



Prince George's County Board of Education
14201 School Lane • Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772 • www.pgcps.org

December 12, 2019

BOARD OF EDUCATION
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Dear Board of Education Colleagues:

Board Chair
Alvin Thornton, Ph.D.

Board Vice Chair
Edward P. Burroughs, III

Board Members

Raaheela Ahmed

Pamela Boozer-Strother

D. Paul Monteiro, Jr.

David Murray

Belinda Queen

Sandra Shepherd

Joshua M. Thomas

Curtis Valentine, M.P.P.

K. Alexander Wallace

Sonya Williams

Joshua Omolola
Student Member

Secretary-Treasurer
Monica Goldson, Ed.D.

ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executive Officer
Monica Goldson, Ed.D.
Telephone: 301-952-6008

One year ago, in December of 2018, we came together as a Board of Education, consisting of 14 elected and appointed members. I was honored to be asked to serve as chair of the Board and joined in welcoming Mr. Edward Burroughs, III as Vice Chair. The community and its elected and appointed representatives looked to the new Board of Education with great anticipation in the wake of the recent complex governance and oversight, leadership, employee, and student development issues that had faced our school system. We were tasked with providing enhanced Board leadership and oversight for one of the nation's largest and diverse urban school systems, with an enrollment of more than 136,500 students, 19,000 employees, and 208 schools with an operating budget of \$2.047 billion. At the end of our first year together as a Board of Education, there are many accomplishments about which we should be proud.

We benefitted from a very successful February 2019 two-day Board retreat where we considered issues involving the Board's approach to the 2019 General Assembly session; enhancing our legal services; the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer (CEO); the Interim CEO's evaluation; the restructuring of the Board's committees and advisory councils; the hiring of a permanent Board Executive Director; and enhancing community liaison support for the Board and staff capacity in the areas of policy, communications and budget analysis.

In the middle of the school year, we quickly organized the Board of Education and developed a working relationship with Dr. Monica Goldson, who was then the Interim CEO. We had to manage Board Office administrative support issues resulting from unanticipated staff changes and realignments. In addition, immediately before us was the challenge of developing the school system's operating budget in collaboration with Dr. Goldson and addressing the compensation of our employees.

We benefitted from our strong engagement with the school system's four labor partners: PGCEA, ASASP, SEIU Local 400 and ACE-AFSCME Local 2250. A high point during the year was our ability to adjust the compensation of our continuing employees. Our ability to do so would not have been possible without the strong support of the County Executive, County Council and our General Assembly Delegation and leadership of Dr. Goldson and our labor partners.

Working together, with the leadership of Mr. K. Alexander Wallace and his colleagues on the Board's Operations, Budget, and Fiscal Affairs Committee, and Dr. Goldson and the staff of the Chief Financial Officer, we unanimously approved and reconciled our Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Operating Budget of \$2,183,122,900. It was a proud moment for the Board of Education; and I thank each member for their contributions.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a great education that empowers all students and contributes to thriving communities.

Prince George's County Public Schools

We also completed the appointment of Dr. Goldson as our permanent CEO. Furthermore, later in the year, we also approved unanimously our FY2021-FY2026 Capital Improvement Program.

The Board and CEO assigned high priority to fiscal and operational accountability and transparency, giving focused attention to outstanding state legislative audit findings related to procurement and administrative oversight, and internal audit issues. I was pleased to represent the Board of Education and join Dr. Goldson as she testified before the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) regarding school system operational accountability issues. The State Board applauded Dr. Goldson and the Board of Education for the way we are addressing operational and oversight issues.

After an eight-month transition period, the 2019-2020 school year opened with broad-based support from all segments of the community, especially involving student school supplies and teacher support contributions. The center piece of the back to school activities was the county-wide "Back to School" event at the Wayne K. Curry Sports and Learning Center.

During the year, the Board of Education had the support of the County Executive, County Council, General Assembly and the residents of Prince George's County as it carried out its trustee, oversight and fiduciary responsibilities for the school system. We look forward to their continuing support as we enter the New Year and continue our work on initiatives that ensure that our students have access to excellent educational opportunities in modern facilities taught and supported by respected and competitively compensated employees.

I am encouraged by the vision and leadership that is emerging from our three Board standing committees: Academic Achievement; Operations, Budget and Fiscal Affairs; and Policy and Governance, which are supported by Board Office staff and the CEO's designated senior administrative staff. There are clear signs of increased community support for our school system from all segments of the community. Let us continue working together to earn their support.

High priority issues during the 2020 General Assembly session will be passage of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan) and the Bill to Learn (school construction) legislation. I look forward to working with you to support these mission critical initiatives. They are indispensable to our ability to provide excellent educational opportunities for our children. Thank you for the diverse ways in which you represent our school system and its individual districts with various out-reach activities and involvement with local, state and national education organizations.

I wish for your family and you a joyous holiday season complete with peace, happiness and good health. I look forward to the work we will do together as a Board to continue the progress we are making to ensure that all of our students have access to excellent educational opportunities provided by a school system that has the respect and support of the community.

In unity,


Alvin Thornton, Ph.D.
Chair, Board of Education

Copy to: Monica Goldson, Ed.D.
 Chief Executive Officer
 Suzann M. King, Esq.
 Board Executive Director