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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: May 27-28, 2009

SUBJECT: Approval of Alternative Governance for School Improvement (Restructuring Plans) for Prince George's County Public Schools

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this action is to approve the alternative governance (restructuring plans) for three schools in Prince George's County.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

In January 2002, President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Section 1116 (b)(8)(B) of this Act, which in conjunction with COMAR 13A.01.04.07.C(3), places requirements on local education agencies (LEAs) with schools in the five levels of school improvement. Schools in improvement must target their efforts on content areas and on students who are in greatest need. Once identified for school improvement, schools must develop detailed improvement plans designed to strengthen each subgroup's achievement. Under Maryland's new Differentiated Accountability Pilot adopted in 2008, schools in improvement progress toward alternative governance through two distinct pathways depending on the number of subgroups not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Comprehensive Needs schools will have failed to meet the annual measurable objective (AMO) in the "All Students" subgroup or will have failed to achieve the AMO for 3 or more subgroups. A Focused Needs school would not have achieved the AMO for less than 3 subgroups or is a 100% Special Education subgroup school. Please refer to the attached Alternative Governance Fact Sheet (**Attachment 1**) and Maryland's Accountability System for 2008-2009 (**Attachment 2**) for further explanations on school improvement, supportive actions, and the number of schools involved.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) developed Alternative Governance for School Improvement guidelines and an accompanying rubric. A school in restructuring planning is required to follow the guidelines outlining: 1) the actions it took during its previous year in corrective action; 2) the rationale behind the selection of its alternative governance option; 3) the LEA's two-year commitment to the implementation of the governance model; and, 4) the results of the Teacher Capacity Needs Assessment (TCNA). The TCNA is a tool designed by MSDE to provide schools with data when planning for school improvement. Its primary intention is to identify and address, as precisely as possible, the root causes underlying key issues impacting student performance, either negatively or positively. Its secondary intention is to insure that the staff and administration collectively agree on the recommended



allocation of the school's key resources in terms of time, energy, personnel, and money to improve student achievement.

Eight schools in six LEAs were identified for alternative governance planning based on the results of the 2008 State assessments. These schools, in collaboration with central office officials and school and community stakeholders, have spent the last six months assessing school needs and selecting from a list of available alternative governance options. Local Boards of Education and superintendents review and approve each school's alternative governance proposal prior to its submittal to the Maryland State Department of Education.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The following schools have submitted Alternative Governance for School Improvement proposals:

Prince George's County

Crossland High	#1217	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
Gwynn Park Middle	#1104	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
Northwestern High	#1708	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff

* Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff, which may include the principal, who are relevant to the school's inability to make adequate progress.

In addition to selecting Option 1, each school has proposed to implement various actions/strategies based on the needs of students and their families, staff members, and school administrators. Sample strategies include the following:

Prince George's County Crossland High School

- Provide needed professional development in co-teaching strategies, implementing accommodations and modifications, utilizing differentiated interventions, small group instruction, and combining the VSC, the County Curriculum Frameworks and MSDE clarification documents to plan lessons.
- Change the master schedule to provide time during the instructional day for collaborative planning.
- Incorporate the data inquiry process into weekly collaborative planning meetings.
- Enhance the current school-wide discipline plan by developing strategies to monitor and promote consistent implementation.
- Increase parent involvement, improve communication between home, school and the community, and engage all stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Gwynn Park Middle School

- Provide reading professional development for all teachers. The newly added literacy coach will serve as lead for this activity and will assist the principal to monitor its effectiveness.

Gwynn Park Middle School (Continued)

- Establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs will meet monthly during teacher planning periods, after school and during half-day professional development days.
- Adopt a new master schedule that will allow collaborative planning time for grade level teams and departments.
- Build teacher capacity to use data to customize instruction and monitor student progress.
- Institute a consistent policy for behavior management.

Northwestern High School

- Establish a “Milestone Project” to track and support the attainment of high school requirements for graduation.
- Provide professional development in reading/writing instructional strategies across the curriculum for all teachers.
- Increase teacher classroom management skills in order to create an environment conducive to learning.
- Adjust the master schedule to provide time for Algebra I co-teachers to plan collaboratively throughout the year.
- Hire a bilingual attendance monitor to work with the guidance department, parent liaison, and pupil personnel worker to form an attendance team.

From March through April 2009, teams of MSDE school improvement specialists reviewed the Alternative Governance for School Improvement proposals. As a result of the internal review, the adopted alternative governances are recommended for approval. Copies of the Alternative Governance for School Improvement Proposals are available in the 2009 Alternative Governance Binder in the Caucus Room. A summary overview of each school’s proposal along with the academic profile is included as Attachments 3, 4, and 5.

ACTION:

The State Board of Education is requested to approve the Alternative Governance for School Improvement proposals for the following schools:

<i>Prince George’s County</i>	#1217 Crossland High
	#1104 Gwynn Park Middle
	#1708 Northwestern High