

Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN)
Unofficial Notes on Dorchester County Board of Education Meeting
February 22, 2024 - Dorchester Career & Technology Center

Submitted by Tom Puglisi

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

The Board went into closed Executive Session at 4:30 pm to discuss personnel, negotiations, legal matters, and administrative functions. Board Vice President Susan Morgan opened the Public Meeting at 6:05 pm with Board Members Sheri Hubbard, and Chris Wheedleton present. Board President Mike Diaz attended virtually.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and Board modifications to the agenda, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jymil Thompson reviewed the Board Calendar (see below).

President Diaz thanked everyone for the well-wishes conveyed to himself and his family. He disclosed that he underwent a liver transplant at University Hospital in Baltimore and that his recovery is going very well. He indicated that hopes to return home this weekend and intends to continue to work on Board business from home throughout his recovery period. Mr. Diaz then left the meeting.

The three Student Board Representatives presented highlights of recent activities at North Dorchester (ND) HS, Cambridge-South Dorchester (CSD) HS, and the Dorchester Career & Technical Center (DCTC). Their presentations can be found *on the DCPS Board Docs website at <https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/dcps/Board.nsf/Public>.*

Board Member Sheri Hubbard provided a brief **Legislative Update** and indicated that the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) is currently tracking over 300 pieces of legislation, which are listed on the MABE website at <https://www.mabe.org/advocacy/2024-legislative-session/>.

Mr. Milton Nagel, Executive Director of MABE and Mr. William Middleton, MABE's Lead Search Consultant, presented information about MABE **Superintendent Search Services**. The goals of conducting such a search are to plan and execute a search process that is thoughtful, responsive, and fair; minimizes the possibility of legal challenges as a result of procedural flaws; and identifies the best leader for the school system for the next four years. The phases of the process include planning the search, advertising and recruiting, screening and selecting candidates, and appointing the new superintendent. Mr. Middleton stressed that stakeholder and consultant involvement informs the Board's deliberations but ultimately the Board is responsible for all decisions. Confidentiality is crucial to ensure a smooth transition and a successful start for a new superintendent. MABE reviews all applicants and passes all applicants to the Board for consideration. The search timeline at this point is tight but possible, if Board Members are willing to dedicate the time required.

Mr. Jerome Stover, Principal of **Cambridge-South Dorchester High School (SCD HS)**, presented an update on CSD's goals as follows: On the Maryland School Report Card, CSD will score (1) 45% in Academic Achievement; (2) CSD 78% on the "Graduation Rate" measure; (3) 25% on the "Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency" measure; 50% on the "Readiness for Post-Secondary Success" measure; and (5) 40% on the "School Quality and Student Success" measure. Mr. Stover described a number of initiatives to foster student engagement and success in achieving these goals, including providing access to mental health programs, Ron Clark Academy Houses and activities, professional development opportunities, professional learning communities, Advancement Via Individual Development (AVID) courses, after school tutoring, new teacher mentoring and "Buddy Teacher" programs.

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Dr. Jodi Colman, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments, reviewed Maryland's New **Post College and Career Readiness (CCR)** requirements and explained that there will be two options for meeting CCR requirements in SY2024-25. Option 1 requires that a student in Grades 10-12 achieve an unweighted GPA of 3.0 and receive a grade of A, B, or C in Algebra I), while Option 2 requires that a student in Grade 9 achieve Level 3 or 4 proficiency on the Algebra I and English 10 Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) tests. Students are to meet these standards by the end of 10th grade. Students not demonstrating that they are on track must be provided support pathways to get on track.

Once the CCR standards are met, students enter one of three **Post-CCR pathway options**. The Maryland Blueprint defines Post-CCR pathways as access to (1) an International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement diploma, (2) Dual Enrollment programs, or (3) Career and Technical (CT) Program completion. Dr. Colman indicated that for the Advanced Placement pathway, the new course catalog outlines opportunities for STEM and Humanities Advanced Placement courses with access to the AP Capstone Diploma. For the Dual Enrollment pathway, DCPS is working with Chesapeake College to explore parameters to support students working towards an Associate Degree. She noted that DCPS covers the cost of course fees and materials for these credit-bearing courses. For the Career & Technology (CT) pathway, DCTC provides 19 CT program options, including CASE/Agriscience, which will return during the 2024-2025 school year. Schools will be hosting information events for families to better understand the Blueprint requirements. Counselors will have on hand data sets to help families select required courses to stay on track towards graduation. Students will experience more accountability in their academic endeavors to be on track towards completing a pathway.

Dr. Colman also summarized recent **DCPS instructional data**, showing that i-Ready math scores are improving slightly, but that 54% of elementary students still score one grade level below their current grade, and 27% score two or more levels below their grade. Among Middle School students, 27% score one grade level below their current grade, and 54% score 2 or more grade levels below their grade. In Reading, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores show that only 41% of elementary students score at or above grade level.

The Board unanimously approved the **Consent Agenda**, consisting of the minutes of January 18 Board Meeting and the January 11 and February 1 Board Work Sessions; an amended update to the FY2025 Capital Improvement Plan; and the Second Reading of Board of Education Policies on General Powers of the Board and the Relation of Board Members to the Board, and on Personnel Policies on Employment, Medical Procedures, introductory Employment Period, Calendar, Workday, Work Week, Rejections, Termination, Suspension, and Promotion.

The Board unanimously approved **Dr. Jymil Thompson as Interim Superintendent**; Mr. Dave Bromwell's amended contract; the Interim Superintendent's contract; the personnel actions discussed in Executive session; proposed School Calendar #1 for SY 2024-25 for public comment (see below); expand flexibility of Calendar Committee in proposing school year start dates going forward; replacement of the gymnasium floor at Warwick ES (\$82,500); acceptance of two MABE grants totaling \$22,000 to support school safety and maintenance.

The Board also unanimously approved the First Reading of Board of Education Policies on the immunity of Board Members, maintenance of the school system, setting policy, appointment of legal counsel and auditing firm, and on procedures regarding termination of employment and performance appraisals

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Ms. Sandy Green, Chief Financial Officer, presented informational reports on **appropriations, expenditures and capital projects**. Ms. Green will be working on reconciling revenues and expenditures prior to the end of the fiscal year.

The following **Public Comments** were presented at the meeting:

- Speaker #1 commented that DCPS needs to do a better job adhering to Individual Education Programs (IEPs) because IEPs are being violated across DCOS with administrators ignoring the IEP team.
- Speaker #2 thanked the Board members for their service on behalf her sister, Dr. Theresa Stafford, and indicated that she will comment at future meetings as a certified Special Education advocate.
- Speaker #3 expressed concern that the new Blueprint pathways may prove to be devastating for minority students and urged that DCPS be proactive in helping these students.

In their **closing remarks**, Board Members thanked Mr. Bromwell for his many years of service to DCPS, congratulated Dr. Thompson on his appointment as Interim Superintendent, and wished Board President Mike Diaz a speedy recovery. Board Members and the Interim Superintendent thanked the Student Board Representatives for their contributions; Mr. Stover, Dr. Colman, and everyone who delivered a presentation at the meeting; the Executive Team/Directors and Ms. Dayton who keep things going in DCPS every day; parents and members of the community for their commitment to our children and their schools and for participating in the meeting tonight; and DCPS administrators, teachers, and staff for their efforts to engage students in a wide variety of academic and nonacademic activities, including career coaching, professional teacher development, community collaborations. Board Members expressed the hope that the new curriculum pathways and the renewed agricultural program will be beneficial. Dr. Morgan noted that change can be good, but can also be difficult, and reminded everyone that positive change depends on all of us. (*Dr. Morgan's closing statement may be found at <https://susanmorganschoolboard.com>.*)

Dr. Thompson stated that he is humbled, honored, and grateful for the opportunity to serve as Interim Superintendent. He noted that he will need help from the entire DCPS community and that he will only be as good as the people around him. Dr. Thompson declared that DCPS is a “diamond in the rough” with great potential but with the need for a great deal of work.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, February 26, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Budget Committee Meeting Dorchester County Board of Education
March 1 – March 3, 2024	NDHS Senior Class Play “Mean Girls” NDHS Auditorium
Monday, March 4, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Budget Committee Meeting Dorchester County Board of Education
March 4-8, 2024	National School Breakfast Week
Monday, March 11, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Budget Committee Meeting Dorchester County Board of Education
Thursday, March 14, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Work Session at Dorchester County Board of Education
Monday, March 18, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Budget Committee Meeting Dorchester County Board of Education
Thursday, March 21, 2024 6:00 p.m.	Regular March Meeting of the Dorchester County Board of Education at DCTC
March 21 – March 23, 2024	C-SDHS Senior Class Play “Mamma Mia” C-SDHS Auditorium
Monday, March 25, 2024 4:30 p.m.	Board Budget Committee Meeting Dorchester County Board of Education
Tuesday, March 26, 2024 5:30 p.m.	Teacher of the Year and “First-Class” Teacher Annual Awards Reception East New Market Firehouse
Thursday, March 28, 2024	No School for Students and Teachers Spring Break
March 29- April 1, 2024	Central Office & School Offices Closed Spring Break

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Dorchester County Public Schools

2024-2025 School Year Calendar **Option 1**

July 2024					August 2024					September 2024					October 2024					
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	
1	2	3	4	5					1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
29	30	31			26	27	28	29	30	30										
4 Independence Day - Offices Closed					12 New Teachers Begin 23 All Teachers Begin					2 Labor Day - School and Offices Closed 3 Grades 1 - 5, 6, and 9 Begin 4 Grades 7,8,10,11 and 12 Begin 5 Pre K and Kindergarten Begin					1 Interim Reports 7 No School for Students - Parent Teacher Conferences 18 MSEA Day - Schools and Offices Closed					
Teacher days: 17 Student days: 17					Teacher days: 6					Teacher days: 20 Student days: 20					Teacher days: 22 Student days: 21					

November 2024					December 2024					January 2025					February 2025				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
				1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31													
6 No School for Students - and teachers (Election Day) 7 End of Term I 11 Half Day for Students - Report Card Prep Teachers 25 - Half Day for Students 27-29 Thanksgiving Holiday - Schools and Offices Closed					11 Interim 20 Half Day for Students 23-31 Winter Break - Schools Closed					1 Winter Break - Schools and Offices Closed 20 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - Schools and Offices Closed 24 End of Semester I 27-28 No School for Students - Semester Break Report Card Prep and PD for Teachers					17 President's Day - Schools and Offices Closed 27 Interim				
Teacher days: 17 Student days: 17					Teacher days: 15 Student days: 15					Teacher days: 21 Student days: 19					Teacher days: 19 Student days: 19				

March 2025					April 2025					May 2025					June 2025				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4				1	2	2	3	4	5	6
10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13
17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20
24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27
31					28	29	30			26	27	28	29	30					
7 Half Day for Students - Parent/Teacher Conference					2 End of Term III 18-21 Spring Break - Schools Closed					5 Interim 26 Memorial Day - School/Offices Closed 28 Cambridge-South Dorchester High School Graduation 29 North Dorchester High School Graduation					10 End of Semester II Last Day for Students and Teachers - Half Day for Students 11 through 13 are potential make-up days 19 Juneteenth - Offices Closed				
Teacher days: 21 Student days: 21					Teacher days: 20 Student days: 20					Teacher days: 21 Student days: 21					Teacher days: 7 Student days: 7				

Holiday Observances	
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	September 2
MSEA Day	October 18
Thanksgiving Break	November 27 - 29
Winter Break	December 23 - 31
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 20
President's Day	February 17
Spring Break	April 18 - 21
Memorial Day	May 26
Juneteenth	June 19

POTENTIAL MAKE-UP DAYS

The following days may be used to make up missed instructional days:
June 11 - 13

Please note that if a weather delay occurs on an early dismissal day, that day will transition to a full day of school after the delay.

	Holidays - Schools Closed
	New Teachers Begin
	All Teachers Begin
	First and Last Day for Students/Last Day for Teachers (Last day is subject to change and will be early dismissal for students)
	No School for Students
	Interims and End of Terms
	Early Dismissal for Students

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Dorchester County Public Schools

2024-2025 School Year Calendar **Option 2**

July 2024					August 2024					September 2024					October 2024				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5				1	2	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
22	23	24	25	16	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
29	30	31			26	27	29	29	30	30									
4 Independence Day Offices Closed					12 New Teachers Begin 23 All Teachers Begin					2 Labor Day - School and Offices Closed 3 Grades 1 - 5, 6, and 9 Begin 4 Grades 7,8,10,11 and 12 Begin 5 Pre K and Kindergarten Begin					1 Interim Reports 17 Half Day for Students - Parent/ Teacher Conferences 18 MSEA Day - Schools and Offices Closed				
Teacher days: 6					Teacher days: 20 Student days: 20					Teacher days: 22 Student days: 22									

November 2024					December 2024					January 2025					February 2025				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
				1	2	3	4	5	6	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	21
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31													
5 No School for Students - PD for Teachers (Election Day) 6 End of Term I 8 - Half Day for Students - Report Card Prep for Teachers 27-29 Thanksgiving Holiday - Schools and Offices Closed					10 Interim 20 Half Day for Students 23 - 31 Winter Break - Schools Closed					1 Winter Break - Schools and Offices Closed 20 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday - Schools and Offices Closed 24 End of Semester I 27-28 No School for Students - Semester Break Report Prep and PD for Teachers					17 President's Day - Schools and Offices Closed 27 Interim 28 Half Day for Students - Parent/Teacher Conference				
Teacher days: 18 Student days: 17					Teacher days: 15 Student days: 15					Teacher days: 21 Student days: 19					Teacher days: 19 Student days: 19				

March 2025					April 2025					May 2025					June 2025				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	
10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
31					28	29	30												
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Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 20
President's Day	February 17
Spring Break	April 17 - 21
Memorial Day	May 26
Juneteenth	June 19

POTENTIAL MAKE-UP DAYS

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April 17
June 11- 13

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	Holidays - Schools Closed
	New Teachers Begin
	All Teachers Begin
	First and Last Day for Students/Last Day for Teachers (Last day is subject to change and will be early dismissal for students)
	No School for Students
	Interims and End of Terms
	Virtual School Day - Primary Elections
	Early Dismissal for Students