

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Date: October 21, 2003
To: Board of Education
From: Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent
Title: Proposed Revision to School Calendar, 2003-2004
Originator: Mr. Douglas Neilson, Chief Communications Officer, Communications
Resource Staff:

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Education approve the proposed revision to the 2003-04 school calendar.

TO: Baltimore County Board of Education
FROM: Douglas J. Neilson, Chief Communications Officer
RE: Proposed Revision to School Calendar, 2003-2004
DATE: October 8, 2003

During Tropical Storm Isabel, Baltimore County Public Schools were closed systemically on Thursday, September 18; Friday, September 19; and Monday, September 22 due to the storm and the damage it caused throughout the county. Maryland Superintendent of Public Schools, Dr. Nancy Grasmick, has granted a waiver for all school systems that were closed on Friday, September 19th, which leave BCPS with two days of instruction that needs to make-up.

When the calendar was planned for the 2003-2004 school year, the Calendar Committee included seven "snow" days. With the winter months still to come, the Committee recommended to the Superintendent and the Executive Leadership Team to use one of the available snow days and the Professional Development Day scheduled for February 13, 2004 as the best way to recapture the lost instructional time. This would leave six snow days for use, if needed, during the coming winter months.

In formulating this recommendation, the Calendar Committee studied the remaining calendar days and found that the only viable options available to the Superintendent were:

- * Friday, October 17, 2003 - Professional Development Day. This is a statewide professional development day, which many members of TABCO use to attend MSTA's annual conference in Ocean City., Maryland.
- * Monday, October 20, 2003 - Professional Development Day - The Office of Professional Development and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction have planned several systemic activities and events for this day. Also, with less than two weeks notice to parents, many could be inconvenienced by changing this date with such short notice.
- * Wednesday, November 26, 2003 - Professional Development Day - As all elementary schools will be closed for students on Tuesday, November 25th, Elementary Conference Day, it is illogical to have all students return on Wednesday, November 26th as all schools will be closed on Thursday & Friday, November 27th & 28th, for the Thanksgiving holiday.
- * Friday, February 13, 2004 - Professional Development Day - There are currently no systemic activities planned by the Office of Professional Development posted on the calendar. Additionally, by returning this date to instructional time now, there would

be ample opportunity for all concerned to rearrange their schedule without any major inconvenience.

Before making this recommendation, the Calendar Committee contacted many of the key stakeholder groups. The overwhelming response was in favor of taking back one or more of the professional development days in order to make-up lost instructional time.