

Board Notes & "Quotes"

Summer 2008

Highlighting the Board of Education and Worcester County Public Schools



Beyond the Board Room

Governor O'Malley Works with Students to Promote School Bus Safety

Worcester County Public School children from Snow Hill Elementary and Middle Schools had the opportunity to work alongside Governor Martin O'Malley for a school bus safety advertisement on June 24 in Ocean City. One of Governor O'Malley's initiatives is to improve public safety and public education in Maryland. The purpose of the advertisement is to communicate the rules and regulations that

"We are grateful to the Governor for promoting school bus safety. Our buses travel 1,438,704 miles a year. The safety of our students and bus contractors is paramount."

— **Dr. Jon Andes**, Superintendent of Schools

motorists must follow when encountering a school bus that is stopped on a residential road and is receiving students.

The 30-second advertisement will run in Maryland movie theatres during the month of August, in advance of the new school

year. The advertisement is the product of the Governor's Office of Communications and the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.



Governor Martin O'Malley and Superintendent Dr. Jon Andes greet Snow Hill Elementary and Middle School students as they exit Kelly Saunders' school bus.

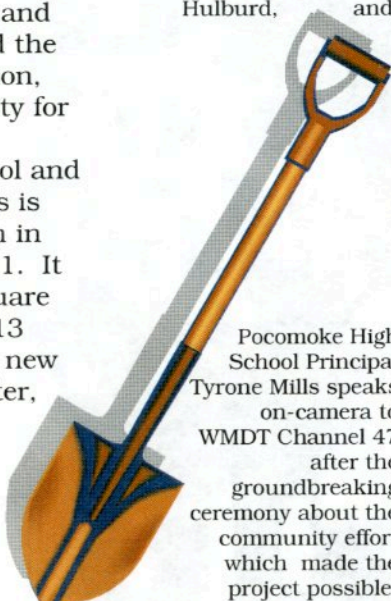
Pocomoke High School Groundbreaking



Worcester County Public Schools celebrated the onset of construction for the Pocomoke High School Renovation/Addition Project by holding a groundbreaking ceremony on June 4 at the school. State dignitaries, County Commissioners, and Pocomoke officials joined the school, Board of Education, and Pocomoke community for the celebration.

The modernized school and enhanced school campus is scheduled for completion in the early summer of 2011. It will include a 50,000 square foot addition, providing 13 additional classrooms, a new science wing, media center, gymnasium, cafeteria, geothermal heating and cooling system, parking lots, and athletic facilities.

Pictured in the front row, *from left*, are Principal Tyrone Mills, Pocomoke Mayor Michael McDermott, Delegate Page Elmore, Commissioner Bud Church, Commissioner Linda Busick, Board of Education President Garry Mumford, Commissioner President Virgil Shockley, Commissioner Vice President Louise Gulyas, Commissioner James Purnell, Commissioner Bobby Cowger, Commissioner Judy Boggs, Delegate Norman Conway, Board of Education member Sara Thompson, and Pocomoke Councilwoman Tracey Cottman. In the back row, *from left*, are Board of Education member Doug Dryden, Board of Education member Robert Rothermel, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jon Andes, Interagency for School Construction Executive Director Dr. David Lever, Board of Education Vice President Robert Hulburd, and Pocomoke Councilman Robert Clarke.



Pocomoke High School Principal Tyrone Mills speaks on-camera to WMDT Channel 47 after the groundbreaking ceremony about the community effort which made the project possible.



McGuffey Distributes 7,600 Books

Across Worcester County on June 2, school children in kindergarten through third grades received a book bag and four books, courtesy of the Worcester County Commission for Women and their McGuffey book distribution sponsors. The Commission, alongside 80 community volunteers and 33 Stephen Decatur High School Connections students, handed elementary students a total of 1,900 book bags and 7,600 books to Ocean City, Buckingham, Pocumoke, Showell, and Snow Hill Elementary Schools.

The purpose of the annual book distribution is to enhance literacy and promote summer reading. Research shows that if students do not read over the summer months, they can lose three months of reading achievement. This loss in skills can accumulate every summer, placing a student behind as much as one to two years by the time they reach middle school.

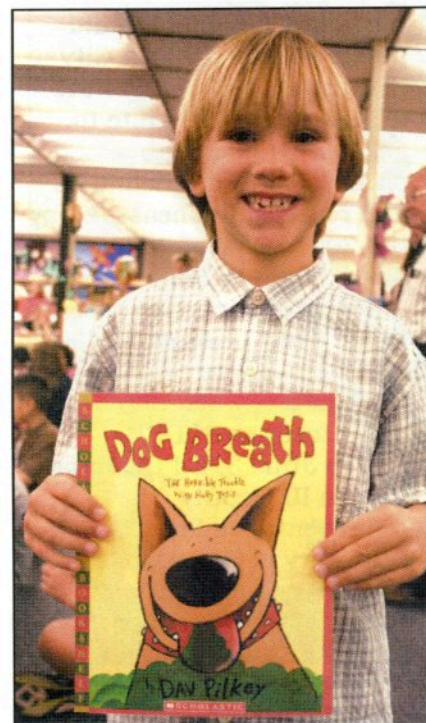
Linda Dearing, McGuffey Book Distribution Coordinator and Commission for Women First Vice President, encouraged the students at Showell to read over the summer. When speaking to kindergarteners, she explained, "Reading over the summer will help keep your reading level up so you will be ready for first grade!"

After students received their books, they participated in reciting the McGuffey Pledge. Students were asked to raise their right hand and repeat a lengthy pledge which included, "I will read my books

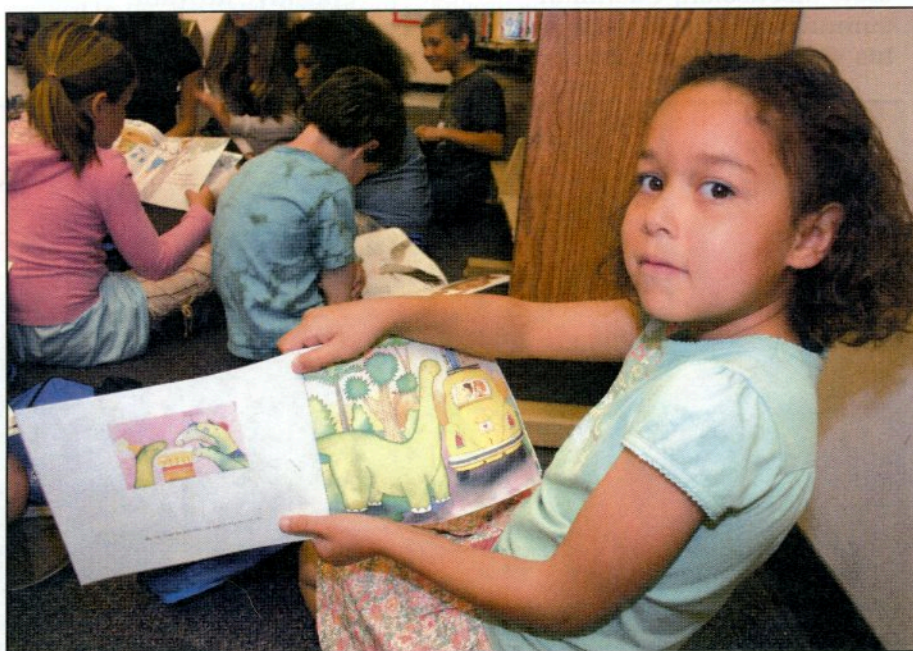
and share my books."

The McGuffey Book Distribution is a community effort, supported by 20 sponsors including Verizon, Choptank Electric, the Community Foundation of the Lower Eastern Shore, and Barrett Chevrolet.

"We are grateful to the Commission for Women and McGuffey sponsors for making a powerful statement about literacy," said Superintendent Dr. Jon Andes. "It is a blessing to have organizations like the Commission for Women, community business sponsors, and volunteers who understand the importance of reading. Developing a love for reading at a young age gives children a tremendous advantage and can help eliminate illiteracy in our society."



Trent Chetelat, a Showell Elementary School second grader in Ashley Fardone's class, was familiar with "Dog Breath," authored by Dav Pilkey.



Ashley Barton, a Showell Elementary School first grader in JoAnne Donovan's class, loves dinosaurs and shows the beautiful illustrations in her new book.

USDE Explores OCES' Formula for Success

Out of 1,455 Maryland public schools, Ocean City Elementary School was the first school in the state to achieve 100 percent proficiency in mathematics and reading, as measured by the 2007 Maryland School Assessment (MSA). The accomplishment has sparked the interest of educators across the state, as well as in the United States Department of Education (USDE).

On June 3, Ed Cashman, Region III Deputy Representative for U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, visited Ocean City Elementary School to tour the school and speak with teachers, students, school system leaders, administrators, parents, Board of Education members, and County Commissioners. At the conclusion of a round table discussion, Cashman summarized the purpose of his visit, as well as what he

gleaned from the experience. "We want to know what the formula for success is," said Cashman. "The expectations and attitudes of your faculty are contagious and our hope is that we can bottle it and pass it on."

Attitude, according to Principal Irene Kordick, is paramount to the formula for success. "The one quality that sets a successful school apart from others is attitude," she said. "Attitude is a choice; you either choose to be positive or you choose to be negative. We choose to be positive."

A positive attitude compliments other important qualities. "Our teachers also

have passion. They have high expectations, work hard, and demonstrate consistency and persistency," said Kordick.

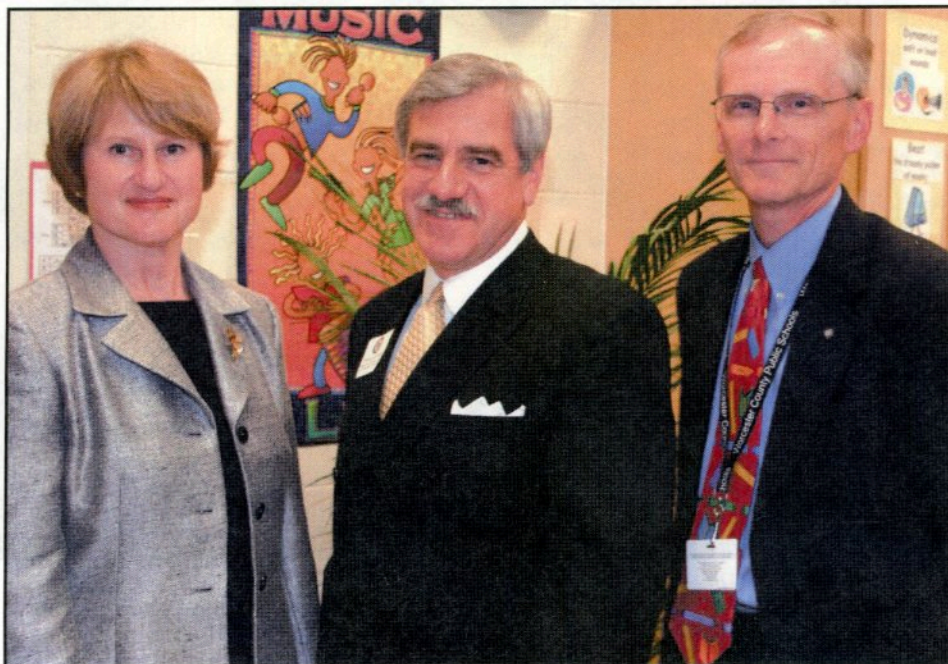
Superintendent Dr. Jon

Andes acknowledged the importance of school governance to the formula for success. "Our County Commissioners and Board of Education work together to provide a quality educational system for our children," said Andes.

Worcester County Public Schools is fiscally dependent on county government which funds approximately 75 percent of the school system's operating budget. "Continued excellence requires continued funding. Moving forward is essential because we are here to raise the next generation of children," added Andes.

*Attitude is a choice;
you either choose
to be positive
or you choose
to be negative.
We choose
to be positive."*

— Irene Kordick,
Principal of Ocean City
Elementary School



Ed Cashman (center), Region III Deputy Representative for U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, spent June 3 with the faculty and staff of Ocean City Elementary School to explore the school's formula for success. Joining Cashman are Principal Irene Kordick and Superintendent Dr. Jon Andes.

2008 Worcester County Teacher of the Year Is Recognized by State Board of Education



Above Left: 2008 Worcester County Teacher of the Year Amy Gallagher (*second from left*) was recognized by the Maryland State Board of Education at their May 29 meeting. Pictured, *from left*, are State Superintendent Dr. Nancy Grasmick, Maryland State Board of Education President Dunbar Brooks, Stephen Decatur Middle School Principal Dr. Mel Ross, and Worcester County Public Schools' Coordinator of Instruction for Social Studies Dr. Joshua Fradel. Gallagher, along with Teachers of the Year from Maryland's additional 23 school systems, were recognized for being named as ambassadors for teaching excellence. The 24 Teachers of the Year will compete for the 2008-2009 Maryland Teacher of the Year title, announced in Baltimore on October 3. Nationally Board Certified, Gallagher teaches Grade 8 Social Studies at Stephen Decatur Middle School. **Above Right:** Amy Gallagher proudly displays her certificate presented by the Maryland State Board of Education.

Read-A-Latte Café Helps Students Connect Reading with Making a Difference in Society

On July 14, Pocomoke High School students participating in the Summer Academy learned first-hand about the importance of reading. Dignitaries (Delegates Norman Conway and Jim Mathias, and Pocomoke Mayor Michael McDermott), School Board members (President Garry Mumford and Doug Dryden), business leaders and professionals participated in the Read-A-Latte Café by reading excerpts from renown documents or novels and discussing the importance of reading.



After reading excerpts from the *Declaration of Independence*, Delegate Conway told students:

"You – as young people, along with your independence and rights, have an obligation to contribute to that road less traveled – to make a difference. We have an obligation to do our best."



In the Board Room

MSA Scores Consistent with 2007-2008 School Year: Outstanding

Top-performing: the word combination is commonly used to label many school systems across the state and country – on many different levels, such as academics, athletics, and character education. Evidence of top performance is demonstrated through test scores, as well as through state and national rankings and recognitions.

The July 15 release of preliminary 2008 Maryland School Assessment (MSA) results (for Grades 3 – 8) by the Maryland State Department of Education confirms that the 2007-2008 school year was an outstanding year for Worcester County Public Schools. “The MSA results proved what we already knew,” said Board of Education President Garry Mumford. “The results proved that we had a record year on all levels; that we are top-performing on all levels. You can only achieve that degree of excellence with the right leadership. It starts at the top, with the Superintendent. It starts at the top because through strong leadership and vision, teachers in our classrooms can do what they do best: engage their students in learning. That’s happening in our school system. That’s happening, and we are extremely proud of it.”

School system results show that the Worcester County Public School System far exceeds the state’s mandated standards for 2008 (called the Annual Measurable Objective or AMO). In addition, school system composite results exceed the state’s composite results in each grade level tested. “Most remarkably,” said Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Dr. Richard Walker, “Our absolute lowest 2008 composite score for any grade level tested – in either reading or

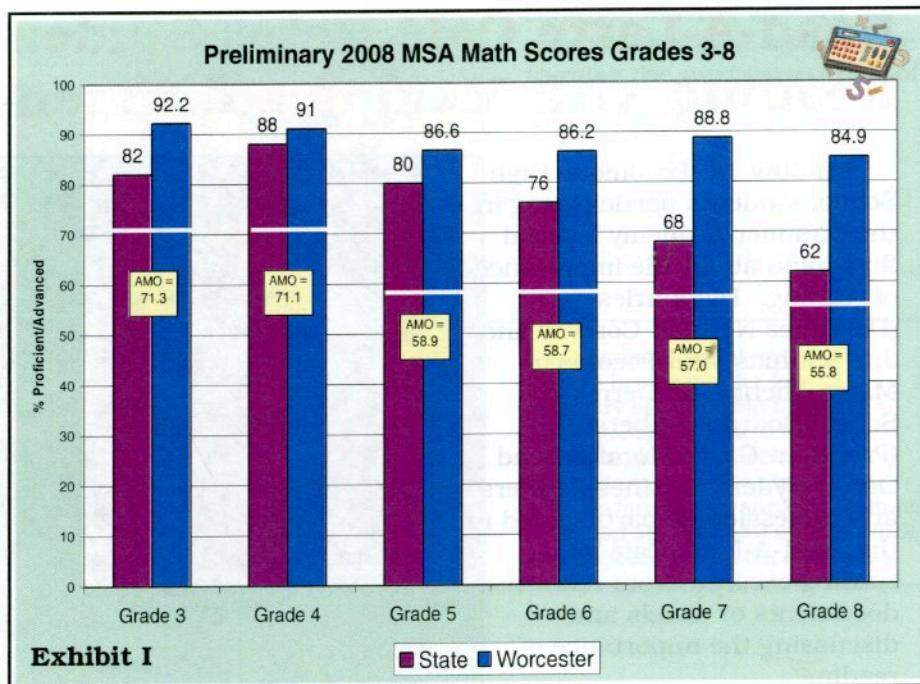
math – occurred in Grade 8 math, with a score of 84.9 percent proficient/advanced. Keep in mind that last year, our composite Grade 8 math score was ranked #1 in the state, at 82 percent proficient/advanced. Our students achieved an improved 84.9 percent, while the Grade 8 math AMO was well below at 55.8 percent and the state average score was at 62 percent. That’s what we call outstanding.”

By the year 2014, No Child Left Behind legislation mandates that all students achieve 100 percent proficiency in both reading and math. “By significantly exceeding the AMOs in all grades tested and in both reading and math,” said Walker, “we are proving that we are well ahead of the curve. What we have been doing has been working.” *(For Preliminary 2008 MSA results in reading and math for Grades 3 through 8, please review Exhibits I and II. Note: State and school system data is preliminary and may change slightly as a result of the appeals process.)*

While, overall, Worcester

County Public Schools was ranked #1 in the state in math as measured by the 2007 MSA results, the school system was ranked #4 in reading, out of the 24 Maryland school systems. “On the 2008 MSA in reading,” explained Walker, “our students improved in every grade level tested. Of great concern last year were our 2007 Grade 5 MSA reading scores, the only grade level below 80 percent proficient/advanced. With many resources and interventions implemented, we are proud to announce that our Grade 5 MSA reading scores jumped to 88.8 percent. In reading, three of the six grade levels [Grades 3, 4, and 7] have composite scores above the 90 percentile. Again, that’s outstanding.”

Achievement gaps plague school systems across the state and country and Worcester County Public Schools is not immune. For example, while African American students in the school system are among the highest performing African American students in the state,



(Continued from Page 6)

the gap still exists. "We have been very concerned about the achievement gap between our African American students and their White counterparts," said Walker. "Although the gap reduced slightly in math, as measured by the 2008 MSA, the gap reduced significantly in reading. For the first time, the gap is less than 20 percentage points. With adequate funding, we will continue to implement the strategies and programs we need to reduce and eliminate all gaps."

"We know that our school system has the right people, in the right positions, producing the right results," said Superintendent Dr. Jon Andes. "We are deeply grateful for their commitment and hard work because they are making a difference for our kids. In addition, we are grateful to our community. Our community members support our schools; they offer their time, talents, and donations for our children."

"We also thank our County Commissioners for funding the positions, programs, and services needed to meet the needs of our children. Sustaining academic excellence requires continued funding. Our investments in our children today will yield invaluable dividends tomorrow — for our communities, counties,

state, and nation — for generations to come.

"Our 2008 MSA scores," continued Andes, "are only part of the story for 2007-2008. We realized successes in every aspect of the school system, and we plan on building on these successes in the 2008-2009 school year. Our mission will always be to provide the best education for our children. Kids come first, and that's the real bottom-line."

The successes realized in the 2007-2008 school year complete the whole story. Below are some of the many accolades achieved over the course of the school year:

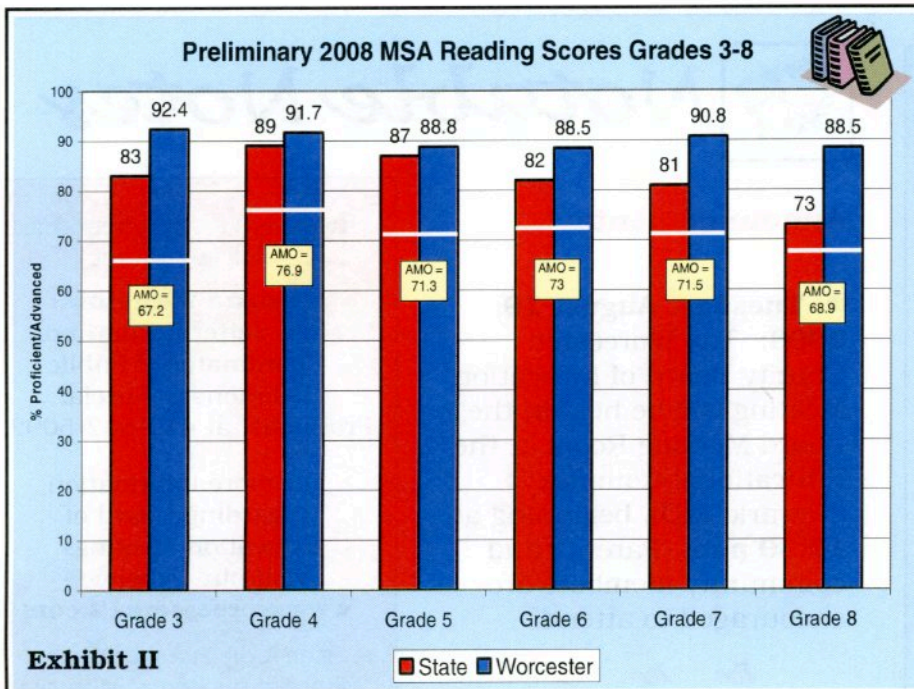
- Six (6) schools were named Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies (PBIS) Exemplar Schools, the highest honor for schools participating in this nationwide character education program.
- Five (5) athletic teams were state champions and two students also earned individual state titles, a record number of state champions in any given year.
- Six (6) schools earned recognition from the Maryland State Department of Education for outstanding performance on the 2007 MSAs.
- Based on 2007 MSA scores, Ocean City Elementary School was the first elementary school in Maryland to achieve 100 percent proficiency in reading and in math, while Showell Elementary School was close, with 99

percent in reading and 97.9 percent in math.

- Nine (9) teachers became Nationally Board Certified, a record number in any given year.
- The school system had the lowest dropout rate in the state and the second highest on-time graduation rate in the state.
- Worcester County Public Schools consistently ranks in the top 5 for dollars spent in the classroom, when compared with all 24 Maryland school systems.
- National school recognitions included Panasonic National School Leadership Change Award Finalist, Character Education School of the Year, Met-Life-NASSP Breakthrough School, and NJROTC state champions in Rifle.
- Student awards included National Merit Finalist, Outstanding Gifted & Talented Student in the State of Maryland, MESA Student of the Year, Woman of Tomorrow recipients, Service Star recipients, College Board Advanced Placement Scholars, Senior Scholar Athletes, Presidential Service Awards, Special Olympic Medalists, and various Band and Choral Awards.
- Teacher/Coach awards included Bayside Coaches of the Year, Community Foundation Excellence in Education Awards, Community Foundation Leadership Award, Mead Fellowship Scholarship Award, Gifted and Talented Award, Wal-Mart Teachers of the Year, Worcester County Teacher of the Year, and School Teachers of the Year.

"The Board of Education wants to commend the Superintendent and his staff for the outstanding 2007-2008 school year," said Mumford. "We are looking forward to another outstanding year in 2008-2009."

"In fact, the Board is truly fortunate that Jon Andes agreed to serve our school system for another four-year term," continued Mumford. "We have every confidence in him and in his educational team to continue to get the job done. If anyone can continue to move our kids forward while dealing with fiscal constraints, it is our Superintendent of Schools."





Budget Briefs

FY 09 Budget Reductions

Worcester County Public Schools has been informed by county government that it will not provide supplemental funding for unanticipated expenditures. As a result, changes to the FY 09 Operating Budget have been implemented to set aside \$1.2 million to cover potential budget overages due to escalating energy costs and other unanticipated expenditures during the 2008-2009 school year.

Unanticipated expenditures can occur when energy costs rise (such as for fuel and utilities) and when necessary services must be provided for newly enrolled students with special needs.

"Although every effort has been made to minimize the impact of these budget reductions on our students and classrooms, some effects will reach our classrooms," said Superintendent Dr. Jon Andes.

The following FY 09 reductions were approved by the Board of Education at their July 15 Meeting:

Reduce School & Central Office Allocations for Supplies & Materials	\$625,853
Reduce School & Central Office Equipment Allocations	\$86,794
Cancel Perfect Attendance Trip for September 2008	\$20,000
Reduce School Field Trip Allocations	\$22,177
Limit Employee Tuition Reimbursements	\$95,361
Reduce Staff Development	\$54,700
Reduce Out of County Travel to State Mandated Meetings	\$5,000
Hire Long-Term Substitutes in place of Contract Teaching Positions	\$60,000
Increase Rates for Building Use	\$2,500
Postpone FY 09 Capital Projects:	
Playground Maintenance	\$40,000
Portable Maintenance	\$25,000
Bathroom Upgrades at Berlin Intermediate	\$16,000
Generator Wall at Ocean City Elementary	\$18,000
Postpone Installation of Elementary Wireless Networks	\$189,100
Total Proposed FY 09 Cost Savings:	\$1,260,485

Board of Education

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Jon Andes, Superintendent

Ed Barber, Assistant Superintendent for Administration

Richard Walker, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction



Notable Notes

Announcements:

● **Tuesday, August 19, 2008:** The Worcester County Board of Education Meeting will be held in the Board Meeting Room at the Educational Complex (Newark, MD), beginning at **12:30 p.m.** Parents and community members are encouraged to attend.



If you have any questions, please contact

Barbara Witherow,
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Coordinator of Public
Relations & Special
Programs, at 410-632-5092.

For more information
regarding Board of
Education Meetings,
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(Click on School Board,
followed by Board Minutes.)