

PTACHC Meeting  
Homewood Center  
January 2, 2017

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. by PTACHC President Reg Avery. Quorum was confirmed. There was a short discussion about the procedures to follow if there is snow.

**Minutes and Treasurer's Report** – Minutes were reviewed. Question was asked as to delegates were not notified of the posting of the minutes and treasurer's report on the website. Notice of reports will be sent to delegates prior to the meeting in the future.

**Board of Education Liaison report** – no representative from the BOE

**School Start and Dismissal Time** - Frank Eastham and David Ramsey

The School Start/Stop Times was the main topic of the meeting and Mr. Frank Eastham and David Ramsay were present at our meeting for that discussion. The same presentation was given as the forums that HCPSS held throughout the county. Some PTACHC members had participated in the survey. It was reported that over 10,000 had responded to the Start/Stop Time survey; however, concerns from parents indicated that anyone could vote more than once so the results should be used with caution. In addition, there were concerns that the survey was not clear that another option could be proposed and the current start/stop time was not an option on the initial surveys. Handouts were distributed to those in attendance at this presentation and much of the discussion and questions were related to the handouts. According to the presentation, No decision has been made and no decision will be made until the Board hears from the community.

There was clarification on the budget numbers:

\$250,000 routing software, one-time, but minimum licensing fees on a yearly basis

\$150,000 practice runs for bus drivers, this is a part of the current budget

\$300,000 contingency (added in 5 extra buses so the models can be up to 5 buses off) Contingency is not a one-time cost.

To summarize the information about the benefits, the majority did not like any of the models presented and not one member voted for Model 1, 2, 3 or 4 because of the impact to elementary students. PTACHC members mentioned that models were presented in April that had Elementary school start later, but they obviously were rejected because they were not options. Members would like to understand if they were eliminated because of budget. Although a timeline has been established, the Board of Education has the power to change timelines. That leaves the impression that if it is determined that 2017/2018 is not appropriate, the Board can move the timeline.

There was discussion regarding whether a vote should be taken and by majority consensus the answer was yes since the delegates were requested in December to poll their schools. Some schools attempted to get a vote from their local PTAs, but did not feel the representation at the meeting was indicative of the school population. **There were two motions: the first motion was PTACHC supports the current model over the other 4 models. The vote was 24 for and 25 against, the motion was not approved.**

The **second** motion was that PTACHC express support for continued discussion of new models for healthy start time options, but the current 4 models that have been presented to us are unacceptable and therefore, we are supporting the current start time. Motion passed: 40 for motion, 8 against motion. 43 schools (23 elementary, 12 middle, 8 high) had at least one member in attendance with 50 members (29 elementary, 13 middle and 8 high) and 7 Board of Directors who signed in; however, all attendees members did not sign in. There were dissenting opinions against the motion. The ones against it indicated that the reason for the change is for the health & well-being of the secondary students and pointed to surveys, findings and statistics that are being used nationwide. Some delegates believed that Howard County parents have not received all of the information to make a sound judgment. PTACHC members were instructed that individuals could testify at public hearing but not as a PTA.

We had a few requests to Mr. Eastham and Mr. Ramsey:

1. Can the dismissal time be included when discussing the models?
2. How many counties have tried to change the schedule and reverted back? What were the reasons?

3. There are a lot of comparisons to other counties that have made changes to the School Start/Stop Time, a request was made for HCPSS to pull the statistics and compare the homeless and FARMS rates to other counties that are being used for comparison. We believe this population, and single-parent households, may be most negatively affected by any of the proposed changes due to additional costs to families that may need more before/after care.
4. One study addressed lateness, but not absenteeism. What has been the impact to absenteeism? More students will not have a way to get to school if they miss the bus because their parents are at work.
5. Since the Online, survey is closed. PTACHC ask where all of the information resides? This can be Information from forums, information about studies, and any other additional information that can help parents become more informed. It was mentioned that there are links from all of the previous board reports.
6. There was an action Item for Frank Eastham regarding conveying the time for Public Hearing on February 7<sup>th</sup>.
7. HCPSS is to provide the presentation to put on the PTACHC site.

**Superintendent's Report:** John White deferred until Feb. due to the lateness of the hour.

### **Support for Homewood School**

Ann Santos suggested that her proposal on support for Homewood/ARL be tabled until next meeting. Delegates are asked to ask their local for input on how PTAs can support for Homewood/ARL.

### **PTACHC President Notes**

- There was an advertisement for the PTACHC Office Administrator position. We said good-bye to Jane Holcomb in December 2016.
- An opening for the VP of Issues position was announced. If anyone is interested, please contact Reg.

### **New Business**

None

**Meeting Adjourned** at 9:35 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Towanda Brown