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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: June 22, 2010

SUBJECT: Approval of Alternative Governance for School Improvement Proposals
(Restructuring Plans) from Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties Public
Schools

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this action is to approve the alternative governance (restructuring plans) for the following schools: Brooklyn Park Middle School in Anne Arundel County and Cora Rice Elementary, Dwight D. Eisenhower Middle, Gaywood Elementary, Hyattsville Middle and Nicholas Orem Middle 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, 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 – Years 1, 2, 3 (corrective action), 4 (restructuring planning), and 5 (restructuring implementation). Years 4 and 5 coincide with Maryland's Differentiated Accountability Pilot as schools are designated "Priority" Comprehensive Needs schools or "Priority" Focused Needs schools. Schools in improvement must target their efforts on content areas and on students who are in greatest need. Once identified as a "Priority" school, the school must develop detailed improvement plans designed to strengthen each subgroup's achievement.

Year 4 Priority Comprehensive Needs and Priority Focused Needs schools are required to select an alternative governance option under NCLB. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has developed Alternative Governance for School Improvement guidelines to lead schools through this process. Schools are asked to reflect on the action steps taken while in Year 3, involve representative school stakeholders in the planning process, create a School Academic Profile outlining changes to current strategies, and conduct a proactive analysis to identify potential challenges likely to be encountered during the implementation of the Alternative Governance model.



The six schools presenting today, in collaboration with central office officials, parents and school community stakeholders, have spent the last six months assessing school needs and preparing their Alternative Governance for School Improvement Proposals. Local Boards of Education and superintendents reviewed and approved each school's 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:

Anne Arundel County

Brooklyn Park Middle	1023	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
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Prince George's County

Cora Rice Elementary	1346	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
Dwight Eisenhower Middle	1010	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
Gaywood Elementary	1411	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff*
Hyattsville Middle	1602	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff
Nicholas Orem Middle	1718	Option 1 – Replace all or most of the school staff*

- * Gaywood Elementary and Nicholas Orem Middle are changing previously State Board-approved Alternative Governance Plans.

In addition to selecting Option 1, each school has proposed to implement significant reforms and supporting action steps that they believe will increase student achievement and facilitate the school's exit from school improvement. Reform areas include: Reading/English Achievement, Mathematics/Algebra Achievement, School Culture and School Structure. Sample action steps identified for all student subgroups include:

Anne Arundel County

Reading Achievement and School Structure:

- Participating in summer and ongoing, differentiated (for new and veteran teachers), job-embedded professional development that is aligned to major school initiatives (such as Arts Integration, Thinking Maps, cross-curricular application of State reading standards).
- Participating in regularly scheduled collaborative planning sessions to plan for pre-assessment, instruction, assessment, re-teaching and/or extending student learning in order to effectively differentiate their instruction.
- Utilizing the newly-created AYP School Performance Coach position to provide support for data analysis and job-embedded professional development.
- Reducing the teaching load of Department Chair (DC) positions for Science and Social Studies so that these DCs can support collaborative planning, job-embedded professional development, and instructional planning, delivery and assessment.

Anne Arundel County will monitor how professional development (PD) is applied to classroom instruction as evidenced by lesson plans, student performance on benchmark assessments, and informal/formal observations. The Differentiated Instruction Oversight Committee and Department Chairs will monitor PD agendas, attendance and degree of participation; observations; and student benchmark performance.

Prince George's County

Reading Achievement:

- Implementing a bi-weekly extended day program offering intensive support for targeted students inclusive of the Special Education population addressing the most impactful State Curriculum indicators.
- Restructuring the master schedule from five 72 minute mods to four 90 minute mods in order to increase time for student engagement in differentiated lessons.
- Analyzing student work during collaborative planning sessions to identify instructional methods and strategies to meet the needs of students as well as to assist teachers and administrators in determining their own professional development.
- Monitoring Reading Limited English Proficient students and providing resources needed for students leaving English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and moving into the regular classroom will be done by a Bilingual Resource Teacher.
- Institutionalizing differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, guided reading, journaling and conferencing.

Mathematics Achievement:

- Mapping the curriculum to develop a cohesive mathematics curricular plan that integrates the arts and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. The curriculum mapping team will meet quarterly to review pacing and update curriculum mapping documents.
- Implementing small group instruction, guided reading, conferencing, journaling, and analyzing student work. Teachers will develop common assessments, analyze weekly data, and use this data to develop and deliver lessons that are scaffolded to the needs of students.
- Incorporating technology integrated instruction into daily lessons by providing professional development through collaborative planning meetings with math teachers. This will allow for the implementation and the use of specific technologies currently available such as, SMART Board interactive tools, Study Island, Understanding Mathematics, and other web resources.
- Utilizing mathematics interventions aligned with student needs during the school day and in extended learning opportunities.
- Enhancing the practice of daily flexible groupings based on data analysis to meet the needs of all students. Identify student groupings based on skill development, proficiency levels and daily/common assessments, and unit tests.
- Implementing the instructional strategies of UDL, best practices and using data analysis to drive instruction. An analysis of student achievement data should show an increase as a result of implementing the UDL strategies.

School Structure and Culture (Prince George's Continued)

- Planning activities for families to participate in to increase student achievement through homework help for parents and students, teaching reading strategies and mathematics skills to parents enabling them to help their children at home, and involving parents and community in student centered Avid activities.
- Hiring a fulltime parent/community outreach facilitator to develop an open line of communication in order to build positive relationships among all stakeholders and address parental concerns.

Prince George's will monitor the implementation of these supporting Action Steps through weekly collaborative planning, accountable talk, minutes from meetings, observations/focus walks, lesson plans and student achievement data. In addition, implementation will be also be monitored by the Site-Based Leadership Team, Area I office, Area Alternative Governance (AG) Board and AG Oversight Board and quarterly through Performance Management Planning Process (PMAPP) meetings.

This past May, teams of MSDE school improvement specialists, along with school improvement experts from local school systems, reviewed the Alternative Governance (AG) for School Improvement proposals from these six schools. As a result of the internal review, the adopted alternative governances are recommended for approval. Full copies of the six AG for School Improvement Proposals are available in the 2010 AG Binder in the Caucus Room.

Response to Board May 2010 Request:

Attached are three documents to provide State Board members with more information about LEA processes for replacing school staff and some lessons learned as a result of MSDE's alternative governance process as reported in its Race to the Top application. Restructuring school progress will be reported at the Board meeting.

ACTION:

The State Board of Education is requested to approve the Alternative Governance for School Improvement proposals for the following schools adopting Option 1 – Replace Staff:

AACPS	Brooklyn Park Middle	1023		
PGCPS	Cora Rice Elementary	1346	Hyattsville Middle	1602
	Dwight Eisenhower Middle	1010	Nicholas Orem Middle	1718
	Gaywood Elementary	1411		

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Attachments

Prince George's County Public Schools

OPTION ONE – Replace Staff

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.

1. How will the school/LEA...

- a. **Identify the academic qualifications needed in new staff members in order to support the school's ability to make AYP:** All teachers and paraprofessional educators are expected to be Highly Qualified/MSDE Certified. In addition, they must demonstrate knowledge of the use of differentiation strategies for targeted subgroups. Staff will also need to demonstrate knowledge of skills and strategies to support individual learners. Additional prerequisites include: experience with implementing IEP goals, accommodations and modifications to meet individual student needs and advance the instructional program; experience working with diverse populations; the ability to demonstrate effective planning for differentiating instruction; and, a willingness to collaboratively plan with a team of teachers and specialists for the delivery of instruction. Teachers will also be expected to demonstrate knowledge of utilizing data to inform instruction, participate in monthly professional development and be actively engaged in peer coaching opportunities.
- b. **Retain, hire, and/or replace staff with these needed qualifications:** Job Fairs will be held during the spring and summer to provide qualified candidates opportunities to interview for vacant positions at Gaywood and for displaced staff to seek other positions. A voluntary transfer consortium will be held on April 7 and 8, 2010 to allow teachers to interview for vacant positions. Human Resources (HR) will compile a list of viable transfer candidates who may be eligible to transfer into Alternative Governance (AG) schools. This list will be cross referenced with the desired criteria requested by the schools to identify possible candidates. An involuntary transfer consortium will also be held on May 20, 2010 to support those teachers who become involuntary transfers as a result of implementing Option 1. In addition, HR will provide all AG schools with priority staffing as a result of their AG status. By July 15, 2010, a HR Specialist will also be assigned to work with displaced staff members to ensure new placement. Area offices will support each school's efforts to identify, interview and hire staff to fill the vacancies. Incentives to attract, hire, and maintain HQ staff include: enhanced professional development, collaborative planning with Special Education Department during the school day; additional support via the offices of Special Education, School Leadership, School Improvement, Alternative Governance, Curriculum and Instruction and the Area office.
- c. **Resolve collective bargaining agreements and contractual issues:** The staff replacements will adhere to collective bargaining agreements as outlined by Prince George's County Educators' Association and the Association of Supervisory and Administrative School Personnel. All non-highly qualified staff will be reassigned.
- d. **Build positive public relations between the school and its students, staff, administration, parents, and community through the period of change:** Through collaboration with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the school will aggressively engage parents, community and partner businesses in establishing a school culture with a shared vision for promoting student achievement. The PTO and school staff will come together in open forum to discuss academic enrichment and enhancement opportunities for students. Parents and community partners will participate in surveys to identify school, home and community needs. The school along with select members of the community and PTO will present parent workshops to assist parents in developing the skills they need to support their students with homework.

Parents and community stakeholders will be invited to serve as members of the Parent Advisory Council and School Planning and Management Team that will meet monthly. In August, teachers, parents and community members will engage in activities that will build school cohesiveness.

Parents will be informed of the school's events and activities through multiple forms of communication. Weekly updates utilizing the school's Student Call Out System will provide parents with a preview of the week's upcoming activities and other important information as well as on the school's website, and the school's monthly newsletter. These forums will also be used to communicate the school's progress in implementing the AG plan.

To build positive public relations and rapport throughout the community, the school will invite local newspaper staff to publish and highlight school events and special programs to will connect the school and community. The PTO and the school administrative team will solicit donations from organizations such as the Washington Redskins, Bowie BaySox, and Washington Mystics to afford our student choir the honor of singing the opening National Anthem during their opening ceremonies.

Ensure that all school staff will be in place prior to the opening of the 2011 and 2012 school years: Human Resources will assign a HR Specialist to work with the Principal, the Coordinating Supervisors of Special Education and School Improvement and an Area Office designee to fill the vacancies at Gaywood Elementary School by July 30, 2010 and 2011, respectively. HR Staffing Specialists will provide weekly updates to AG Oversight Board in order to monitor progress.