

**Minutes of Open Work Session
Westover, Maryland
February 4, 2014**

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

Location: J.M. Tawes Technology & Career Center

The Board of Education of Somerset County met in an **open work session** in the Board of Education Meeting Room at the J.M. Tawes Technology & Career Center on Tuesday, February 4, 2013, at 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Board Members: Chairman William Miles, Margo Green-Gale and Mr. Dan Kuebler; Interim Superintendent Dr. John B. Gaddis; Interim Assistant Superintendent of Administration, Ms. Nancy Smoker; Interim Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, Mr. Dave Elebash; Chief Finance Officer, Ms. Wendy Harrison, and Recording Secretary, Melissa Tilghman.

Chairman Miles declared a quorum and called the meeting to order.

SUMMARY OF 2015 BUDGET ENVIRONMENT

Dr. Gaddis presented a summary of the needs the Board must consider when developing the FY2015 Budget. He stated that additional funding will be requested for capital and technology infrastructure improvements to enable the implementation of PARCC Testing and instructional use.

The Board discussed the continued operation of the High Roads Academy, the addition of an elementary classroom to the Somerset Promise Academy and the continuation of school security improvements. Staff will be increased at SPA along with increased professional development to train staff and administrators in dealing with the different challenges at the school. Dr. Gaddis reported that there is a potential donation of 1,500 books and 6 computers that will be added to the SPA library.

Mr. Elebash reported that Somerset County is one of the only counties in the State giving the correct employee steps. Ms. Harrison stated that there will be no COLA or step increases at this time.

Mr. Elebash reported that discussions have been held and principals have submitted their budget requests. He stated that the current budget must be taken into consideration before the principals' requests can be considered. Ms. Smoker reported that actual budgetary figures could not be presented to the Board at this time because actual figures have not been received from the State.

The Board expressed concern about the large class sizes in the elementary schools. Mr. Kuebler requested that consideration be given for the upcoming students entering the

Somerset Intermediate School and stated that a plan must be developed to handle the current large class sizes and accommodate potential overcrowding at the Intermediate School.

Upon the conclusion of the open work session on the discussion of the FY2015 budget, the Board unanimously agreed that the following items were priorities that must be included in the budget in order to promote student achievement:

- Expansion of Early Childhood Education
- Small Class Sizes with no more than 15 students per class
- Goal Planning for Phase I of the GES HVAC Renovation Project
- Emphasis placed on enrichment for the top 20% of students
- Continuation of technology inclusion in the schools to include the installation of wireless connection in all schools for PARCC Assessments. Mr. Kuebler requested that efforts be made to include in the budget the purchase of laptops for all students and administrators.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

Dr. John B. Gaddis, Interim Superintendent

Recorded and Prepared by: Melissa Tilghman/Recording Secretary