

APPROVED
25-1998

Rockville, Maryland
July 1, 1998

The Board of Education of Montgomery County met in special session at the Carver Educational Services Center, Rockville, Maryland, on Wednesday, July 1, 1998 at 8:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL Present: Mrs. Nancy J. King, President
 in the Chair
 Mr. Geonard F. Butler, Jr., Student Board Member-elect
 Dr. Alan Cheung
 Mr. Blair G. Ewing
 Mr. Reginald M. Felton
 Mrs. Beatrice B. Gordon
 Ms. Mona M. Signer
 Ms. Debra Wheat
 Dr. Paul L. Vance, Secretary/Treasurer

Absent: Ms. Ana Sol Gutiérrez

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. King.

Re: **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Mrs. King noted the presence of former Board members in the audience: Mr. William Colman, Ms. Alison Serino, and Mr. David Naimon. Mrs. King acknowledged the principals from Damascus and Springbrook high schools.

Re: **SWEARING IN**

Ms. Molly Ruhl, clerk of the court, administered the oath of office to Mr. Butler.

Re: **STATEMENT BY MR. BUTLER**

“Mrs. King, distinguished members of the Montgomery County School Board, Dr. Vance, distinguished guests, family, and friends: it is truly and honor to stand before you this evening. You know the most difficult thing about giving a great speech is getting the crowd to interpret your theme . . . your message. So when I was sitting down to write this, I knew that I was faced with a great challenge. I really had no idea where to begin. There are so many themes to choose from. From Jesse Jackson's, ‘keep hope alive’, to Martin Luther King's, ‘I have a dream,’ to O.J. Simpson's, ‘I didn't do it’, to Bill Clinton's ‘I did it, but I can't believe everybody found out!’. Unfortunately, none of those messages really characterize what I'm about to embark on. Being the Student Member of the Board comes with a plethora of challenges, adversities, and altogether learning experiences that just can't be

summed up by infamous political cliches. So, after writing all of this, I still really didn't know what to say.

I felt the best way to start my speech would be to thank all of those who helped make this possible. I'll begin by thanking God, whose grace and guidance has opened many doors in my life, and who without, I would have nothing. I'd like to give many thanks to the teachers and mentors who helped and inspired me. Mr. Tobin, my newspaper editor, who constantly reminded me that although my writing was good, the world was not a big tabloid. Mr. Frace, who I talked to many times when I was down, and who constantly gave me words of encouragement. Mr. Wilson, whose after school talks about politics and the world, and my behavior, are greatly appreciated. Mrs. Miller, who constantly reminded me that there are no free rides and that I'd have to work for everything I get. You were right. To Mrs. Moldow, who pushed me and pushed me to channel my raw energy into positive outlets. Miss Jordan, my chorus teacher, who use to always put me in the front of the stage, even though she knows I can't sing. The attendance staff of Springbrook, who were always rooting for me . . . and keeping me from losing credit! Mrs. Jones, who reminded me many times while in her presence that I was on her bus, and that if I didn't chill, she was going to throw me off. Mr. Murky, who always kept up with me and helped me when I got into small jams during my campaign. To Morris Hudson, Mrs. Hudson, and family, who were like a second family to me. Hudson, your leadership has come through time and time again and I'm forever grateful. Mr. Feffer, who suggested that I run and whose confidence was really a catalyst for my running. Brent and Leon, who always looked out for and supported their little BROTHER. Pastor Harding, who helped when I needed him most and whose prayers undoubtedly got me through rough times. Carl Lashley, my big BROTHER and mentor. In the short time that I have known you, you really have been someone that I can look up to, someone that I can learn from, and someone who is there for me. Your leadership inspired me to run, and I thank you. To Mrs. McEachern, my Fourth Grade teacher, who instilled in me confidence and courage, and who taught me more about my culture, my heritage, and myself than any teacher I've had. Without her early paving, the road to success may have never been completed. And to Mrs. Lockard, one of the finest teachers I have ever known, yet regretfully never had as a teacher. You have been like a mother at school and have pulled every good quality out of me that you could find. You were always there to help during my campaign and I will still be counting on your wisdom during my term. And, Miss Serino, a teacher who I also haven't had, but who I was fortunate enough to meet at MLW and have as a mentor ever since. If you don't know, she was once Student Member of the Board, so her help has been vital to my success. You are one of the coolest people that I know, and without you keeping me on my toes, I really might not be here. To Mrs. Prue, my Elementary School principal who nurtured me from the early stages and helped me to develop into a leader. You are one of the best principals I've ever known and without your early help, I just don't think I'd be standing here. And to Mr. Durso, my principal, mentor, and friend, who I have called on many times and who has helped me every step of the way, from my campaign, to my campaign recovery, your

leadership has not just helped me to get where I am, but has made Springbrook one of the finest schools in the country. You too, sir, are one of the best principals I have ever known. Now, of course, comes my friends and family. I must start off with my main man, Andy Booth, who has just been one of my best friends for a long time. You have stood by me through everything and I owe much love. My partners in crime, Jereme Towns and Bakari Saalakhan. You all also stood by me and have always been there to remind me when my head was getting too big. To Gordan Banks, my campaign manager. Who went with me to many a school and gave my campaign the leadership it needed to win. Much love. To Delali Dziraza, Osom Azu, and Montrell Smith . . . my roll dawgs, who traveled with me all over the county, helping and supporting what I was doing. I couldn't have done it without you all. To all of the BROTHERS, INC., who were my secret weapon across the county. Y'all supported and campaigned for me when even I couldn't. To Julie Clements, my longtime friend and confidant. You have really put up with a lot, yet you stuck by me and always was there. Much love. And to Kibwe Hughes, a true leader and friend, you have also been my roll dawg and mentor throughout this endeavor. You have taught me and helped me in many times of need. Much love and respect. To all of my other friends, who know who they are, thank you for just being my friends and standing by me. And last but not least . . . A great big thank you to my Mother and Father. You are the best parents a kid could have and if it wasn't for you all . . . , I wouldn't have a car! Seriously though, your guidance has been the best and you all have done everything possible to see that I have been successful. There has never been one moment in which I couldn't call on you all and you have not been there. I eternally owe thanks and I will always love you guys.

Great! The thanks are out of the way and now I need to get to the point. While writing this, I still had much trouble deciding what to talk about. So, I thought back to my campaign. What an exciting campaign it was. And something that stuck out in my mind were the things that I used as my slogans. One of my more famous slogans for those who don't remember was: 'I can't spell SUCCESS without U'. You don't know how many times I'd be in the mall and somebody would say, 'Hey, you're the guy from the video at school. Can't spell success without U!!'. But the real slogan that I ran my campaign by was a quote that I found in a magazine. It states: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world . . . indeed it's the only thing that ever has'. It was by some lady named Margaret Mead. When I saw it, I thought, 'Oh boy! A great quote by someone who nobody will ever know. I'll use it.' And I remember bumping into Miss Serino one day in the hall at school and telling her my slogan, and she said, 'Oh! You're using Margaret Mead. That's a great quote, One of my favorites.' And I'm thinking, 'How do you know who she is! Aww, she must have the same magazine.' One day I told my mom the slogan and she said, 'Oh! Margaret Mead, the famed anthropologist. Great choice, Geonard!' I'm like 'Does everybody have the same magazine that I have. Who is this Harriet, Martha Mead . . . lady everybody knows? But, aside from the great woman that Mead really was, the quote is what I was interested in. And thinking back to my campaign and all of my years in school, that quote really means something. You see, I'm not a politician. And you, my

teachers, administrators, friends, and family are not my political staff. I'm Geonard Butler of Silver Spring, Maryland, and you all are whoever you are. When it comes down to it, we are but a small group. But, we are a small, committed group. And that small, committed group has achieved something, WE are on the Board of Education. Not I . . . WE. Now, I might enjoy all of the perks involved with being on the Board, y'all know I get my own parking space, right! Y'all know I got my own phone line, right! But it is WE who have made it. See, I didn't do this alone. And, I didn't do this for myself. I did it for the schools, staff, and students of Montgomery County. I did it for all of the people who have believed in my leadership. I did it for YOU. And now, it is OUR job to do something. WE face the awesome responsibility of changing the world. WE must. It is the only thing that ever has. It is 1998 and WE as a small, but thoughtful and committed group of people have to lead this county into the next century. My being on the Board of Education is but a mere step in the right direction. You will soon be hearing from last year's Student Member of the Board and next year at this time, I'll be giving a speech about what it was like to be on the Board. And then it is over . . . for ME, but not for WE. WE, will carry the burning torch of our forefathers into the new millennium. WE, will pave the way for many more leaders to come. It is WE who will prevail. When I've talked to people and told them about my position, many are quick to speak about how corrupt the government is that I'll be a part of. They speak of all of the shiesty things that go over the heads of everyday citizens and tell me that I will be seeing this every day. They sound so hopeless and full of worry. But, I have no fear. For I know that WE will prevail. It is WE who will get past the corruption, the lies, and the scandals that plague governments everywhere. Right now, the Board of Education that I am a part of is wrestling with a controversial issue because of some recent decisions made. Some people are angry at some other people and people may suggest that things are falling apart here in good ole Montgomery County. But they aren't. Not as long as WE are here. WE need to stick together. WE need to keep our eyes on the prize. WE need to remember what battles are worth fighting and when to surrender when WE must. But, WE will change the world. Whether you are Black, White, Red, or Brown, Religious or Not, Male or Female, Child or Adult, Teacher or Board Member, it doesn't matter, You are a part of WE. And WE, this small group right here will change the world INDEED, it is the only thing that ever has.

I thank all of my supporters and voters and look forward to serving and working with all of you this year. I will do my best to keep Montgomery County's tradition of excellence alive. Thank you."

Re: **PRESENTATION TO MS. WHEAT**

On behalf of the members of the Board, Mrs. King presented Ms. Wheat with memorabilia of her stay on the Board of Education.

Re: STATEMENT BY MS. WHEAT

“Will anyone notice if I get up to sneak some cookies? What do we do in closed session? What on earth does preclude mean -- and why does everyone keep saying it? Does the Superintendent have an actual vote? Do meetings always last this long? Are they going to really hear me when I speak -- or just be polite and listen? Who is that? These questions along with a thousand more I thought I would never be able to answer circled through my head during my first few meetings as Student Member elect a little over a year ago. By the time July I rolled around I had a little bit more of an understanding about some things -- but I still had no idea whether to adjudicate on the written record, what the difference between operating and capital was, or why the policy could be different than the regulation etc. etc. I did however know that I had committed myself to a huge amount of work -- and that I was in for a very busy and unforgettable year.

I was right! (It was a foreshadow of the year to come.) I have had a very busy year filled with a lot of work -- but I wouldn't trade it for anything except maybe for a little bit more of that fiscal stuff in the lacrosse area if you know what I mean -- but don't worry I won't bring that up -- tonight at least. But seriously this year has been amazing. I have learned so much. I have learned a huge amount about our school system as well as many others across the country, helped students voice their opinions, sat still longer than I ever thought possible, lobbied council members -- and a fellow Board member a time or two, I have thought long and hard on many different issues, and learned to approach problems from many different perspectives in an effort to come up with the best solution. I learned a lot about myself, my values and my goals, and gained many skills that I will continue to use in school, work and life for the rest of my years. I have had so many incredible experiences and unforgettable opportunities -- from hosting a TV show focused on student issues, to speaking with over 120 classes of 5th graders about my responsibilities, their upcoming vote as 6th graders and the importance of getting involved in their schools and communities. I have met President Clinton on two separate occasions and I was able to voice my opinions as a student to the State Board of Education, the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education, many community and government groups, to many parents and PTAs and of course to Dr. Vance on our wonderful lunch dates. I have traveled all over Montgomery County, Maryland, Virginia and even to New Orleans -- Board Official Business I swear, and read memos, faxes, nasty letters, reports, files, and even some not suitable for anyone under the age of 18 excerpts. I have been overwhelmed, really aggravated, really happy, upset, confused, excited, nervous, confident and very proud of myself throughout this incredibly short and irreplaceable year. It seems like it was only yesterday that I couldn't believe my year was starting -- and now I can't believe my year is over. Many of you might remember last year when I spoke of how it only took one youth advocate to change or replace a light bulb. I am proud to say that I have witnessed the changing or replacing of many light-bulbs which have helped the futures of many people -- children and adults to be brighter and brighter. Many people have helped to make my year an incredible experience

and in turn my future much brighter -- so I would like to thank them for all of their support, guidance, time, help and love. However, I have learned this year that people stop listening to you if you talk too long -- so I can't take the time I should to thank them the way they deserve to be thanked. But without all of these people and others I'm probably forgetting, I might not have survived my 365 days as a REAL BOARD MEMBER. So I owe a huge thank you to George, Glenda, Roz, Roland, Ruby, Gail, Jennifer, Lois, Juanita, Dr. Vance, Marshall, Mrs. Gemberling, and all of the Staff, for all of their time, guidance, support, cookies and patience. To my two Board mommies -- Mona, and Nancy, for making me go home once the clock struck 12 and paying for my goals, to Reggie, Ana, Bea, Blair and Alan for always asking my opinion and listening to what I had to say. To Julie for all that she has done for me for the past four years, to Mike, Steph and Jen for everything, to my family for all of their love and support in every way possible, and a huge thank you to all of my teachers for their understanding and to Mrs. Lewis for showing me that anything is possible and to Mr. Smith for believing in me.

When I read my first comments as the 20th student member last year I shared with you, that by this time this year, if I had positively changed the life of at least one other student, gotten someone else involved or shed a new light on a discussion at the Board table than all the hard work would be worth it. Well it has been worth it. I am sad to be leaving but confident that Geonard -- the next in a long line of incredible people will do a fantastic job in representing the students of this county. Aside from stealing my parking spot, Geo -- you will be taking over a huge responsibility. You have just become the 21st student member. In my opinion the SMOB -- as you'll learn to answer to, has three main jobs. First to represent the students of MCPS, 2nd to share your experiences as a student here in MCPS and third and most importantly to be a living breathing reminder of what must constantly be in the forefront of any of the decisions made in this room -- the STUDENTS. The student member is a real Board member -- I started out thinking that I wasn't really an official Board member but by the end of September I had gotten in a heated debate with Mark Simon, president of MCEA, sat through a million hours of meetings, went to school in business clothes way more than jeans, gotten two not so friendly letters in the mail and even voted for the Superintendent to do a study on something. I had become a real Board member. Being a Board Member is a huge responsibility -- but as long as you are dedicated and hard working it will be a life changing experience for you, and a huge benefit to the entire school system. I encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities it will bring along with it -- but realize that you cannot do everything. (Trust me I tried) Aside from being a student (which does mean attending at least some classes) your role as SMOB must come first. Get to know all of the people you will be working with -- and ask them questions whenever you need to you're still young enough that they don't get aggravated as long as you say thank you and sneak them some cookies too. Don't ever be afraid to say how you feel -- and challenge anything that your fellow Board Members, staff, PTA members, union members or even the Superintendent has to say if you disagree -- remember you are a real Board member. However, you are on TV, so try and remember these three points and you'll be fine --

1. ALWAYS lead with your point, be short, articulate and to the point.
2. Believe in what you are saying and be able to back it up.
3. Contrary to popular belief you do not have to comment on everything -- so if you don't have anything new to say, sit back and smile. You'll thank yourself later.

I could go on and on forever with advice -- but it wouldn't be any fun if you knew all the tricks already. So I will leave you with this: you are the only person you have to be with 24 hours a day, so do not let anyone influence you into doing, saying or voting for or against anything that you don't feel comfortable with, or don't believe is right. They will all get over it if you disagree with them -- but you might not. And when you are making any decisions or forming any opinions don't ever stop believing in the power of one person, or in the hope that you bring to this school system, this county, this community and this generation. You can and will make a difference. Eleanor Roosevelt so correctly put it, 'The future belongs to the people who believe in the power of their dreams.' You must believe in the importance of your dreams, and protect the dreams of over 130,000 students. Good luck. Enjoy it. And start right away because it will be over before you know it."

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

Board members and Dr. Vance welcomed Mr. Butler and thanked Ms. Wheat for her work on the Board of Education and wished her well in all her future endeavors.

Re: **RECESS**

The Board of Education recessed from 8:50 to 9:25 p.m. for a reception and closed session.

RESOLUTION NO. 437-98 Re: **PERSONNEL APPOINTMENT**

On recommendation of the Superintendent and on motion of Dr. Cheung seconded by Ms. Signer, the following resolution was adopted unanimously by members present:

Resolved, That the following personnel appointment be approved effective July 2, 1998:

<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Present Position</u>	<u>As</u>
Thomas Pumphrey	Acting Assistant Principal, Highland ES	Principal, Piney Branch ES

RESOLUTION NO. 438-98 Re: **PERSONNEL APPOINTMENT**

On recommendation of the Superintendent and on motion of Mrs. Gordon seconded by Dr. Cheung, the following resolution was adopted unanimously by members present:

Resolved, That the following personnel appointment be approved effective July 2, 1998:

<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Present Position</u>	<u>As</u>
Jerrold Perlet	Principal, Monocacy ES	Principal, Sherwood ES

RESOLUTION NO. 439-98 Re: **INSTALLATION OF STADIUM LIGHTS AT SENECA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL**

On recommendation of the Superintendent and on motion of Mr. Ewing seconded by Mr. Felton, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

WHEREAS, Permanent stadium lights have been installed with funding provided in 13 high schools in partnership with the booster clubs and city and county governments; and

WHEREAS, A recent storm damaged some of the light poles at Seneca Valley High School; and

WHEREAS, The booster club at Seneca Valley High School has agreed to provide half of the cost of new stadium lighting, and the County Council has programmed funds for stadium lighting in FY 2000; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the Board of Education request an emergency supplemental appropriation for the FY 1999 Capital Budget and an amendment to the FY 1999-2004 Capital Improvements Program in the amount of \$130,000 from the County Council to fund the cost of stadium lights at Seneca Valley High School, with the understanding that the school's booster club will be responsible for one half of the cost of this project; and be it further

Resolved, That the county executive and County Council initiate the process to approve this emergency supplemental appropriation to permit this replacement to be completed in time for the fall athletic programs at Seneca Valley High School.

RESOLUTION NO. 440-98 Re: **ADJOURNMENT**

On recommendation of the Superintendent and on motion of Mr. Ewing seconded by Mr. Felton, the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the Board of Education adjourn its meeting of July 1, 1998, at 9:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

PLV:gr

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMARY SHEET**

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