

## WORK SESSION MINUTES

### MEETING OF THE GARRETT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION Oakland, MD 21550

**Tuesday, October 8, 2013**

#### **Part I – Call to Order**

Mrs. Cynthia Downton, President, called the work session of the Board of Education to order at 5:25 p.m. Also in attendance were Mr. Thomas Carr, Vice President; Mr. Rodney Reckart, associate member, Mrs. Charlotte Sebold, associate member; and Dr. Janet Wilson, Secretary - Treasurer / Superintendent of Schools. Ms. Miriam Sincell, Board Attorney; Commissioner Bob Gatto, Ex-Officio Member; and John Major, III, Student Member of the Board, were also present. The meeting was held at central office.

#### **Part II – Read Closed Session Summary for Executive Session**

Dr. Wilson read the closed session summary for September 10, 2013.

#### **Part III – Hearing of Constituents**

Mrs. Karen Martin expressed concern regarding coaching contracts. In particular, an assistant coach at Southern High has become a valued coach and mentor to the girls' soccer team and there are many concerns she will not be coaching next year.

#### **Part IV – Recognition**

Ms. Emily Eggleston, a Northern High School student, was recognized at the board meeting for her design of the Garrett County Public School logo. Dr. Janet Wilson presented her with a plaque and monetary gift. The logo is a part of a soon to be launched new Garrett County Public Schools website. Ms. Eggleston's mother, Mrs. Krystal Jacques, also attended the meeting.

#### **Part V – Policy**

Tim Thornburg presented information on Policy 130, *Collective Bargaining*. The revised wording in the policy states the Board of Education will bargain with designated exclusive representatives of "Organizations Certified Employees" and "Organizations Noncertified Employees".

Mr. Tim Thornburg presented recommendation to make changes to Policy 190, *Equal Opportunity*. The revised wording in the policy states that the Board of Education will not discriminate against any employee or any applicant seeking employment because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or disability

#### **Part VI – Administrative Procedure**

Mr. Larry McKenzie recommended title changes in Administrative Procedure 725.30, *Authorization and Approval of Board of Education Expenditure of Fund*. Mr. McKenzie shared proposed name changes from the organizational chart to the procedure to allow alignment of the chart for auditing purposes

#### **Part VII – Policy and Administrative Procedure**

Mrs. Barbara Baker recommended that Administrative Procedure 345.22, *Special Education Parent Complaint* be sunset as this item is included in the Special Education handbook that parents receive each year. Mrs. Baker also recommended that Administrative Procedure 475.1 *Special Education Due Process Hearing* be sunset as this item is included in the Special Education handbook that parents receive each year at Special Education meetings. Mrs. Barbara Baker stated that the Lead Team is looking at all administrative procedures and policies to see if any should be sunset.

Mrs. Barbara Baker proposed name changes in Board Policy 270, *School Improvement Team* and Administrative Procedure 270.1, *School Improvement Team Training*. The title changes from “School Action Teams” to “School Improvement Teams” are in alignment with state verbiage. Mrs. Barbara Baker shared the recent concerns of principals regarding culminating field trips for grades 5, 8, and 12. Principals wanted to be able to take a one day trip that is not related to the curriculum.

Mrs. Baker also mentioned Mr. Ed Wildesen, Director of Transportation, and Mr. Jason Shank, Vice Principal of Hickory Environmental Education Center, will have two additions to the field trip forms that will be brought to the next board meeting.

#### **Part VIII – Garrett County Public Schools Foundation**

Mr. Larry McKenzie presented the Garrett County Public Schools Foundation update. Mr. McKenzie reported the GCPS Foundation currently has six members: Mr. Alan Shapiro, Mrs. Julie Yoder, Mr. Spencer Schlosnagle, Mr. Bill Meagher, Mrs. Tracy Fratz, and Mrs. Carol Newman. Those members will be receiving the foundation’s bylaws. GCPS Foundation is still actively looking for two more members from the southern end of the county.

## **Part IX – Enrollment and Class Size**

Mr. Larry McKenzie, Director of Finance, stated as of September 30th, the county school enrollment is 3,886 students, including Pre-Kindergarten. Pre-Kindergarten is an unfunded mandate of the state. The county receives funds for only grades K-12. Mr. McKenzie stated that the student enrollment was originally projected to decrease by 65 students this school year, but actually declined by 132 students.

Mr. McKenzie stated that there have been recent questions and concerns regarding class sizes and in particular in elementary schools. The average class sizes across the elementary schools within the district are 1:20.92 this year and are reasonable to other districts across the state. Last year's average elementary school teacher to student ratio was 1:20.76.

Mr. McKenzie stated the next key dates for state funding reporting is October 31<sup>st</sup> for Special Education reporting and Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) reporting.

## **Part X – The Capital Improvement Plan**

Mr. William Swift, Director of Facilities/ Maintenance/Operations informed the board that the Capital Improvement Plan must be completed every year. The 2015 plan has been completed. The plan estimates for an energy efficiency initiative. Work has not yet begun as the facilities study has not been released. These projects may ride for two years. The design planning must be approved by IAC. It has not been totally approved as funding has been deferred for a year. The local design for 2015 will hopefully be ready to present to the IAC. The bulk of funds will come in 2016. Mr. Swift explained we will have to wait to see if any schools will be closed before the initiatives can be started.

## **Part XI – Charter School**

Ms. Miriam Sincell, Attorney, provided an update on the Charter School application. On September 24th, the State Board of Education entered its opinion on the charter school. The State Board affirmed the Board of Education's decision. They recognized Garrett County recently had to close schools and may need to close more due to financial constraints so is not in position to open new schools at this time.

## **Part XII – Other**

Dr. Janet Wilson, Superintendent of Schools, has been receiving many questions about the Dennett Road building and regarding the letter from Senator Edwards to the governor. In response, she provided the below details.

Why was Dennett Road School Retained? The Board retained Dennett Road because there was still debt on the building. Bonds from the state included \$28,000 for wiring and \$179,000 for a boiler (in 2012). There is \$140,213 still due on the building.

What other buildings in the district have debt? Route 40 Elementary School was renovated in 2003 with a 16 year time frame that the building must be used or the money will have to be paid back that was given for the renovation. Yough Glades Elementary School also has an outstanding debt.

How much were the cameras and security door systems? The cost for the cameras was \$97,498. Garrett County was the only county in Maryland that did not have security cameras on busses. National news has expressed that busses have become a target as there are many students on the busses. The cameras were added to increase the safety of the students and the drivers. The cost for the security door systems was \$237,000 for all doors including the board office. Cameras had to be added to Swan Meadow to be able to see the person at the front door.

Dr. Wilson expressed her gratitude to Mr. Swift, Mr. Wildesen, and their staff, for expediting the process. She also thanked the commissioners for putting the school resource officers in the schools.

What is the energy savings with Johnson Control? Johnson Control advanced \$4.2 million worth of climate control in the schools. The energy savings gained are used to reimburse the company over 15 years. The company guarantees the pay back through energy efficiency. If not, they will pay it!

What is Project Open Space? This is grant money for playgrounds, football fields, etc. The county must give money in-kind to help complete the projects. This could be done by using volunteer work as well. This has been done in the past by volunteers from the band boosters. The US Tennis Association contributed funds, also.

How is Dennett Road School being used? Garrett County Community Action Head Start classrooms were displaced when students were moved from the schools. Head Start has access to Dennett Road. On one side of the building, Head Start occupies the classrooms. On the other side, the collaborative IT office between county government and GCPS is housed. Equipment is being purchased through grants to help drive some of the economic development. The Board of Education has received grants to update computers. This IT equipment is also backing up the hospital and college network. The community uses the gym and cafeteria for after school activities.

The Board is looking at moving the maintenance facility to Dennett Road as the current maintenance building is antiquated and not insulated.

A new roof is needed for half of the building. This part of the building houses the county IT equipment so must be replaced to ensure no damage to the county IT hub.

**Part XIII – Adjourn**

The board adjourned the work session at 6:32 p.m.

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Mrs. Cynthia Downton  
President

Dr. Janet S. Wilson  
Secretary/Treasurer

Approved: November 12, 2013