

Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN)
Unofficial Notes on Dorchester County Board of Education (DCBOE)
Monthly Meeting, Thursday, April 21, 2022

Submitted by Tom Puglisi

Note: Supporting documents may be found on the CAN website at CambridgeCan.org and the DCPS Board Docs website at <https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/dcps/Board.nsf/Public>

1. Closed Session, 4:00 p.m.

1.01-1.05 Personnel, Legal, Negotiations, and Administration Functions

2. Regular Session, 6:00 p.m.

2.01 Pledge of Allegiance

2.02 Approval of the Regular Agenda for April 21, 2022

2.03 Calendar

2.04 Legislative Update. No legislative update was provided by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) this month.

2.05 National School Board Association Report. Susan Morgan reported that she and Board Member Sheri Hubbard attended the National School Board Association National Conference held in San Diego from April 1st through April 4th. They each attended four sessions each day plus a plenary session (see attachment). Dr. Morgan attended several sessions on relationships between school boards and superintendents. They stressed transparency and keeping each other informed. Another very useful session described trauma-informed schools. The presenter stressed that relationally responsive schools work well with traumatized children and noted how important it is to look at ways to respond to traumatized children other than re-traumatizing them. Stress was placed on moving from discipline/punishment to behaviorally responsive actions. This requires being more open, listening to the students, and understanding that you bring with you all the baggage you picked up when you were growing up. Another session examined rural school systems preparing their graduates for life. Such systems looked at their students to decide what they needed from school to make them ready for enrollment, employment, or enlistment. They arrived at this by asking the community what it needed for its children. Ms. Hubbard provided printouts from the rural school systems discussed above, as well as the other sessions that she attended. She attended a session on school board roles and responsibilities and provided a brochure summarizing them. Another session stressed that children who experience connections at school have good mental health. A session by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) defined equity as distinguished from equality. She also attended a session on dealing with negative individuals.

2.06 Comments from the Student Board Representatives. See PowerPoint presentations on the CAN and DCPS Board Docs websites.

2.07 Comments from the Public.

- A Dorchester Educators representative requested that the vote on the proposed calendar for the 2022-2023 school year, which includes many new early dismissal days, be postponed due to past experience showing that attendance is extremely low on early dismissal days.
- A member of the public thanked pupil services for providing support to most vulnerable students, and for the use of the MTSS process throughout the system. The speaker congratulated Ms. Wilson upon her retirement and requested that the Superintendent seriously consider minority candidates for vacancies on the Executive Team. The speaker noted that placement of weapons detectors in schools has not been effective because many persons are actually in the schools before they get to the detectors. The speaker also noted that art students at Maces Lane are failing because they lack sketch pads.

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- 2.08 Instructional Update – Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS). A variety of actions have been taken to develop a handbook and set the groundwork for initial implementation of the MTSS 3-tiered support system across the district. MTSS identifies both individual and systemic problems of an academic and behavioral nature. The goal is to develop clear intervention techniques and evidence-based practices that are used across the board in all schools. Data will be collected systematically on expectations, interventions, and outcomes. See presentation attached.

3. Consent Agenda – Approved unanimously,

- 3.01 Approval of Personnel Items for April 21, 2022
- 3.02 Approval of the Minutes of the March 17, 2022, Regular Board of Education Meeting
- 3.03 Additional Grants Acceptance.
- 3.04 Soliant Contract – Speech Teleservices – Emergency Approval
- 3.05 American Reading Company
- 3.06 Approval of Purchase of i-Ready Diagnostics in Mathematics from Curriculum Associates
- 3.07 Firewall Purchase E-Rate
- 3.08 Performance Matters Analytics & Assessment Annual Subscription/ Maintenance and Support Renewal
- 3.09 Installation (labor) Contract for Replacement of the Roof System at Choptank Elementary School (CES)
- 3.10 Material Contract for Replacement of the Roof System at Choptank Elementary School (CES)
- 3.11 Cambridge-South Dorchester HS Fire Alarm System Replacement & Campus Mass Notification System Contract Termination
- 4.12 Cambridge-South Dorchester HS Fire Alarm System Replacement & Campus Mass Notification System Installation Contract Award

4. Items for Board Action

- 4.01 Proposed 2022-2023 Calendar of Dorchester County Board of Education Board Meetings. Approved unanimously.
- 4.02 School Calendar Changes for 2021-2022 are proposed to change the C-SD graduation date to accommodate State Track and Field competition, and to add several early dismissals at the end of the year for teacher preparation. Approved unanimously.
- 4.03 Proposed School Calendar for 2022-2013. The Superintendent noted that the proposed calendar was published through various modalities with no comments received, although both public speakers mentioned problems associated with the proposed calendar. The Superintendent recognizes the problems noted but believes these extra professional development days are needed next year. Chairperson Layton made a motion that the vote on the proposed calendar be tabled until next month’s meeting, that it be posted on the DCPS website and sent out by each school’s message system, and that the public be encouraged to comment. Layton motion approved unanimously.
- 4.04 First Read – New BOE Policy 420.06 – Students: Admission Requirements; Student Registered Sex Offender – Entry of School Property. Approved unanimously.
- 4.05 First Read – New BOE Policy 430.08 – Students: Student Attendance; Pregnant and Parenting Policy. Approved unanimously.
- 4.06 First Reading - HealthSmart Elementary (K – 5) Health Curriculum. Approved unanimously.
- 4.07 First Reading: HealthSmart Middle School (6 – 8) Health Curriculum. Approved unanimously.

5. Items for Information

- 5.01 Appropriations and Expenditures Report.
- 5.02 Quarterly Grant Balances Report
- 5.03 Capital Projects and Quarterly Technology Purchases Reports
Financial reports were provided as of March 31. Minor variances were noted, but overall, the system is operating below project budget levels. Retention bonuses are on track to be provided as previously approved.

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6. Other Business

6.01 Board Comments

- Dr. Morgan: Thank you to all who came to this meeting. The current school board is much changed from the previous. We have one that now works together, that looks at the whole system, not just the financial end. We heard all that you said at the last meeting about behavioral issues in our schools. That has been a concern of mine since before I came on the board. That hasn't changed. As you will note from an earlier presentation tonight on the Multi-Tiered Support System the county is working to introduce, the administration is working on the issues of students doing poorly in academics as well as behavioral issues currently occurring. New programs are introduced routinely in school systems and often they are only partially successful. We have to work together to make this new system successful. For that, we need the help of the parents and or guardians to work with us on this. A school can only do so much without the help of the students' family and the community at large. Please help us help your students.
- Mr. Hall thanked the student board representative, as well as those who provided public comments. It is important for the Board to work with the Superintendent to ensure a safe and effective level.
- Mr. Diaz noted the importance of all school personnel understanding the MTSS program and implementing it enthusiastically and effectively.
- Ms. Hubbard thanked the student representatives and all those who participated in today's meeting.
- Ms. Layton recently attended a meeting of many of the candidates who are running for the County Board and School Boards. Congratulated John Condon on his many awards. Violence in our community is very worrisome, and it will take the entire community to solve it. She has also noted the concerns about placement of the weapons detectors. Ms. Layton noted that DCPS needs to consider establishing a foundation to receive gifts and donations for the school systems. She congratulated the Teacher of the Year and the First Class Teacher of the year, and noted that it is good to see some semblance of normality returning to the schools.

6.02 Announcements from the Superintendent. Superintendent Bromwell noted that positive covid cases have dwindled considerably. DCPS and the County Board sent a joint letter to the Legislature protesting the unfairness of the State funding formula. He noted that partnerships are taking place with neighboring counties to provide our students with programs that DCPS cannot offer due to low enrollment. He congratulated the Teacher of the Year and the First Class Teacher of the Year.

7. Adjournment