



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD • MarylandPublicSchools.org

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: May 24-25, 2011

SUBJECT: Approval of Alternative Governance for School Improvement Proposals
(Restructuring Plans) for Anne Arundel and Baltimore Counties Public Schools

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this action is to approve the Alternative Governance (AG) proposals for the following schools: Wiley H. Bates Middle School in Anne Arundel County and Golden Ring and Lock Raven Technical Academy Middle Schools in Baltimore 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 Four 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 three 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 MSDE. Under NCLB, schools and central offices must select one of the three federal options for alternative governance.

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| 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. |
| Option 2 | Re-open the school as a public charter school. |
| Option 3 | Contract with a private management company. |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

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

Anne Arundel County

Wiley H. Bates Middle 4043 Option 1 – Replace relevant staff

Baltimore County

Golden Ring Middle 1451 Option 1 – Replace relevant staff
 Loch Raven Technical Academy 0954 Option 1 – Replace relevant staff

All three of these schools have been working with MSDE since their year of Corrective Action. In addition to selecting Option 1, each school re-validated their selected 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 and Math Achievement:

- Participating in summer and ongoing, job-embedded professional development aligned to major school initiatives (such as Arts Integration, Thinking Maps, Cross-curricular application of State reading standards).
- Implementing consistent vocabulary instruction across contents (Marzano and Beck).
- Collaborating with Central Office staff to identify and implement additional and/or alternative reading and math interventions.

School Structure: (Anne Arundel County Continued)

- Creating non-teaching Department Chair positions for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education so that these chairs can support collaborative planning, job-embedded professional development, and instructional planning, delivery and assessment.
- Utilizing AYP School Performance Coach position to provide support for data analysis and job-embedded professional development.
- Restructuring meeting schedule to allow for more job-embedded professional development in content teams and interdisciplinary teams.

Implementation for these Action Steps will be monitored through meeting agendas, lesson plans, walk-through and formal observations, and student performance on benchmark assessments.

Baltimore County

Mathematics and Reading Achievement:

- Reevaluate, realign, and monitor a master schedule that provides common planning periods, incorporation of a co-teaching model, and an intervention period aligned to the students' identified academic needs.
- Develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate ongoing, differentiated, and targeted PD series for reading and mathematics achievement focusing on effective data utilization and culturally responsive teaching strategies to guide daily instructional practices and interventions.
- Develop and implement a monitoring tool for mathematics and reading that continually assesses cohort growth.

School Culture and Use of Data:

- Develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate the expansion of Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) strategies schoolwide with a focus of improving students' organizational and college preparatory strategies. Students in Grade 8 will access and participate in the PSAT
- Develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate an action team to function as a part of the focus on safe and orderly environment and teacher-based management strategies. Teachers' input will provide the foundation for a positive school culture, cohesive organization, and effective leadership.
- The administrative team will construct the master schedule to include common planning time by grade level and tested content area to facilitate horizontal planning and data analysis to ensure optimum effectiveness in student learning.

Student performance will be evaluated via the analysis of student work, ongoing assessments (short-cycle and benchmarks), and MSA/HSA results. Performance will also be assessed against the State Curriculum and BCPS curriculum standards, indicators, and objectives. Once a quarter, the master schedule will be cross-referenced with the evaluative process data to determine if the master schedule responds to the instructional needs of the school.

Earlier this month, 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 three schools. As a result of the internal review, the adopted alternative governances are recommended for approval. Full copies of the AG for School Improvement Proposals are available in the 2011 AG Binder in the Caucus Room.

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 Relevant Staff:

Anne Arundel County

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| Wiley H. Bates Middle | 4043 | Option 1 – Replace relevant staff |
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Baltimore County

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| Golden Ring Middle | 1451 | Option 1 – Replace relevant staff |
| Loch Raven Technical Academy | 0954 | Option 1 – Replace relevant staff |

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