

**PTA Council of Howard County General Meeting
Homewood Center
March 6, 2017**

1) The Superintendent's report was given by John White in place of Dr. Foose. The 2017/2018 school calendar has been approved. School will start on 9/5. Winter break will be 12/24 to January 1. Spring break is scheduled for 3/30 to 4/6, however 5 inclement weather days are built into the calendar and could become scheduled school days. 3 of these are during Spring Break, and a 4th is President's Day, with the 5th being June 15th. Final day of school is scheduled for 6/14

- In the 2018 / 2019 school year, no school will start prior to 8:00 AM. No school will start later than 9:20, as is currently the case.

- In conjunction with some guidance from the Board, Administration has come up with a 1st draft of the operating budget for the next school year. There was a fair amount of discussion about the admin's proposal to eliminate school websites.

- Next step is for the budget to go to Mr. Kittleman who will likely make cuts, and then the Board and Admin will need to re-craft the 1st draft.

2) Cynthia Vaillencourt gave the Board of Education update. She mentioned that she felt the proposal to cut school websites was done out of spite by School admin in response to guidance from the Board to reduce the communications budget by 10%. She feels it could be done in other ways. She also mentioned that Dr. Foose's lawsuit against the board may be dismissed – a motion is pending.

3) Motion to increase each PTA's annual dues paid to PTACHC from \$170 to \$200 in order to provide additional assistance to Homewood and ARL schools (who are not allowed to have their own PTAs) failed in an extremely close vote. Much discussion was held prior to the vote and it seems as if PTACHC wants to increase support for these schools in some fashion. The issue was tabled until the April PTACHC meeting

4) David Ramsay in charge of Transportation for HCPSS, gave a presentation about the School Bus system. Among the highlights

- HCPSS uses 453 buses each day to transport 40,000 students to 100 public and non-public schools

- HCPSS outsources it's drivers to 42 different companies. Bus drivers are not employees of the School system.

- In a nationwide study of school transportation related fatalities, 58% were from teen drivers, 23% were from parent drivers and less than 1% happened on School buses

- 70 drivers in Ho. Co. per day run through the stop signs that pop out from the side of the bus when it is stopped!! They are working with Law enforcement to address this.

- Each contracted driver goes through a criminal background check, a drug test , physical, and driving record review. MD MVA has a continuous monitoring system that is used to track all drivers, who also receive annual physicals, random drug testing, and bi-annual driving observations

- Each school bus is equipped with 4 cameras, which can be reviewed by school administration. If your child is having an issue on the bus, please notify administration, who should be able to review camera footage to aid in determining what happened.
 - David closed by asking to please spread the word that the contractors who work with the school system are in need of bus drivers! Drivers are typically paid between \$16-\$19 / hour.
- 5) Next month's PTACHC agenda will also include a discussion on re-districting
 - 6) Legislative update – 2 highlights – the county is changing how it elects Board of Education members. Instead of 7 at large members there will be 2 at large members and 5 members elected by district. Also, there is an APFO discussion to be held in Savage on 3/22. See attached for more on both subjects
 - 7) The School system's bullying policy will be reviewed in the Board meeting held on 3/25

Mike Schmeckpeper

2017 Maryland PTA 102nd Annual Convention ,July 27 - 29, 2017, Sheraton Columbia Town Center, Columbia, Maryland. More details at www.mdpta.org....“Maryland PTA invites you to join us for this weekend of education, networking, relaxation and fun. Maryland PTA Convention is an opportunity to bring new energy and ideas to your local PTA units and enhance your relationships with other members of the PTA. The Convention Committee has planned a weekend full of informative education sessions and fun social events.”

1. Maryland State Legislation - Bill to change how Howard County Board of Education members are elected. Currently, 7 BOE members are elected county wide. If Local bills are approved by a majority of the local State Senators and also the local State Delegates, then the bill goes on to the entire Maryland Legislature for typically a courtesy approval by the entire Maryland State Legislature, at least that is my understanding. Unable to confirm as yet.

Below information is from <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/About-HoCo/State-Delegation> (or go to that website, select “About HoCo” at top of home page, then select “State Delegation” on drop down box, then select “Proposed Local Legislation”).

Howard County Board of Education – Elected School Board, Ho. Co. 11–17 – PASSED BY THE DELEGATION WITH AMENDMENTS (HB1299, CLARIFYING AMENDMENT 2/15/17, hearing scheduled, AMENDMENT 3/1/17)

By: Delegate Atterbeary



FOR the purpose of requiring that, beginning with a certain election, certain members of the Howard County Board of Education be elected by districts and certain members be elected at large; providing that a member elected to the county board from a certain geographic area but whose district boundaries are subsequently altered may remain as a member of the county board for a certain period; providing that in making an appointment to fill a vacancy on the county board the County Executive of Howard County shall endeavor to ensure that the county board reflects certain characteristics of the county population; providing for the termination of the terms of certain members of the county board; providing for the application of this Act; and generally relating to the election of the members of the Howard County Board of Education.

To follow HB 1299 through the State Legislature, go to the General Assembly of Maryland's website www.mgaleg.maryland.gov and search on HB 1299 / 2017 Session for hearing dates, Name of Committee currently considering the bill, Committee members, contact information, etc.

To voice your opinion on this matter, see contact info of Howard County State Senators and Delegates, select “State and Federal Representatives” on that same drop down box.

2. Innocence Stolen: Protecting our Children Online; A free option for Community Groups to host. Presented by Vince DeVivo, Community Outreach Specialist, U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Maryland. Sponsored by the Howard HS PTSA. This presentation informs adults about how best to protect young people from negative and criminal influences online. Topics include social networking, cyber bullying, sexting, and internet predators. The program provides prevention and intervention strategies and internet safety resources. In addition to adults, the presentation is also open to both high school and middle school students, at the discretion of parents. Although the program does not contain graphic imagery, predators and sexting will be discussed as they are significant online hazards. Not all parents may want to address these issues in this format. For those that do, it has been helpful in fostering dialogue within families about online safety.

3. Howard County Council / Planning Board -- APFO, March 6, 2017 Update provided by Brent Loveless, Forest Ridge ES / Patuxent Valley MS.

What is APFO? - The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance is a series of tests applied to new commercial and residential developments. These currently include tests for **Elementary School Capacity**, **Middle School Capacity**, road intersection capacity and maximum number of units that can be built in a given area. The current APFO does not test for items such as High School Capacity, Police, Fire, Parks, Libraries etc. APFO provides some mitigation in the form of fees or delays, but does not hold back development indefinitely in areas that are over capacity. Items such as school redistricting directly change the utilization of schools and effect the tests used for development approval or delay.

Current Status - The administration formed an APFO task force in the summer of 2015. In early 2016 A task force report was published. In Feb 2017, these recommendations were reviewed by the county administration and the DPZ with detailed descriptions describing they feel should be approved. This was presented at a "informational" Planning board meeting held on Feb 16th 2017. The public testimony went until midnight which was dominated by support for better standards to support education. The Baltimore Sun provided dedicated coverage on this event Feb 21st titled... *Residents say changes to Howard County's 'outdated' growth policy don't go far enough.*

The exact timeline of legislation is not published by the County. This is the current information as of March 6, 2017 On

Thursday, March 30, 2017 - 7:00 PM - Banneker Room (Ellicott City), the Planning Board has scheduled - **GPA 201701 - Proposed Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance amendment to PlanHoward 2030** – Details of this meeting, and its format are not available yet, but this is directly relevant to APFO updates.

The spending affordability report released March 3rd recommends a .25% increase to transfer taxes dedicated for school capital improvement programs, but also lists changes in student-teacher ratios to reduce expenses. The recommendation and details would have to be passed by the state and would not take effect until FY19. Transfer taxes, Excise taxes and "holds" are the three mechanisms that APFO uses to mitigate growth.

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/County-Administration/Budget/Spending-Affordability-FY-2018>

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/News/ArticleID/818/News030317b>

Several PTA's have held individual informational sessions on this topic to keep parents informed in addition to PTAHC distribution material. The next known public info forum is March 22nd in Savage Maryland arranged by PTA parent Judy George. <https://www.facebook.com/events/759870447511124/>

The DPZ approved regulations are in process of being rewritten in the form of legislation to the County Council for their approval at an unspecified date. Various organizations are actively lobbying for modifications.

PTA Position – The PTA has expressed a position to lower the capacity thresholds for schools and include high school tests. This should be presented to the County Council when legislation is pending.

Outside Factors - Recent presentations and decisions of the HCPSS Budget Reviews, BPW, Spending Affordability Committee, Attendance Area Committees, 21st Century Committee on School Construction and other forums do not anticipate significant improvements or change in the trend of school capacity issues. The outcome of APFO updates are one of the only active legislative initiatives that can change the trend positively or negatively.

What's Next – The Planning Board is reviewing Plan Howard 2030 APFO changes. The County council will be presented with legislation to approve, disapprove or amend. The State will be presented with any legislation that involves tax changes, and some interdependent legislation may be introduced separately from the APFO code. Redistricting processes have started with feasibility estimates based off of older APFO criteria.

The **APFO report with FEB 2017 DPZ comments** that was posted on the Howard County Planning Board site have been removed. Several groups and individuals have republished this information on personal websites. The County Executives site for the 2015 APFO task force is..... <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/About-HoCo/County-Executive/Adequate-public-facilities-ordinance-task-force> <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Branches/County-Executive/Adequate-Public-Facilities-report-2016>