

# BOARDROOM CHATTER

## Superintendent's Report

### *Recognize Doug & Betsy Schwab for their continued support of the Annual Schwab's Genetics DNA Technology Workshop:*

- Ms. Karen Bundy, Director of Secondary Education, recognized Mr. and Mrs. Doug and Betsy Schwab for their support of the Annual Schwab's Genetics DNA Technology Institute administered by the Board of Education.
- The Doug and Betsy Schwab and Family Foundation Inc. donated a total of \$7,159.24 to fund this year's workshop, as they have done for the past ten years.
- The Genetics DNA Technology Institute is a two-week long program that engages 8 students each week in hands-on genetics and DNA investigations.

### *Recognize the LaVale and Frostburg Lions Clubs for providing vision screening for all pre-K students in the ACPs:*

- Mrs. Deb Kolb, coordinator of the Judy Center, recognized the LaVale and Frostburg Lions Clubs for providing vision screening for all pre-K students in the public school system.
- 9 members of the LaVale Lions Club were in attendance at the meeting to accept this recognition.

### *Recognize Parent Involvement Matters Award winner and nominees:*

- Board member, Mr. Tom Striplin, presented Mrs. Erin DeLong with a certificate of recognition for being selected as Allegany County's representative for the Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Award.
- The award was created to honor and recognize parents across the state for the significant contributions these individuals make to public education.
- Mrs. Jennifer Kauffman, Parent Advisory Council co-chair, also presented Mrs. DeLong with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the council members.
- Other Comcast PIMA nominees from Allegany County included Charles and Renate Kealey, Braddock Middle School; Kelly Guyton, Beall Elementary School; and Joe Aurigemma, West Side Elementary School.

### *Introduce the 2008-2009 Allegany County Teacher of the Year:*

- Mrs. Lisa Stevenson, coordinator of Acceleration and Enrichment and Media, formally introduced Ms. Michaela Linn, music teacher at Mountain Ridge High School, as the 2008-2009 Allegany County Teacher of the Year.
- Ms. Linn was chosen by a selection committee from 20 school-level representatives who submitted applications.
- All county-level representatives, finalists, and Ms. Linn will be honored at a celebration in November.

### *Present proclamation recognizing May 6, 2008, as National Teacher Day:*

- Board member, Mrs. Karen Treber, presented a proclamation to Ms. Michaela Linn recognizing May 6, 2008, as National Teacher Day.

### *Present proclamation recognizing May 5-9, 2008, as Child Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week:*

- Board member, Mrs. Jane Dawson, presented a proclamation to Mr.

Steve Wilson, Supervisor of Food and Nutrition, recognizing the week of May 5-9, 2008, as Child Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week.

## Unfinished Business

### *Consider second reading of Video Surveillance policy:*

- At last month's business meeting, Mrs. Valerie Arch, President of ACTA, addressed the board regarding concerns the teachers association has with the Video Surveillance policy.
- Board members opted to table the proposed policy last month due to these concerns.
- After more discussion on this topic the board once again agreed to table the second reading of the policy and will hopefully be able to make a decision on it at the June business meeting.

### *Consider additional revisions to Early Admission to Kindergarten policy:*

- Mrs. Dee Blank, Supervisor of Elementary Education, explained to the Board that the additional revisions that the policy committee had made to this policy were in bold type.
- Members reviewed the modifications and accepted the policy.

## New Business

### *Consider approving proposed amendment to FY08 budget:*

- Mr. Randy Bittinger, Director of Finance, addressed the Board with a budget amendment. After an analysis, Mr. Bittinger identified areas where the budget will exceed revenue and areas where budgeted spending will be less than budgeted.
- These areas are as follows:
  - Interest revenue—\$500,000
  - Utility savings—\$1,150,000
  - Healthcare savings—\$440,500
- The proposed uses of these funds are as follows:
  - Greenway Avenue & Mountain Ridge Stadiums—\$1,000,000
  - Internal Public Address Systems—\$300,000
  - Renovation at 108 Washington Street—\$500,000
  - Culinary Arts Program at the CTE—\$300,000
  - School bus radios and cameras—\$119,500
  - Allconet contribution—\$210,500
  - Food service equipment—\$110,500
- The Board agreed to fund six of the seven proposed projects with the nearly \$2.1 million in available funds.
- The Board decided that before spending \$300,000 on a culinary arts program at the Career Center that they should take a tour of the facilities to get a better idea of the proposed program.
- Board member, Mr. Jeff Metz, expressed concerns about the possible lack of student interest in the program as well as the lack of available jobs in the area in this field.
- Dr. AuMiller, however, feels that there are plenty of jobs in Allegany County in the culinary arts field.
- Dr. AuMiller explained that postponing making a decision on this budget amendment item would not hinder the possibility of the

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program being implemented for the 2009-2010 school year.

## **Consider accepting first reading of Attendance Policy:**

- The Board approved the first reading of the Attendance Policy with minor discussion on the topic.
- Board member, Mrs. Jane Dawson, expressed concerns as to the number of high school seniors not staying in school for a full day.
- Mrs. Janet Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, explained that this is a result of the State Board of Education making a decision to allow seniors to leave school after all graduation requirements have been met.
- According to statistics provided by Mrs. Wilson, 388 of the 493 seniors not enrolled at the CTE are taking four credits or less. 58 of those ACPS students are taking early college courses and 11 are dually enrolled.

## **Consider accepting amendments to 2007-2008 academic school calendar:**

- The Board approved the following amendments to the current academic school calendar:
  - Students will dismiss 3 hours early on Friday, June 6, 2008.
  - Students will dismiss 3 hours early on Monday, June 9, 2008.
- Students are already scheduled to dismiss 3 hours early on Tuesday, June 10, 2008.
- Teachers will work full days.

## **Vote to meet in Executive Session in June:**

- The Board voted unanimously to meet in an Executive Session in June should any appeals be pending.

## **Work Session Notables**

### **Introduce 2008-2009 Student Board Member and Alternate:**

- Mr. Dan Whetzel, Acting Supervisor of Social Studies, introduced Alex Shin of Allegany High School as the new student board member for the 2008-2009 school year.
- Alex is a member of the National Honor Society, the mock trial team, the debate team, the soccer team, the marching band, and is the current President of the Association of Student Councils. Alex is also a member of the YMCA swim team.
- Mr. Whetzel also introduced Max Green of Fort Hill High School as the alternate student board member.
- Mr. Whetzel as well as other board members thanked Tracy Zimmerman, current student board member, for her service this past year and wished her luck in her future endeavors.

## **Recognize FBLA Winners:**

- Mrs. Deborah Bittinger, principal CTE, and Tammy Edwards, Allegany High School FBLA advisor, introduced the winners of the 2008 Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) conference.
- The 6 students from Allegany High School and the Career Center placing first or second at the conference are as follows:
  - Brian Hallee—1st place Website Development, 3rd place Networking Concepts
  - Sarah Foye and Sarah Walker—1st place team in Desktop

## **Publishing**

- Patrick Thomas—1st place Spreadsheet Applications
- Cody Toothaker—2nd place Business Math
- Ronald Diehl—2nd place Business Law
- Jennifer Mullan—2nd place Word Processing II
- The FBLA students will represent Maryland in the National Competition in Atlanta, GA, beginning June 26, 2008.
- Mrs. Bittinger also introduced Dustin Trantum of the Career Center, who placed 1st in Cabinet Making in this year's Skills USA Challenge.
- Dustin will represent Maryland in the National Competition in Kansas City beginning June 23, 2008.

## **Recognize Envirothon Winners:**

- Ms. Karen Bundy, Director of Secondary Education, introduced the first place winners of the 2008 Allegany County Envirothon competition.
- The winning team, entitled Page 5, was from Allegany High School. Members included Anna Dusenbery, captain, Julia Roberts, Yelena Dewald, Sara Rahman, and Miriam Smith-Drelich.
- Alan Hammond, environmental science teacher at Allegany High School, was the team's advisor.

## **Open Space Schools:**

- Mrs. Janet Wilson addressed the Board regarding concerns a number of stakeholders have had about open space schools, specifically the noise level in these types of classrooms, becoming a distraction to students.
- Mrs. Wilson opened the floor up to principals to speak on the pros and cons of this topic.
- Board member, Mrs. Jane Dawson, explained that she has been asked several times to research putting up partitions in the schools operating open space classrooms; however, Mr. Vince Montana, Director of Facilities, advised her that due to concerns with fire codes he would have to consult with an architect to see if there is a design that would address the noise issue.
- Board member, Mr. Tom Striplin, explained that he wasn't aware that the noise level in open space classrooms was a problem at all and asked for input from various administrators in attendance at the meeting.
- George's Creek Elementary School principal, Mr. Dan Clark, told Board members that open space classrooms in his school did, in fact, cause concerns due to the natural loudness of this type of program.
- Mr. Clark explained that students in other classrooms have difficulty concentrating when they are able to hear what is going on in neighboring classrooms.
- Mr. Steve Wilson, principal South Penn Elementary School, explained that his school has been operating in open space for a number of years and the design works well for his students.
- Mr. Wilson feels that open space classrooms foster collaboration and teamwork.
- Mr. Wilson also explained that in a perfect world everyone would have walls in their classrooms, but that visual barriers can be set-up to make the open space situation work.
- Mr. Wilson told Board members that the noise in open space classrooms is simply "working noise" and that students are able to learn and that his teachers do a wonderful job.



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**Ms. Norma Blacke Bourdeau:**

- Ms. Bourdeau, president of the Allegany County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People addressed the Board with the same concerns of the Concerned Citizens of Cumberland group.
- Ms. Bourdeau requested that the Superintendent and the Board of Education immediately ban the display, wearing, and intimidating use of the Confederate flag from school premises and grounds and areas near and adjacent to the County's four public high schools.

**Mrs. Valerie Arch:**

- Mrs. Valerie Arch, president of the Allegany County Teachers' Association, again addressed the Board regarding concerns the Association has with the Video Surveillance policy.
- Mrs. Arch stated that while she realizes that the Board's proposed policy is legal, she still feels that teachers and students should need to give their consent before being recorded.
- She also stressed that the policy needs to be modified to say that videos used in the classroom expressly prohibit the recording of sound.
- Mrs. Arch additionally questioned the purpose of the policy, who will have access to the video tapes, where they will be stored, and how they will eventually be destroyed.
- After discussion of Mrs. Arch's concerns, the Board once again agreed to table the second reading of the policy until the June business meeting.

**Comments and Announcements**

**Mrs. Jane Dawson:**

- Mrs. Dawson recognized April Brenneman, local graduate, for her academic and career accomplishments.
- April received her Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Analysis and Planning from Frostburg State University; she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Kentucky; and she received her Master of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Kentucky.
- She is currently serving as Project Geotechnical Engineer in the Lexington office of MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.

**Next Meeting**

The next Business Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2008. The Work Session begins at 5 pm and the Business Meeting begins at 7 pm in Conference Rooms II and III.

**June 2008**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

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Mr. Tom Striplin, *Member*  
Mrs. Karen Treber, *Member*  
Mr. Jeff Metz, *Member*  
Tracy Zimmerman,  
*Alternate Student Board Member*

**Administration**

Dr. William AuMiller,  
*Superintendent of Schools*

**Ex-Officio Member**

Mr. Robert Hutcheson,  
*Allegany County Commissioner*