

Combined Education Committee
Wednesday, September 21, 2016 4-6 PM
(Public Comment ~ 6:30 – 8:30 PM)
County Office Building, Reagan Room

Attendance:

Commissioner Richard Weaver

Commissioner Richard Rothschild (sitting in for Commissioner Howard)

Paula Singer, Facilitator

Delegate Susan Krebs

Delegate April Rose

Devon Rothschild

Bob Lord

Michelle Rodgers

Bobbi Tucker

Daniele Hoff

Glenn Galante

Roberta Windham

Steve Guthrie

The meeting opened, introductions were made, and Ms. Singer announced that Commissioner Rothschild will be sitting in for Commissioner Howard at today's meeting. Ms. Singer also stated that everyone should have a copy of the National Conference of State Legislatures – No Time to Lose (How to Build a World Class Education System State by State) booklet provided to the Committee by Delegate Krebs.

Adoption of meeting minutes of September 7, 2016

Upon motion of Bob Lord, second by Delegate Krebs, Delegate Rose Abstained, the September 7, 2016 meeting minutes were adopted as presented.

Devon Rothschild stated that she felt the Committee should discuss today's agenda before moving forward with the agenda. A discussion was held by the Committee regarding the agenda items being placed on the agenda. Ms. Rothschild's concern was "Remarks by Commissioner Rothschild". The Committee discussed and shared their concerns. Comments

were made regarding following protocol for the agenda. Ms. Rothschild stated that when the President of the Board of Education saw that Commissioner Rothschild was making “remarks” to the Committee, he felt that he should be able to as well and asked to be placed on the Committee agenda for the next meeting on October 5, 2016. Delegate Krebs motioned that the Committee invite James Doolan, President of Carroll County Board of Education to come and make remarks at the next Committee meeting. The Committee was fine with that, so Commissioner Rothschild would make “Remarks” today and Mr. Doolan would make “Remarks” at the next meeting.

Presentation by Mr. Glen Galante, representing Carroll County Education Association (CCEA) Teachers’ Union

Mr. Galante stated that the CCEA represented School Teachers, Nurses, Special Education Teachers and Speech and Language Pathologists. Mr. Galante gave an overview of a sample teacher and what that looked like over the past several years with cuts and freezes. The topics discussed included: Review of Step & COLA (Cost of Living) History; View of a sample teacher; Median Income History; Tax History; Unemployment; Pensionomics 2016; Maryland Data on Teacher Shortage; and What’s Next? He shared with the Committee a teacher moving from step to step and COLA year to year. What happens in a normal situation and what that may have looked like without the freezes and cuts. Carroll County has been at the bottom for the last eight (8) years or so. Some years the teachers did receive bonuses but that is just one year and does not affect their pay step or pensions. It was requested that information regarding just one teacher (sample) be used in a less mathematical way. It was also requested that the Committee be provided information on a first year teacher and where they were on the scale; a five year teacher; a ten year teacher; and so on. It may be easier to understand for an average over time. Mr. Guthrie stated that he would provide that information to the Committee.

Presentation by Mr. Steve Guthrie, Superintendent, Carroll County Public Schools ~ “What is A Step” – Salary Scale

Mr. Guthrie gave an overview of a teacher, how he/she starts and goes through the salary scale to get to the top (in regard to years of services, education and experience). A step relates to one year of experience, so the more years you have, and the farther up on the scale you are. A question was raised regarding the “Pay for Performance System” and Mr. Guthrie stated that it has been tried in many school systems without any good results. It has been apparent to the Board of Education in the past few years that they cannot “play catch up” on the steps for the teachers so they are in the process of restructuring the salary scale. Some people that had 2 to 8 years of experience are still on the 1st step along with the new teachers coming in. Because this was not equitable they knew something had to be done about it. So, a new scale was developed and negotiated with CCEA this year to make it more equitable for those people who

are stuck on Step 1. That is how the “Cross Walk” evolved. Mr. Guthrie explained the salary scale and how it will make things more equitable with the teachers on the front end (there were 665 teachers that were affected by the old salary scale). The cost of the Cross Walk is no more costly than the regular salary scale. These are the same funds, but in the new scale it will be fairer to those people who were held on Step 1 the longest. It will benefit those people the most and the people at the top will benefit the least. Mr. Guthrie stated that it is felt that this is a step toward solving Carroll County’s problem. There will be a report that comes out in late October from The Maryland Negotiating Service that compares Carroll County to other counties. The key is to develop a salary scale each year, you put in the amount of money you have to work with and go from there. It is a good scale until the freeze’s come again and then the integrity of the working scale collapses. It was mentioned that, at this same time, people in the private sector were losing their jobs, health insurance (everything) and the teacher’s still had their jobs, a paycheck, health insurance, etc. This should be considered as well. Mr. Guthrie reminded everyone that it all depends on the money available on a year to year basis to determine what amount is budgeted for pay raises. A request was made for Mr. Guthrie to post the current Board of Education budget book on the CEC website. A question was also raised regarding recruitment. Mr. Guthrie explained how the recruitment of teachers was handled. He stated that there is no evidence that there is a teacher attrition problem. Rather, the issue is that it is hard to attract teachers with Carroll County salaries. He stated that the salary wasn’t mentioned until after the applicant has had a chance to see the school system and talked to the interviewer and then if that person is selected the Department of Human Resources handles the phone call regarding the job and salary offer. There have been 33 declines of teacher job offers this year and that does concern him. The Committee discussed ideas of recruitment incentives for teacher’s such as a “Basket of Goods”. Although competitive raises are important.

Ms. Singer reviewed the list of future dates for meetings. The meeting of October 19th which had a conflict will now be held on Thursday, October 20th 4-6 PM (with a possibility of having a public comment session after that meeting); and a wrap up session on November 2nd. Ms. Singer also shared with the Committee that there are two (2) reports that are due soon: 1) Compensation Report from Mr. Guthrie (will come out mid to end of October) and the Career and Tech Center Report by Delegate Rose. It was stated that the Committee may need to go beyond the November 2nd deadline date to be able to get all the reports and data collected to come up with solutions.

A concern was raised regarding at this point the Committee has gathered a lot of information but have not started to discuss any solutions. There are still a few more reports that need to be

shared with the Committee but it was decided to do some brainstorming on solutions at the next meeting prior to hearing any reports, reports will be scheduled at the end of the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM

Public Comment Session (6:30 – 8:30 PM)

There were several citizen who shared their comments and concerns with the Committee:

- Board of Education should stop throwing away money (saw staff at New Windsor Middle throwing away unopened art supplies)
- Better utilization of supplies
- Not getting that much for taxpayers money
- Declining enrollment
- Think outside of the box
- Raise Taxes
- Too many Teachers and too many Administrators earning more than \$100,000 annually
- All about the money
- Hire Management Firm to study from the top down regarding salaries
- Clearly define the problem
- \$40 - \$50M Funding Gap in front of us
- Accomplish objectives of the group, trying to end of October, 2016
- Use Westminster High School for Career and Tech classes
- Need to close more county schools
- Need to cut more programs
- Aging in place – we need to grow
- Put forth a plan – have done a lot of research, reconfiguration of the schools, put 6th grade back in elementary schools

Upon motion of Commissioner Weaver, second by Mr. Lord, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.