

## WORK SESSION MINUTES

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

**Tuesday, January 14, 2014**

#### **Part I – Call to Order**

Mrs. Cynthia Downton, President, called the Work Session of the Board of Education to order at 4:01 p.m. Also in attendance were Mr. Thomas Carr, Vice President; Mr. Rodney Reckart, Associate Member; Mrs. Charlotte Sebold, Associate Member; Mr. Matthew Paugh, 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 in the Board Room.

#### **Part II – Open Ceremonies**

Mrs. Downton led a moment of silence after which Mr. John Major led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Downton noted there will be an addition to the agenda. Mr. McKenzie will be adding the new IRS mileage rate to the agenda. He will discuss this after his informational item, Budget Priorities for FY2015. The Board unanimously accepted the agenda with the one addition.

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

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

#### **Part IV – Election of Officers**

Mrs. Cynthia Downton, President announced her appreciation to the board members and the public for their support of her during her presidency. Dr. Wilson asked if there were any nominations. Charlotte Sebold made a nomination for Mr. Thomas Carr to be President and Mrs. Downton seconded that motion. Mr. Carr thanked Mrs. Downton for the fantastic job she has done this year. He mentioned that we have many challenges this school year. One of his goals is for the Board members to complete a self-evaluation prior to completing the superintendent evaluation. Another goal of Mr. Carr's is to get the Garrett County Public Schools Foundation up and running to permit individuals and businesses to contribute financially to the school system. This would permit those donations/contributions to be made and get proper tax deductions. He would also like the Dennett Road facility to be set up as a proper Maintenance facility as the current Maintenance building is in deplorable conditions.

Mr. Carr asked if there were any nominations for Vice President. Mrs. Downton nominated Rodney Reckart and Mrs. Sebold seconded the motion. Mr. Rodney Reckart was elected as Vice President.

#### **Part V – Recognition**

Mr. Carr, newly elected President, recognized Miss Shelby Stegall, a 10th grade student at Southern High School, for designing the Christmas card which was sent from the Board of Education and the Superintendent to all employees, each Maryland school superintendent, and various county and state agencies in December 2013.

#### **Part VI – Policy**

Mr. Larry McKenzie, Director of Finance, presented the proposed revisions to the 725.30, *Board Member Expenses* policy. Mr. McKenzie proposed wording changes in the policy to reflect the reimbursement for travel and other expenses by the Board as defined in the Education Article of the Annotated Code 3-603 and 4-107. Other minor wording changes were proposed in the policy.

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

Mr. Tim Thornburg, Director of Human Resources, presented the first reading of 563.6, *Liberal Leave for Non-Essential Employees Policy*, and 563.61, *Liberal Leave for Non-Essential Employees Administrative Procedure*. The purpose of the policy is to establish a liberal leave for non-emergency 12-month employees. During inclement weather and other non-emergency conditions, liberal leave is intended to provide non-essential employees with flexibility as it relates to their work day.

#### **Part VIII – Administrative Procedure**

Mr. Tim Thornburg, Director of Human Resources, presented revisions to 857.221, *Late Opening or Closing of School Due to Emergencies or for Safety Reasons Administrative Procedure*. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall make all decisions regarding the closure or delayed opening of schools in accordance with Board of Education Policy 857.22.

To the extent possible, the decision related to delayed openings or the closure of schools will be made prior to 5:45 AM. Opening/closing status of the school system will be posted on the school system's website ([www.garrettcountytschools.org](http://www.garrettcountytschools.org)) and on the web at [www.SchoolsOut.com](http://www.SchoolsOut.com).

School personnel and the public will also be notified by public service announcements carried on radio and television stations.

Procedures regarding Essential Employees and Nonessential Employees are outlined concerning report times during late openings, early dismissals and school closures.

### **Part IX– Legislative Policy Statements (PSAAM)**

Dr. Janet Wilson, Superintendent of Schools, presented the PSSAM’s Legislative Policy Statements (PSAAM) informational item. Dr. Wilson provided legislative priorities for 2014 as highlighted by the Public School Superintendent’s Association of Maryland.

Some priorities include the review of the current state funding formula, including pre-kindergarten students in the full-time-enrollment component of the formula (making pre-k universal within the state), as well as other areas of capital improvement, employee relations, teacher retirement system, education reform, student safety and security, and local autonomy.

### **Part X – Advocacy Committee Updates**

Dr. Janet Wilson, Superintendent of Schools, presented an update on the Advocacy Committees. As the Board is not moving forward on school closures, the former Advisory/School Consolidation Committees will be asked to be a part of an Advocacy Committee to plan for the future of Garrett County Public Schools.

The Advocacy Committee will be comprised of a specified number of members and will meet at least five times during the current school year. Members of the Advocacy Committee will be appointed by the Superintendent, with the members of the former Advisory/School Consolidation Committees having the opportunity to express interest for initial consideration. If committee seats are not filled through the initial appointment process, the public will then be able to apply for the Advocacy Committee. The committees will not be as large as the former committees.

The Advocacy Committee will be looking at various topics: financial/Human Resources, instructional programs, transportation and enrollment, and strategic planning.

Dr. Wilson asked some of the Board members to consider attending the Advocacy Committee meetings. Mr. Bob Gatto, Ex-Officio Member, asked if students from middle and high schools could be involved in the committee meetings as well. Dr. Wilson noted this would be considered.

### **Part XI – Budget Priorities**

Mr. Larry McKenzie, Director of Finance, and Mr. Bill Swift, Director of Facilities, Maintenance and Operations presented the Budget Priorities for FY2015. The budget priorities are for maintenance, facilities and repairs. Each principal was asked to provide Mr. Swift with a list of items needed regarding their school's maintenance, facilities and repairs. Mr. Swift met with the principals afterwards to prioritize these lists.

Mr. McKenzie also stated the IRS has decreased the standard mileage rate for mileage reimbursement from \$0.565 per mile to \$0.560 per mile effective January 1, 2014. Garrett County Public Schools should follow the same rate and decrease the mileage reimbursement rate to \$0.560 per mile. He asked the Board to consider adding this item to the Business meeting agenda.

### **Part XII - Common Core Update for Secondary Education**

Mr. Paul Edwards, Director of Secondary Education, presented the transition to the Common Core for Secondary Education. Mr. Edwards shared the high school transition plan based on the eight (8) outcomes identified by central office staff, building principals, and Educator Effectiveness Academy participants in 2013-14.

The plan will implement high quality professional development that is aligned with the Learning Forward Standards of Professional Learning to help teachers develop new knowledge, skills, and practices necessary for full implementation of the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum, STEM Education, and the Teacher and Principal Evaluation system.

### **Part XIII - Project Lead the Way Sustainability**

Mr. Paul Edwards, Director of Secondary Education, presented this informational item. Mr. Edwards reviewed the Garrett County Project Lead the Way Sustainability Plan to improve the matriculation through the Project Lead the Way program. The 6 step plan will increase enrollment numbers beyond the introductory courses and increase completion rates (especially for non-traditional female students). Project Lead the Way will be prioritized as a program of studies and not as a sequence of electives.

### **Part XIV - 4.0 Grading Scale**

Mr. Paul Edwards, Director of Secondary Education, presented this informational item. Mr. Edwards shared a 4.0 grading scale to be used by middle and high schools due to changes implemented within PowerSchool.

The scale is based upon the widely-accepted College Board 4.0 scale. Colleges and Universities as well as those organizations issuing scholarships often request the reporting of grades on a

4.0 scale. In addition, the Maryland Longitudinal Data System also collects data based on the 4.0 scale.

**Part XV - Facility Engineer Associates (FEA) and Bushey Feight Morin Architects Inc. (BFM)**

Mr. Paul Swanson (FEA) and Mr. Mike Gehr (BFM) presented this informational item. They met with the former Advisory / School Consolidation Committee members to answer their questions regarding the facility study report they provided. They also met with the County Commissioners.

Both gentlemen were present to answer any questions the Board may have concerning the future needs of the school system, based on their assessments. They both stressed community involvement and teamwork for future decisions.

To be cost effective, Mr. Reckart asked about cutting out a certain amount of square footage in the renovation of Southern Middle School. Mr. Gehr indicated that all depends upon what the Board's vision is for that building before renovation.

Mr. Swanson suggested that whatever schools in the future may be closed, there needs to be a lot more busses on the road than we have now to reduce the time students will spend on the bus ride.

**Part VXI - Open Meeting Act on Hearing of Constituents**

Ms. Miriam Sincell, Attorney, presented the Open Meeting Act on Hearing of Constituents to the Board. Mr. Carr, Mrs. Downton, and Ms. Sincell have completed their certification of completion for Maryland's Open Meetings Act.

Ms. Sincell stated that the Open Meeting Compliance Board and Act says the Board does not have to answer questions and/or make comments during the public comment sessions. The Board should not answer because one person cannot speak for the group.

For inquiries from the public, the public should make verbal questions beginning at the local schools and follow the chain of communication up to the Board. She suggested that the current policy needs to be revised.

**Part XVII - HSA / AP Testing**

Mr. Jim Morris, Supervisor of Research, Evaluation and Information, presented the HSA and AP Testing information. Mr. Morris shared 2012-13 high school test results for HSA, SAT, PSAT, ACT, and AP assessments.

**Part XVIII - Feedback on High School Graduation Date**

Mr. Jim Morris, Supervisor of Research, Evaluation and Information, and Mr. Paul Edwards, Director of Secondary Education, provided the feedback received on the high school graduation date that was set for May 31, 2014.

Mr. Morris shared graduation date feedback that came to the Public Information Office over the past month. The Board at last month's meeting requested public comment on the graduation date. The request was posted on the school system's website, Facebook and Twitter.

There were 8 comments submitted. Four comments indicated that the May 31st date was fine.

The other 4 comments suggested: waiting to set the graduation date later in the year after snow days have been rescheduled; having police assistance at the intersection leading to Garrett College before and after graduation; having better parking and a better sound system at the CARC; and allowing seniors to decide when and where graduation should take place.

Mr. Edwards indicated that at the beginning of the school year a team of constituents looked at last year's problems at the CARC and have worked to solve them.

Mr. Edwards indicated that there will be a packet of information sent to all seniors concerning graduation and parking. He also indicated that when the decision to move the graduation to the CARC was made last year, student input was gathered. The students were in favor of the change.

**Part XIX – Hearing of Constituents**

There were no public comments at this meeting

**Part XII – Adjourn**

Mr. Matthew Paugh, Associate Member, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 p.m. and move to Executive Session at 6:30 pm. Mrs. Downton, Associate Member, seconded that motion.

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Mr. Thomas Carr  
President

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Dr. Janet S. Wilson  
Secretary/Treasurer

Approved: