Board of Education Welcomes New Members

The Prince George's County Board of Education welcomed its newest members on December 6 during an official swearing-in ceremony in the Board Room of the Sasscer Administration Building in Upper Marlboro.

New Board Members include Peggy Higgins (District 2), Patricia Eubanks (District 4), Carolyn Boston (District 6), Henry P. Armwood, Jr. (District 7), and Edward Burroughs, III (District 8). Burroughs has served as the Student Member of the Board for the past two school years. The five new members join four “veteran” members of the Board of Education – Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq. (District 5), Rosalind Johnson (District 1), Amber Waller (District 3), and Donna Hathaway Beck (District 9) – in being elected to represent their communities for the next four years.

Following their swearing-in, Board Members elected the new Board Chair and Vice-Chair to serve for the year. Verjeana M. Jacobs was re-elected to serve a fourth term as Board Chair, and Donna Hathaway Beck was elected as the new Vice Chair.

“To make a good county great, we must work together,” said Board Chair Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq. “The Board of Education is committed to education reform, but it will require the collective efforts of our community and county leaders to move our district forward towards excellence.”

“I look forward to working collaboratively with county officials to support our public school students and employees during these challenging financial times,” said Donna Hathaway Beck, newly-elected Board Vice Chair, “and I anticipate a smooth transition to the nine-district model of representation promised to our community.” For photos, brief bios, and contact info on all the Board Members, see page 2.
Meet the 2010 Board of Education!

Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq. • Chair • District 5

Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq. has been elected to serve as Board of Education Chair for four consecutive terms since she joined the Board in 2006. After earning her Bachelor’s Degree in Behavioral & Social Sciences – Criminology from the University of Maryland in 1989, she began a career in public safety at the Prince George’s County Department of Corrections. Jacobs went on to attend law school full-time at the District of Columbia School of Law and received her Juris Doctor Degree in 1996. She has been practicing law in the State of Maryland for the past 10 years and manages a part-time private law firm serving clients with family law, labor/employment, personal injury/negligence, business/contractual and government relations matters. She also has served as an adjunct professor with University of Maryland University College since the fall of 1996, teaching in the Behavioral & Sciences and the Government & Politics discipline.

Donna Hathaway Beck • Vice Chair • District 9

Donna Hathaway Beck has served as a Board Member since 2006, after earning much recognition as an advocate for public education. She has served on a number of committees and councils, including the CB 40 Referendum Committee, the Task Force for High School Capacity Alternatives, Commission 2000, and the Task Force for Governmental Operations and Efficiency. On behalf of the school system, Beck served on the Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB), Committee of 100, Home/School Advisory Council, PGCPS Title IX Advisory Committee, Prince George’s County Council of PTAs, and the Superintendent Selection Committee. Beck has served on every PTA at schools where her children attended, and was granted Honorary Lifetime membership in the Maryland State PTA. She is also an active member of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and volunteers for Girl Scouts of America and 4-H Clubs.

Rosalind A. Johnson • District 1

Rosalind Johnson has been a resident of Prince George’s County since 1954, and attended Fairmont Heights High School. She completed undergraduate studies at Morgan State University, where she majored in Spanish, and minored in French. Johnson taught in the school system from 1968 to 2005, teaching all levels of Spanish and French in secondary schools, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses in Spanish. She has served as the President of the Prince George’s County Federation of Teachers, AFT for 12 years; Member of the Federation of Maryland Teachers, AFT; Member of the American Federation of Teachers, and served as a national and international teacher trainer on using teaching and learning styles to foster high levels of learning and good classroom management. She is a published author on Multicultural Education, has served her community on many associations and committees, and has been an avid activist for education and child support enforcement.

Peggy Higgins • District 2

Peggy Higgins is a long-time resident of Prince George’s County with a 32-year career in social work, 28 of those years serving families and children in the county. She is a licensed clinical social worker with a master’s degree in social work from Catholic University, Washington, DC. She also holds a master’s degree in general administration with a concentration in state and local government from University of Maryland/University College in College Park. Higgins has extensive experience in state and local government systems, child and family development, and effective planning and executive management. She has been the Director of the City of College Park’s Youth, Family and Senior Services Department since 1989. Higgins is a former member of the school system’s Head Start Policy Council; a founding member of the College Park Lakeland STARS program; and member and Past President of Maryland Association of Youth Services Bureau.

Amber P. Waller • District 3

Amber P. Waller has resided in the county for more than 16 years, and has been a member of the Board since September 2007. Waller is focused on building partnerships throughout the county to enhance parental, community, and business engagements. She has served on the Maryland State Career Technical Education Task Force, established the first bilingual family academy in Hyattsville, and was appointed by Governor O’Malley to serve on the State Advisory Council on Youth Camp Safety. Waller has played an active role in civic and community activities, serving as civic association president, a member of Kiwanis and the Multi-Cultural Alliance of Prince George’s County, and other organizations. As an involved parent and advocate of education, she has served the community in many capacities, including the county PTA, Boys and Girls Clubs, the Committee of 100, the D.C. Chapter of the NAACP, and the Maryland Black Mayors, Inc.

Board Awards Program
Charles H. Flowers
High School
12/14 • 6:30 p.m.

CIP & FAB Committee Meeting
12/16 • 5 p.m.

Board meetings, work sessions, and most public hearings convene in the Board Meeting Room of the Sasscer Administration Building, 14201 School Lane, in Upper Marlboro.

Board Room events are broadcast live on Comcast Cable Channel 96 and Verizon Channel 38, and via Web cast at www.pgcps.org. For more information, call the Board Office at 301-952-6115.

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Patricia Eubanks • District 4

Patricia Eubanks moved to the county in 1981 and continued her education at University of Maryland University College and Trinity University. She has two children who are graduates of the school system. Eubanks is an advocate for social justice and the family, and has volunteered in schools, churches and the community. She has worked as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, recorded shows for the Broadcast Factory in Washington, D.C., and spoken on substance abuse prevention to middle school students. In 2001 she started a non-profit called MOTHER(My Opportunity To Help Everyone, Resource) as a resource of information after years of gathering and sharing information. Eubanks has mentored many women, single mothers, and teens, and was previously employed with the Department of Health with the District of Columbia Government. There she worked with the substance abuse population for 12 years and was recognized by former Mayor Anthony A. Williams and others for her efforts to develop and implement substance abuse policies.

Carolyn M. Boston • District 6

Carolyn Boston has been a county resident for over 40 years, whose adult daughters graduated from the school system and whose grandchildren currently attend PGCPS schools. Boston has a strong desire to advocate for parents, students, and teachers, and served as PTA President at Robert R. Gray Elementary School for nine years. She served as Chairperson of Field Services for the Maryland State PTA Board of Directors for two years, and has served in various capacities for the Prince George’s County Council of PTAs. Boston served PGCPS as a Parent Liaison for four years, also acting as a Mentoring Master Trainer. She is also a facilitator for the Corner Conference Parental Workshops, as well as numerous national and state PTA leadership workshops and conferences to increase advocacy building on behalf of children and parents. She received the Maryland State PTA Highest Award for Lifetime Member Recipient, and served as Vice Mayor and Councilwoman for the Historical Town of Fairmount Heights.

Henry P. Armwood, Jr. • District 7

A 40-year resident of the county, Henry Armwood has four adult children who were educated in the school system and five grandchildren who are currently enrolled. Armwood attended Merrimac University, Florida A&M University, and Montgomery College. He has earned a Real Estate Certificate from Prince Georges Community College and a Project Management Certificate from Boston University. He spent seven years as a court clerk in the D.C. Superior Court, then worked for AT&T in marketing as an account executive and technical support specialist. After retirement, Armwood served two terms as President of the Charles Herbert Flowers High School PTSA, and was awarded Lifetime PTA Membership in recognition of his success in the PTSA. He then became a Parent Liaison at the school, also serving Parkdale and High Point high schools where he was successful in building business and community partnerships that have had a lasting impact on the school and students.

Edward Burroughs, III • District 8

Edward Burroughs, III, served two consecutive years as the Student Board Member, from 2008-2010. A 2010 graduate of Crossland High School, Burroughs maintained a high GPA, and served as President of the Student Government Association and President of the Future Business Leaders of America. He was also inducted into the W.E.B. Dubois Honor Society, the National Honor Society, and the Spanish Honor Society. While at Crossland, he was a member of the Principal Leadership Team, varsity golf, and varsity baseball teams. Burroughs is an advocate for students, supports the addition of extra security staff and metal detectors in high-risk schools, and has worked closely with Delegate Jay Walker to address the issue of systemic school safety. During his last year as Student Member of the Board, he spearheaded an effort to start the process of constructing a much-needed new, state-of-the-art auditorium at Crossland High School.

Jonathan Harris, II • Student Board Member

Jonathan Harris is a senior at Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr., High School, where he maintains a 4+GPA while taking Honors and AP courses. He is a member of the Student Government Association and the National Honor Society, has participated in Mock Trial, and has volunteered hundreds of community service hours through his membership in A-Z Productions. Harris has received numerous awards and recognitions throughout his school career, including the 2004-2005 Meteorologist of the Year medal, the Presidential Award for volunteer service, and the Jesse Watt, Jr., Memorial Award. He is an advocate for the Prince George’s Regional Association for Student Government (PGRASG) and the 2009 President for Youth Council. This year, he is serving as the vice-president of African American Men Aiming Towards Excellence (AMATE), a young man’s mentoring program. He is an active member of his church, Greater Mt. Nebo A.M.E., serving in the choir, as an acolyte, as camp counselor, in the Media and Youth ministry, and other church ministries. In 2007, he was voted the Young Man of the Year, an award given to youth that are active and have shown dynamic leadership qualities within the church.
Goal 1: High Student Achievement

Essay by Dhoruba Glover

When I stepped onto the campus of Charles Herbert Flowers high school for the first time as a freshman I was a different person than the one who stands before you now. I was young, immature, and had few expectations of my future up to graduation and post high school. I only saw what was in front of me and was oblivious to the potential I possessed as a student. That is, until a month later when I was formally introduced to the Project Lead the Way program under Mrs. Victoria Lee. This program has exposed me to engineering disciplines and concepts, given me a grasp of the professional world, helped make connections to math and science, and provided insight into career options available after graduating from this institution.

The field trips and educational activities we have participated in throughout our years at Flowers high school have included sessions with the Lockheed Martin Corporation, visits to the University of Maryland, engineering symposium at Morgan State University, the University of Missouri Science and Technology.

This trip to Missouri S&T was very refreshing and enlightening because it exposed me to a different environment and place I was not used to and provided me information that would help me choose the college degree I currently plan to pursue in industrial engineering.

The other activities I have participated in have helped me see the business side of the real world in terms of professionalism and the importance of having good exposure and networking in whatever career you pursue.

The program has not only introduced me to engineering but also provided me with a sound foundation in math and science. In terms of math, I have always been ahead of my peers and although I have had my struggles in terms of confidence I am currently taking my second straight year of calculus. The PLTW program has given me the opportunity to be concurrently enrolled at Prince George’s Community College taking both calculus 1 and 2 with Professor Rocco Mennela. This has been one of the best decisions I have made because Mr. Mennela has helped me understand the concepts he has taught and regain my confidence in my math abilities. I currently have an A in the class. This is credited to both Professor Mennela and the hard work of Mrs. Victoria Lee, the PLTW coordinator at Flowers. I would have not had the opportunity to take the class without her setting up the partnership with Prince George’s Community College.

All in all I have been a great beneficiary of the project lead the way program because when I look back and reflect on my years at Flowers I realize that as a PLTW student I have learned to not put limitations on myself but take every success and setback in stride and be both the best student and individual I can be. Also the belief that Mrs. Lee has in us as students greatly has affected our confidence and willingness to succeed. As a PLTW student, I have seen myself grow mature and gain important qualities that will be very beneficial to me in my future: technical ability in the field, confidence, drive, and the ability to go above and beyond expectations. These qualities have and will help me to produce the highest quality of work in the classroom, workplace, and as a functioning member of society.

Education Insight will highlight Superintendent of Schools William R. Hite’s five strategic priorities for the school system in upcoming editions. This edition focuses on Goal 1, highlighting student achievement through an essay written by Dhoruba Glover, a student in the Project Lead the Way program at Charles H. Flowers High School.

The Five Strategic Goals:

1) High student achievement
2) Highly effective teaching
3) Safe and supportive schools
4) Strong community partnerships
5) Efficient and effective operations
PGCPS Celebrates American Education Week!

Schools throughout Prince George’s County joined districts across the nation in celebrating American Education Week from November 14-20.

PHOTOS:
TOP: Glassmanor Elementary School students take part in a hat-making event.
CENTER: Lamont Elementary School students dress up to represent the future career of their choice.
BOTTOM: Calverton Elementary School students give their school a ‘hug’ to celebrate American Education Week.
Superintendent Hosts Annual State of the School System Address

Parents, students, staff, elected officials, and members of the community had the opportunity to come together to learn about the latest in public education in Prince George's County.

The Fourth Annual State of the School System Address was held at the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts on November 16. Dr. William R. Hite, Jr., Superintendent of Schools, gave a presentation that focused on student achievement and his five strategic priorities for the school system: 1) high student achievement; 2) highly effective teaching; 3) safe and supportive schools; 4) strong community partnerships; and 5) efficient and effective operations.

Using Skype online video conferencing technology, Dr. Hite brought in three former PGCPS students and a current senior in high school to share how the school system has helped them to succeed.

"Hearing directly from our students is critical in determining which strategies are working to improve student success," said Hite. "I encourage family and community members to work with us to ensure that all students graduate prepared for success in a global economy." Dr. Hite encouraged all attendees at the event to get involved in education through involvement at the school level, or through sharing their thoughts and ideas with district leaders through the new striveforfive@pgcps.org email address.

Special Visitors Tour Project Lead the Way at C.H. Flowers High

Congresswoman Donna Edwards and representatives from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) visited Charles Herbert Flowers High School on November 19 to see the school’s Project Lead the Way program in action.

During the visit, students described the program at their school and shared stories on how it has benefitted their academic achievement and personal lives. Students also led the visitors on a tour of their classrooms.
Certification Information and Related Services Fair is a Resounding Success

On Saturday morning, November 20, 404 PGCPS teachers were in attendance at the Second Certification and Related Services Fair held at Charles H. Flowers High School.

The Division of Human Resources sponsored a day filled with 13 topic sessions, including certification renewal and endorsement sessions, how to become highly qualified, National Board, Professional Development Opportunities, ESOL Teaching, Becoming an Administrator, Technology Training, Stress Management for Educators and many more.

Eight universities and eight PGCPS vendors shared their information with participants. In addition, Dr. Joann Ericson, MSDE Certification Branch Chief, conducted the Endorsement Session and commented afterward, “I had fun.” The event concluded with a high energy Zumba dance class. “Keep up the good work,” was a comment repeated often on the program evaluation forms.

Article submitted by Valerie Schwartz, Human Resources

Education Secretary Visits Gholson Middle

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan joined PGCPS Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William R. Hite, Jr., National Education Association President, Dennis Van Roekel, and PGCEA Executive Director Lewis Robinson at G. James Gholson Middle School on December 1 for a classroom visit and roundtable discussion on the turnaround school reform model that is being implemented at the school.

The roundtable discussion, titled “Moving Towards Student Success: Relationships, Collaboration, and Change,” provided a forum to hear from parents, educators, administration officials, and members of the community on how best to turn around low-performing public schools.

Gholson is one of four schools in the county implementing a turnaround model supported by School Improvement Grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education.
Peer Mentors Make a Difference at Calverton ES

Coordinators Jennifer Hunter Ogunde and Jhanna Levin know just how to get students excited about reading. They have organized a program called Reading Together, a peer tutoring program at Calverton Elementary School. It is developed to improve students motivation to read, help students read more fluently, and improve comprehension strategies.

Fourth-grade students stay after school two days a week to tutor their peers. The student tutors are highly trained and follow a structured lesson framework, which helps them to develop mentoring, leadership, and interpersonal organizational skills.

Students Enhance Technology Skills at Tech Mania

Students from five Prince George’s County high schools (DuVal, Eleanor Roosevelt, Northwestern, Charles H. Flowers, and Oxon Hill) participated in a scientific, engineering and technological event called Tech Mania. Students attended information sessions discussing topics such as computer and cell phone security, secured space and information protection, cyber protection and satellite imaging/analysis technology. Presenters on site were Capitol College (AGI), Northrup Grumman, Proteus Technologies, Telecom Systems, Lockheed Martin, Fiber Plus, and Booz Allen.

Tech Mania gives students a better understanding of STEM-related studies and how they lay the foundation for solid careers in the future. This type of event gives students the opportunity to experience exciting and innovative technology to solve complex problems.

Beacon Heights AP Recognized for Excellence

Lila Walker-Morant of Beacon Heights Elementary School was recently named Assistant Principal of the Year by the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals (MAESP).

Each year, MAESP selects one outstanding assistant principal to be recognized as the Assistant Principal of the Year. Walker-Morant was nominated for the award by staff and parents for her outstanding service to the Beacon Heights school family. She was presented with a plaque and recognized for her achievement at the MAESP Annual Assistant Principals’ Conference on November 19 at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab Kossiakoff Center in Laurel, Maryland. She will also be recognized by the Maryland State Board of Education in June 2011.
Students Raise Cancer Awareness in Their Schools

Staff and former students of Arrowhead Elementary School participated in a Relay For Life Walk at their school. Students took part in a “Mini Relay For Life Walk.” To prepare for the event, students conducted research on cancer, healthy foods, and exercise and shared their information with peers. Since the start of the 2009-2010 school year, students, staff, and alumni have raised $6,000 for the American Cancer Society.

Buck Lodge Middle School students raised $1,104 for breast cancer through their participation in the nationally-celebrated Lee National Denim Day. Lee National Denim Day adheres to a simple philosophy: one day, one cause, one cure. It is one of the largest single-day fundraisers nationwide for breast cancer.

Parkdale High School Students Recognized for Innovation by NFTE
Nearly 30 students in business teacher Salam Johnson’s Entrepreneurship I class were named classroom winners in the Network For Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) World Series of Innovation. The class submitted their “First Down Sensor” project in the Sports Product or Business category of the competition and won $1,000 for their classroom and $20 gift cards for each student. Their project featured a football with a microchip in it, which can track with 100-percent accuracy where a football lands on the playing field. The product uses solar-powered batteries to provide power for the microchip.

Largo Evening High School Students Take Part in Law Project
More than 45 ninth-grade and/or LSN Government students at Largo Evening High School students had the opportunity to take part in the highly-successful Pro Bono Law Project “civil law” advisory. Glenn Ivey, Former State’s Attorney, led the discussions. Martin Wills, Operation Manager at the Chick-Fil-A at the Boulevard at the Capital Centre, also served on the panel with several Largo Evening High School staff. Students asked numerous thought-provoking questions of the panelists, and will have to chance to learn more during the next advisory on “Corporate Law.”

Gwynn Park High School Band Performs at the Library of Congress
On November 9, the Gwynn Park High School Marching Band was featured as a special guest performer at the Library of Congress Coolidge Auditorium as part of a kick off for the Combined Federal Campaign National Capital Area. Dr. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress and CFC Chair, made numerous comments about Gwynn Park’s High School’s phenomenal performance and their great display of pride and community. The Gwynn Park band is directed by William Lake, Jr.

Take the Employee Satisfaction Survey
PGCPS is conducting an Employee Satisfaction Survey and we need all employees, at all levels, in all departments to participate! Look for an invitation in your PGCPS email account, or check the PGCPS Web site for more information. The survey will be available through December 17. For more information, call 301-952-6342.
Mark Your Calendar!

Terrible Teddy Planetarium Show
December 10 • 7:30 p.m. • INFO: 301-918-8750
Howard B. Owens Science Center
9601 Greenbelt Road • Lanham
The Howard B. Owens Science Center will host a planetarium show for the family entitled, “Terrible Teddy.” Back by popular demand, Terrible Teddy is a timeless tale where Santa has created a Teddy Bear too big to fit in his sleigh, and Teddy does not want to be in a department store. During this show, you will see how the Teddy Bear finds his way back to Santa using the stars. Doors open at 7:15 p.m. Cost if $4 for adults; $2 for students/seniors.

Teacher Recruitment Fair
December 11 • 6:30 p.m. • INFO: 301-952-6473
Charles H. Flowers High School
10001 Ardford-Ardmore Road • Springdale
The Division of Human Resources will host a recruitment fair for current vacancies and positions for 2011-2012 school year.

Board Awards Program
December 14 • 6:30 p.m. • INFO: 301-952-6115
Charles H. Flowers High School
10001 Ardford-Ardmore Road • Springdale
The Prince George's County Board of Education will host its first Board Award Program of the 2010-2011 school year. The program will recognize students, staff, and community partners for their outstanding achievements and contributions to education.

IMPORTANT REMINDER!
PGCPS Offices Closed for Furlough Days • December 27-29
Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) administrative and central offices will be closed from December 23-31 as part of the school district’s planned furlough days for employees. For more information, visit the school system’s Web site at www.pgcps.org.

PGCPS Staff Required to Take Part in Security Awareness Training
To enable the school system to be in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, the Technology Security Office and the Technology Training Team (T3) have developed a Web-based Security Awareness training module to focus attention on computer, Internet, and network security awareness and to promote good security practices. All employees are expected to participate in the training so that they can recognize information technology security concerns and respond accordingly. It will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the course. Please call 301-386-1608 ext. 2253 or email cora.lyles@pgcps.org for more information or questions.

How to Access the PGCPS Security Awareness Training Module:
• Go to http://moodle.pgcps.org/course/view.php?id=106
• Click on Login
• Enter your user name and password
• Select the ‘Computer, Internet and Network Security Awareness’ course
• Read each lesson and complete the quiz!