

APPROVED
18-2009

Rockville, Maryland
July 1, 2009

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Tuesday, July 1, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Ms. Shirley Brandman, Vice President
in the Chair
Mr. Christopher Barclay
Dr. Judy Docca
Mr. Michael Durso
Mr. Timothy Hwang, Student Board Member-Elect
Mr. Philip Kauffman
Ms. Nancy Navarro
Ms. Quratul-Ann Malik, Student Board Member
Mrs. Patricia O'Neill
Dr. Jerry D Weast, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: Ms. Laura Berthiaume

Re: **SWEARING IN**

Ms. Loretta Knight, clerk of the circuit court, administered the oath of office to Mr. Michael Durso and Mr. Timothy Hwang.

Re: **STATEMENT BY MR. DURSO**

Mr. Durso stated that it was a pleasure and honor to be part of the Board of Education. As a former principal, he will now be serving students in a different fashion.

Re: **STATEMENT BY MR. HWANG**

"Eleven years ago, in a hallway displaying banners of excellence and a school drenched with an aroma of expectations, I walked into school, with a bead of trepidation making its way down my neck. Yet, from day one, I witnessed the not-so-clandestine secret behind the success of this county: the hard work of its teachers, staff, administration and the open minds of a student body ready and willing to learn. This is the premise, the logic, the dangerous equation - for this entire system. Because of this wonderful combination of resources, hard work, and dedication, I am able to stand before the very system that I am indebted to - ready to serve.

It's truly humbling to think back to these past couple of months and it's an amazing feeling to be entrusted by tens of thousands of students. This campaign has been a wonderful experience and I am so glad that I was able to get to know the student body that has made this happen. This election has proved that together this county can do anything and I am

proud to be serving as the 2009-2010 Student Member of the Board of Education.

It would be absolutely impossible to name all the people that are responsible, but I would like to thank Jiayi Yang for his great campaign who I was fortunate enough to run against. I have gotten to know him over the course of the campaign and I know that he will continue to be a great asset to our county and his community. I look forward to working with him in our fight for our common interests. Furthermore, I would not be here without the support of my personal community. I thank my parents and family, my friends, my school, and my community for providing me with the support I needed to succeed. I thank my campaign manager Ethan Susseles and field director Justin Shugarman and the rest of my campaign team for making this one of the most memorable, engaging, and innovative SMOB campaigns ever run. And last but not least, I thank Q for her service to her county and her tremendous impact on the system. I am sure that as she goes on to reach her dreams, she'll find her experience on the Board to be a great asset.

But most importantly, I want to thank the countless number of students who came out to vote on Election Day to voice their opinions. The students that have voted in this election have been described as being more innovative, socially conscious, and technologically savvy than previous generations and this election has shown to continue that trend. I hope we can unify the student body to work together to achieve real solutions to the big problems of this county in the upcoming months. I am a firm believer that democracy is not a spectator sport; rather it is an amalgamation of all its citizens within a constantly changing system requiring participation from every one of its members. This election is a testament to this idea within our generation. It is with this idea that I will continue to stay connected with all my constituents and provide an opportunity for every student to get involved in the decision making process.

Now, I've traveled around the United States in my experiences – from the dizzying skyscrapers of Chicago to the serene farms of North Carolina and all around the country, students are asking for the same thing – to be a part of the very institution that provides them with the audacity to learn, to dream, and to achieve anything that they set their mind to. A common dream permeates the hearts and minds of students across the nation.

Consequently, throughout all my travelling and all my work, I learned that the strength of America isn't any industry, isn't the expansive national defense, or the power of America's economy; rather it is the resilience of a people – the heart of a nation that beats for prosperity and hope. The critical question we have to ask ourselves centers around whether or not this county – students and teachers, parents and administrators, county officials and state legislators – continues to work together - as it has wonderfully done so in the past - to retain that same American dream for our generation and generations to come to lead the rest of the country and set an example of a world-class education system for every one of its students. It is with this compelling need that we must act to make sure that future generations will inherit a school system of transparency and accountability, of unity and communication, and of a renewed hope for public education and I have no doubt

that MCPS will continue as the leader of this country on a march towards a brighter future for every one of its students.

During the campaign, I met with a good friend of mine Jeff Sy. He came here from very modest means. His father would drive 4 hours a day to his work to put food on the table and provide for a small two-bedroom apartment where Jeff could study with his two siblings. His mother barely spoke English and managed to feed him on the established welfare system. Despite all that, he was able to come to Montgomery County and study in the some of the best schools in the world, allowing him the opportunity to reach new heights never imagined by his parents. Indicative of the changing demographics of our nation, Jeff's parents traversed thousands of miles to raise a family in the best county in the nation to join hands with this system in its goal in providing the American Dream for every student. And at this very moment, Montgomery County stands at the top of the nation, but we can and must do better. Yet, despite mounting economic challenges and pressures from an increasingly connected international community, I am fully confident that this Board, this county, and this state that have all have provided me with the tools and resources to achieve this position will take on and overcome the challenges of the world and continue to provide opportunities to countless students like Jeff.

I truly believe in public education. I believe in the American Dream. I believe in the fact that every student should have equal opportunity to learn and become successful in their lives. I ran for this position envisioning a particular school system. A school system unrestricted by race, gender, socio-economic status, or disability; A school system competitive with the rest of the world; A school system where no child is truly left behind. While it may not be as simple as getting from Point A to Point B, there is an inherent need to resolve the underlying issues of this county, and I know that Dr. Weast, this Board, and I, are all ready and willing to serve.

There was a quote in my 6th grade teacher room, right above the chalkboard, that has stayed in my head all these years: ever try less than your best This quote represents only a fraction of the blood sweat and toil that I will give to this office. And I will promise you now, that I will not give up unless I have given my best. We are the citizens of Montgomery County. As we progress through the turmoil, the ecstasy, the sufferings, and the joys of this upcoming year, I know we will come to realize that our community is what truly defines our county, as the BEST in the nation."

Re: **STATEMENT BY MS. NAVARRO**

Ms. Navarro thank the Board and school system for an amazing five years. She looked forward to working with the Board as a County Council member.

Re: **STATEMENT BY MS. MALIK**

“Wow. I can hardly believe it, but my term has come to an end.

Let me start out by telling you have a great student coming in to take my place. Tim Hwang, will be a phenomenal addition to the Board of Education. I have worked with him for years in student government and I’ve recently had the pleasure of preparing him for this job over the last few months. He has continuously impressed me with his ability to draw people towards him and his ideas, and I’m certain that you will love working with him over the next year.

I’d also like to thank and congratulate Jiayi Yang for participating in the Student Member of the Board election. It is never an easy decision to take part in such a grand scale election, so thank you both Tim and Jiayi for sharing your ideas to the students.

While we’re on the task of thanking people, I have a huge list of my own who I am truly grateful for. Thank you to my parents, my brother and entire family who have always understood the time commitment. Thank you to my teachers who have been willing to work with me as I juggled school and board duties. Thank you to my friends who have been encouraging and supportive this entire year.

Thank you most importantly to all of the students of Montgomery County who gave me the privilege to have the experience of serving as the 31st Student Member of the Montgomery County Board of Education.

After taking on this position, I learned that it was not just a matter of serving students and student government, but also taking input from the unions, parent teacher associations and other citizen groups. With this input, I have truly been able to become a better member of this Board of Education overseeing the 16th largest school system in the nation and representing 140,000 students, 22,000 employees and nearly a million residents.

The experience I have had serving on this specific board of education has been beyond imagination. It has been such an honor to say that I am part of the board of this county, especially when our success proves fruitful as seen in the Wall Street Journal article that commended our schools for our impressive work in using technology to reduce the minority achievement gap as well as our work in being tied to have the highest graduation rate in the entire country as 80,7% of our students graduated. It was also an honor to be a part of historic votes such as that making inauguration day a holiday, the expansion of a pilot program for portable communication devices during lunch and many more. In addition, I have had the pleasure of overseeing the success we have had in middle school reform, maintaining some of the best programs and initiatives and reducing curricular fees for the following years. All of this hard work has been done despite a difficult economic year and although it has been difficult making some of the decisions, I knew I could always count on all of you for support and advice.

But much work remains to be done, and I know that the future of Montgomery County

Public Schools is in good hands.

With that said, I'd also like to take a few moments to appreciate my former colleagues who have become like a second family to me. It has been such a pleasure working alongside all of you.

Phil. Although we've only had 4 months, I can honestly say it has been pleasure sitting next to you at all these board meetings. Your attention to detail and your thorough questions never cease to impress me and I will deeply miss your humor. You and I now share something beyond the board; we are both members of the Penn community and I know that we will keep in touch as I go to school.

Laura. You are the other member that I have only had 4 months of serving with. I have been so impressed with your ability to come up with creative solutions and your drive to make this school system one in which everyone feels included. You brought a new perspective to the board and I truly admire your fearless and independent mindset.

Judy. When I was first getting situated as a board member, you were the first to help me understand the sometimes confusing acronyms and programs. I also appreciate you looking over my questions when I first got on the board as I would draft out a question and point an arrow asking "is this a stupid question". It has been so enjoyable working alongside someone who understands the administrative perspective, truly enjoys different cultures and has such a passion for reaching out to the various communities Montgomery County has to offer.

Chris. I always like to think that we understand each other more than everybody as we both share the fulltime job in addition to all the board responsibilities. You have been so open and willing to help; I'll never forget how you helped me understand the budget and were willing to hear me out on any issue I brought to you. Your humor and your realist perspective have made these meetings so much more enjoyable this year.

Nancy. It has been such a pleasure working with you and learning from you. Your passion to serve and your drive for issues such as early entrance to kindergarten and the minority achievement gap have really inspired me. I have to say I will miss discussing Lost with you, but I know you will do a great job serving the county council and representing the needs of this board and I congratulate you on your election.

Pat. I knew you would be a great colleague from the start as MCR presented you with an award commending on your efforts for fighting for student rights. Your willingness to hear me out on the many issues I brought to the table has really been such a huge help to me. I appreciated hearing your perspective at the table, because I knew you have so much good insight having served so many years working towards improving it.

Shirley. Your ability to pay attention to detail and your thorough questions have never ceased to impress me, as well as your way with words: the articulate manner in which you present all of your thoughts has been such an inspiration to me. I appreciate your openness to work with me on just about any issue I thought was important. You truly have been someone I could confide in and any issue I had, I always felt comfortable bringing to you and I respect you so much for that.

Dr. Weast, Mr. Bowers, Dr. Lacey and staff. Your desire to make this school system an example for other counties, states and countries has truly been an inspiration to me. The best part is that the efforts and initiatives are actually paying off and the minority achievement gap has reduced significantly. Dr. Weast, I will miss the budget talks that occurred prior to the board meetings. I always joke about how your scribbling on the chalk board about the budget makes it seem as if we're a football team about to go in to a big match and you are laying out the plays. And I have truly enjoyed this.

A special thank you should also go out to Kathy, Martha, Becky, Laura, Suzanne and Glenda who are all led by our amazing Chief of Staff, Roland. Thank you so much to all of you for taking the time out to answer any questions I had.

Roland, you have been such a huge help and I apologize for those midnight texts I send to clarify something board related. I appreciate your attentiveness to my concerns and I will miss your humor!

As for me, I have to say that this position has completely transformed me. I have always looked at this position as more than just a learning experience, but a serious opportunity to represent the needs of all the residents of this county and that the student board member is not merely a communicator between the students and the board, but rather a real decision maker responsible to ALL of the audiences and groups in this large county.

By looking at my experience in this manner, I have changed so much as a person. I wish I had the words and the time to articulate how much of an impact this year has made on my character and my personality. Just know, that I will take the lessons that I have learned here with me next year as attend the University of Pennsylvania. I hope to study history or political science and perhaps go into law. I will make sure to keep you all posted on how my college experience is going and I know my predecessor Ben Moskowitz and I will most likely watch these meetings on webcast from UPenn.

Thank you to all once again for sharing this special farewell to me and Nancy and inauguration for Tim Hwang. and Mike Durso."

Re: **COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS AND THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Board members welcomed Mr. Durso and Mr. Hwang and thanked Ms. Navarro and Ms. Malik for their work on the Board of Education and wished them well in all their future endeavors.

Re: **PRESENTATION TO MS. NAVARRO AND MS. MALIK**

On behalf of the members of the Board, Ms. Brandman presented Ms. Navarro and Ms. Malik with memorabilia of their service on the Board of Education.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. A reception followed in the auditorium.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

JDW:gr