



BOARD BRIEFING

An Update from the GCPS Public Relations Office



Public Session 4/11/23

Announcements

- 4/15 School Bus Contractor Association Dinner, Bittering Mennonite Church, 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- 4/17 Grading Period 3 Report Cards Released
- 4/22 GCPS Honors Arts Fair, Garrett County Performing Arts Center, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- 4/25 MABE Board Service Academy: The Board of Education's Role in Community Engagement & Leadership (virtual) 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- 4/29 Relay for Life, Garrett County Fairgrounds, 5:00-9:00 p.m.
- 5/4 MABE Board Service Academy: Parliamentary Procedures: Maximizing the Benefits & Rewards (virtual) 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Student Member of the Board

- Ms. Alexis Shaffer, Student Member of the Board, was not present, but her report was read by Mr. Tom Woods, Board President. The GCASC executive members met on April 11th at Brenda's Pizzeria to plan the last General Assembly of the year. The General Assembly will be at Garrett College on April 26th where officer elections and a couple of workshops will be held.
- Southern Student Council is organizing an event for Teacher Appreciation Week. They are also working to plan a spring event such as volleyball or kickball for students. The elections for Student Council members will be happening this week as well.
- Northern Student Council is currently planning an event for Teacher Appreciation Week. They are also working on a spring field day and organizing elections for the next school year.
- Spring Sports officially started a couple of weeks ago.

- Southern High School Prom is scheduled for April 29 at Brodak's Banquet Hall.
- Southern High School's Theatre Program is getting ready for their performances of Spamalat.
- Northern High School's Prom is scheduled for May 6th.
- Congratulations to the GaCo robotics team on their amazing efforts at the Chesapeake District Championships this past weekend.

Board Recognitions

- On behalf of the Board, Mr. Josh Hinebaugh recognized Southern Garrett High School for winning the Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science. This is the fifth year, SGHS has won this award. Hunter Broadwater and Lindsay Krisher were present to accept the award.



New Business

- Mr. Richard Wesolowski, Director of Maintenance, Facilities, Operations, and Transportation, requested the Board approve the recommended vendor, Bushey, Feight, Morin Architects (BFM), to complete the design of the Southern Elementary School. Superintendent Baker asked that the Board

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Board of Education Members: Mr. M. Thomas Woods, President; Mr. Rodney Glotfelty, Vice President; Mr. Joshua D. Hinebaugh, Dr. Matthew A. Paugh, and Mr. Jason E. VanSickle, Associate Members; Ms. Alexis X. Shaffer, Student Board Member; Ms. Barbara L. Baker, Superintendent; Mr. Brandon Hoover, Attorney



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approve the project as outlined. The Board voted unanimously to approve the bid award.

- Mrs. Alison Sweitzer, Director of Finance, presented a budget transfer request to the Board for approval. Superintendent Baker recommended the approval of the transfer. Mrs. Sweitzer answered a question from the Board. The Board approved the transfer unanimously.

Continuing Business

- Mr. Tom Woods, Board President, provided an update to the public regarding the superintendent search process. He stated that the Board would hire a one-year Interim Superintendent as soon as possible.

New Business (cont.)

- The Rodeheaver Group, P.C., was recommended to be the auditor for the FY2023 annual audit by Mrs. Sweitzer. Superintendent Baker recommended approval of the auditor and the Board voted unanimously in favor to approve the Rodeheaver Group, P.C., as the auditor.

Public Comment

- Kathy Shaffer, Mayor of Oakland and a grandparent, spoke to the Board regarding the negative effects of school closings on communities. She asked that the Board keep the interest of students and families as a priority over money. She asked that the Board seek out other forms of income, such as grants, to fund the schools to keep them open.
- The results of a community survey, not sanctioned by GCPS, were reviewed by Christy Thomas, Amanda Wakefield, Michelle Hetrick, Bethani Heyhurst, and Jes Brown. The survey may be

reviewed under the Public Comment agenda item on BoardDocs.

- Michael Henderson, a community member, spoke to the Board about school closings. He expressed concerns regarding §14-3902.04.
- Richard Carlson, Mayor of Accident, asked that the Board keep community schools open.
- Cindy Garlitz, a parent, expressed concerns over the proposed grade band and facility proposals on the northern end. She addressed concerns over Blueprint regulations and meeting guidelines.
- Stephanie Boyd, a parent, expressed concerns over the lack of information provided to her PIA request.
- Terah Crawford, a parent, expressed frustrations over grade band options relating to the northern end when compared to the southern end. She asked that the Board listen to the community when making their decisions.
- Linda Bradley, a community member, expressed concerns over closing Swan Meadow and possible future schools. She indicated that a new employer will be coming to the county adding jobs in future years. She asked if schools slated for closure could be considered for charter school status.
- Monica Rinker, a former Board member and a parent, addressed the Board regarding the terminology used throughout the grade band alignment and facility utilization process. She expressed concerns over past purchasing for schools. She asked if smaller school buildings were considered.
- Rebecca Gordon, a parent, spoke to the Board regarding the post-Labor Day start and why the vote was against the best interest of students. She asked that future decisions be based on the best interest of students, not a political move.
- Amy Rowe, a parent, spoke to the Board regarding the closure of Route 40. She asked that the Board consider giving one more year prior to school closure considerations.

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- Jennifer Rankin, a parent, spoke to the Board regarding the existing footprint and operation of GCPS. She asked that the Board consider other options to benefit the students and keep families in Garrett County.
- Marla Posey-Moss, president of the free state PTA, presented documents to the Board. She elaborated on the functions and benefits of PTAs. She invited the Board to attend a conference this summer.

Continuing Business

- Ms. Barbara Baker, Superintendent, along with Dr. Nicole Miller, Chief Academic Officer, presented the Superintendent's Final Recommendation to the Board regarding the Swan Meadow School closure. They shared the COMAR regulations that were followed through this process. They reviewed different analyses of varying aspects of each Swan Meadow and Yough Glades (possible receiving school), and what effects would occur based on each situation—closing or continued operation. After a thorough review of the school closure factors, prompted by declining enrollment and financial impacts on the school system as a whole, the Superintendent recommended the closure of Swan Meadow School at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year. They answered various questions from the Board regarding funding, staffing, and instructional challenges faced. The Board voted 3-1 to deny the Superintendent's recommendation to close Swan Meadow School. Therefore, Swan Meadow will remain open for the 2023-24 school year.
- Superintendent Baker and Dr. Miller presented the Superintendent's recommendation to the Board regarding the Route 40 Elementary School

closure. After a thorough review of the school closure factors, prompted by declining enrollment and financial impacts on the school system as a whole, the Superintendent recommended the closure of Route Forty Elementary School at the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year. They answered various questions from the Board. The Board voted 3-1 to deny the Superintendent's recommendation to close Route 40 Elementary. Therefore, Route 40 will remain open for the 2023-24 school year.

Board Member Updates

- There were no Board member updates provided.

Superintendent Updates

- There were no updates provided by the Superintendent.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be Tuesday, May 9, 2023, in the Board Room of the Central Office, Oakland, MD. Details of the meeting will be announced ahead of time.

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