The Board of Education of Charles County held a Community Town Hall on October 28, 2019, at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 5980 Radio Station Road, La Plata, MD, 20645. The meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. and adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

1. **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**
   Virginia R. McGraw, Chairman; Latina Wilson, Vice Chairman; Jennifer Abell; Tajala Battle-Lockhart; Elizabeth Brown; David Hancock; Michael Lukas; and student Board member DeJuan Woods, Jr.

   **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**
   None

   **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT**
   Kimberly A. Hill, Ed.D., superintendent of schools
   Amy Hollstein, Deputy Superintendent
   Randy Sotomayor, assistant superintendent of fiscal services
   Mike Heim, assistant superintendent of supporting services
   Linda Gill, executive director of schools
   Marvin Jones, executive director of schools
   Eric Schwartz, staff attorney
   Katie O’Malley-Simpson, Director of Communications
   Kessandra Stubblefield, Executive Assistant to the Elected Board

2. **OPENING**
   Chairman McGraw opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. She read a prepared statement on the purpose of the town hall as part of a commitment to hearing from the community about issues that are important to them. Mrs. McGraw introduced Amy Hollstein, deputy superintendent and Eric Schwartz, staff attorney, who shared a brief presentation on the Kirwan Commission’s Blueprint for Excellence. Following the presentation, Vice Chairman Tina Wilson shared the format of the town hall and read aloud the rules for the forum. She encouraged speakers to offer community suggestions for improving public schools and ideas for the future of public education.
Doug Sayers, parent of three students in Charles County Public Schools, (CCPS), read a prepared statement offering several recommendations to the Board. Highlights included recommendations for a balanced budget; addressing discipline issues and the security and safety of teachers and students; and avoiding increased class sizes and diverse education and career paths for CCPS students. Chairman McGraw asked him to email his comments to Board members and staff.

Amy Lane, 4-H University of Maryland Extension, shared ways in which her organization can support CCPS, including assisting in grading lesson plans and training teachers.

Brian Johnson, expressed concerns about a professor at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) who, he said, “shares her political preferences” with students instead of sticking to educational topics. He asked Board members their opinions on whether this action is a “good idea?” Mrs. Battle-Lockhart and Mrs. Abell said professors “should stay on topic.” He also shared the need for more emphasis on Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs in CCPS since some students do not want to attend college after graduation.

Linda McLaughlin, president, Education Association of Charles County (EACC) thanked the Board for the review of the Kirwan Commission’s Blueprint for Excellence. Comments shared included questions on how CCPS plans to expand college and career readiness under the Kirwan Plan; add cybersecurity to the CTE curriculum and to create a path for “soft employment” for CTE students.

Darryl Gray, parent, said he could not find information on the school system website about CTE programs. Mrs. Hollstein said she would email him the link from the school system’s website.

Maureen Mears, parent, thanked Board members for the successful CTE CASE program at Maurice J. McDonough High School. She read a prepared statement to include questions on what measures are in place to ensure equity in CTE programs at all schools and financial literacy options for students. She asked Board members to continue to expand CTE opportunities to students.

Robin Cooper, asked the position of the Board on implementing uniforms for all CCPS students and for providing vouchers for those students who cannot afford them? Chairman McGraw stated that the Board does not have a position and that each school’s administrator makes the decision. Superintendent Hill shared outcomes from members of the Discipline Review Committee regarding the dress code and student uniforms. She stated that during a recent meeting by committee members, there was no “ground swell” on implementing uniforms. Ms. Cooper asked if a survey could be made available to parents regarding uniforms. Superintendent Hill said it is possible that her request for a survey “may” be considered.
Robert Sondheimer, teacher, said CCPS should concentrate on “the basics” of spelling, grammar and multiplication tables and the need for more school counselors.

Lisa Ambers, nonprofit owner and former winner of the Board’s Be the Difference Award shared how her company works with schools in areas such as financial literacy, anti-bullying, girls clubs, mentoring and social etiquette. She questioned how her organization can obtain funds to help other non-profit organizations like hers.

Josylyn Chaplain, parent, expressed concerns about the “lack of focus on multiplication and writing” in schools. She said all teachers should focus on writing skills.

Mrs. Hollstein shared ways in which the school system is currently addressing these areas to include a program called Revision Assistant and training for content teachers.

Representatives from Eagle Life Learning Foundation of Largo, MD shared information on how their organization addresses the needs of African American and Latino males.

Chairman McGraw thanked everyone for sharing.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman McGraw adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.