



PRESS RELEASE

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PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION BEGINS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH WITH COMMUNITY MEETINGS

School Board Launches Massive Effort to Ask County Residents What Characteristics They Want in a New Superintendent

The Prince George's County Board of Education announced today that community-wide meetings would be held in January as part of a massive effort to obtain public input in the process of selecting a new superintendent for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) – America's 18th largest school district.

Board Chair Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq. announced that large, town-hall meetings would be held in four locations on January 13 and 14 to ask the public to weigh in on the traits and characteristics they want in a new superintendent. Additional meetings will be held for the Prince George's Regional Association of Student Governments (PGRASG), teachers, administrators, staff, elected officials, and community leaders.

"It is vitally important that we reach out to our community and get their advice on what kinds of traits and characteristics the new superintendent should have," Board Chair Jacobs said. "The school board needs that advice and involvement from the entire community as we work to find the right person to lead our school district. This is a critically important decision for the future of our children."

Community meetings have been scheduled at 7:30 p.m. for the following days and locations:

- January 13, 2009 – Sasscer Administration Building, Board Meeting Room, 14201 School Lane, Upper Marlboro
- January 13, 2009 – Oxon Hill HS, Multipurpose Room, 6701 Leyte Drive, Oxon Hill
- January 14, 2009 – High Point HS, 3601 Powder Mill Road, Beltsville
- January 14, 2009 – Central HS, 200 Cabin Branch Road, Capitol Heights

Officials from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) will ask the community for thoughts on these three questions: 1) "Tell us about the good things that are happening in the county"; 2) "Tell us the skills, qualities and characteristics you want to see in the next superintendent"; 3) "Tell us about any issues that a new superintendent needs to be aware of to be successful." Members of the community will not be asked to recommend names of candidates nor give their thoughts about specific candidates.

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The meetings will be arranged and conducted by MABE, which was hired by PGCPs to assist in the process of selecting a new superintendent. Superintendent John Deasy stepped down in November and Dr. William Hite was appointed Interim Superintendent in December. Dr. Hite is a candidate for the Superintendent's position.

The school district is launching an aggressive communications campaign to invite the public to the meetings to share their ideas. Personal telephone calls, automated phone messages, emails, letters, and the district's television station and Web pages will be used to urge the community to participate in the important meetings.

After the community-wide and smaller group meetings are held, the Board of Education will meet with MABE officials to review all the recommendations from the public and to establish a final profile of the traits and characteristics the board will seek in a new superintendent. The board will then begin considering potential candidates for the job. The Board expects to complete the work on the superintendent profile by the end of January.

During daytime meetings on January 13-14, MABE officials will lead discussions with invited groups of teachers, administrators and staff, community organizations, and elected officials who will be asked the same three questions about traits and characteristics of a new superintendent.

The communications effort to involve the public will be expansive:

- School board members will make personal telephone calls and send letters to many community leaders inviting them to the daytime group meetings;
- The Board Chair will send an email to all teachers to invite them to the group meetings;
- When school resumes after the holidays, school principals will send follow-up emails to teachers reminding them about the group sessions;
- District administrators will send an email and use the district's automatic phone messaging system to alert administrators about the group meetings and invite them to attend;
- The Board Chair will contact leaders of the employee unions by phone and letter to invite them to attend the group sessions;
- The district's automatic phone messaging system will be used to invite parents across the district to attend one of the four community-wide meetings;
- Follow-up recorded phone calls from school principals will be delivered a week before, and a day before, the public meetings begin;
- The school district's television station will broadcast the schedule of community-wide meetings; and
- The school district's email listserv will be utilized to invite community members to the community-wide meetings.

"Prince George's County public schools have made great academic progress over the last couple of years," Board Chair Jacobs said. "The Board of Education's decision on a new superintendent will be vitally important to continuing this progress. We're going to aggressively seek out our community's involvement in this process, and in the end the Board will pick a new leader who will help continue improving the quality of our schools for our children."