as school closings, school happenings, etc. Mr. Willing stated that he viewed a slideshow on the Connect Ed. Program.

**C. 500 Series policies**

Mr. Bloodsworth presented an overview of the submitted policies with special attention to policy 500-20, the Athletic Policy.

**600 Series Polices (Student Services) and 700 Series Policies (Human Resources)**

Due to time constraints, a motion was called for by Chairman Willing, moved by Dr. Whittington, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles and passed to table the 600 series policies and the 700 series policies until the April 21, 2009 Board Meeting. The vote was unanimous.

**Facilities and Transportation**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles and passed to approve Mr. Daugherty's request to train, Jonathan Murray as a substitute bus driver. The vote was unanimous

**D. Out of County School Request**

It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Dr. Whittington and passed to approve an out of County parent's request for their child permission to attend Greenwood Elementary School. The vote was unanimous.

**E. Human Resources Progress Report**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, it was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Dr. Whittington and passed to approve Mr. Lawson's Human Resources Report. The vote was unanimous. The following personnel actions were presented: **Retirees:** Cathy Kurtz, Nancy Reading, Pat Ward, and Peggy Ward; **Resignations:** Jonathan Nowak, Dean Wootten, and Cynthia Sterling; **Transfers:** Kay Tawes, Phaedra Spencer, Joan Gillsdorf, Dorrie Moon, Jennifer McDorman, Christy Scott, Tara Ward, Andrea Dryden, Michelle Bradford, Mary Ellen Willey, Leigh Widdowson, Jason Pfirman, Mila Tolley, Kevin Taylor, Margaret Cohen, Laura Duerbeck, Deborah Tull, Vonette Wright, Rita Carton, Sharon Richards, Megan Carey; **Terminations;** John Borden; **New Hires:** Ron Purnell, II, Donald Crockett, and Heather Duncan.

**Out of State Travel**

Out of State Travel was presented to the Board for informational purposes only.

**15. Superintendent & Board Member comments**

Chairman Willing thanked Ms. Hopkins and Ms. Welch for their help with the presentation for the community and Technology Development.

It was moved by Dr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Pruitt and passed to approve Ms. Taylor's request to take the Gear Up students on a college tour to various universities.

Sharema Copes was recognized for outstanding mentorship. The Board was also informed of the free "Be There" campaign that has been advertised on television stations. Woodson Elementary and Somerset Intermediate were congratulated for receiving the Maryland School Performance Recognition Award.

Dr. Whittington commented and voiced his concern of the need to enforce the student dress code. General Sumpter thanked the schools for having such strong leadership.

**16. April 2009** – It was moved by Mr. Pruitt, seconded by Vice Chairman Miles, and passed to approve April 14, 2009 as the next open budget meeting and April 21, 2009 as the next open regular session. The open budget meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m., the closed session will begin at 6:00 p.m., the open regular session will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the J.M. Tawes Career & Technology Center. The vote was unanimous.

**17. Adjournment**

It was moved by Vice Chairman Miles, seconded by General Sumpter and passed to approve the adjournment of the meeting at 9:45 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Karen-Lee N. Brofee, Superintendent

Recorded and Prepared by: Melissa Tilghman/Secretary