

EXHIBIT 8



CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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STEPHEN H. GUTHRIE
Superintendent

June 12, 2012

The Honorable Doug Howard, President
Board of Carroll County Commissioners
Carroll County Government
225 N. Center Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157

Dear Commissioner Howard: *Doug*

I am writing to update you on our progress with the Comprehensive Facilities Utilization Study and also ask you for your assistance. As you are aware, we have begun the study and it is scheduled to be completed in December.

First, let me thank you for completing the initial community survey, which I informed you of by letter on May 30, 2012. I would like the Board of Commissioners to become further involved by recommending two representatives to participate in the study by serving on the work teams. As the committee work is now underway, I hope to receive these names as soon as possible. If you provide me with the names and contact information for recommended participants, Mr. O'Neal, who is coordinating this effort, will immediately involve them.

In addition to the data obtained through the initial, community survey, our process will incorporate a tremendous amount of research to include applicable laws, regulations and policies, data review and analysis, stakeholder input, and industry standards, where appropriate. As a part of this research, I am interested in providing the study group with additional information based on the thoughts of the Commissioners. I am not looking for a consensus, but informal reactions to questions being raised that fall outside of my authority or that of the Board of Education.

To that end, Mr. Jon O'Neal and I will be making appointments to meet with you and discuss your reactions to these outstanding questions. However, to give you a sense of what we are asking, below are some of the questions being raised by our citizens now that they are aware of the study:

1. Should the Board of Education vote to close a school(s) and the facility reverts back to County what are the planned actions that the you feel is appropriate to take with the facility;
2. Should the Board of Education vote to close a school(s) and the property reverts back to County, what are the planned actions do you feel is appropriate to take with the property;
3. Should the public use of facilities both in the building and the fields that presently occur at each school facility continue;
4. If the you feel that the property should be sold, what impact, if any, will the proceeds have on the school system's operating or capital budget;

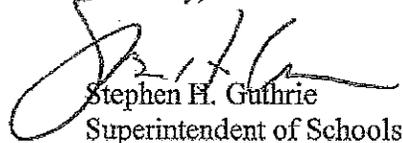
5. Is your response to question #4 different if debt is still owed on the facility and/or property;
6. Is real estate market information for school facilities and property available;
7. What are your thoughts for both the system-wide and individual school levels for enrollment versus capacity, assuming that the Commissioners do not believe that each school in the county should be at 100% of capacity;
8. Relative to question #7, which of the following factors do you think are legitimate considerations when determining the ideal enrollment versus capacity ratio:
 - a. Room for future growth in overall student population;
 - b. Special education programs and students that have a very disproportionate ratio of student to teacher space and staffing; and
 - c. Negative impact on the general student-teacher ratio and class size that would result in a misalignment with state law, regulation, or Board of Education policy; and
9. Do you support using existing space for developing programs that will provide better service to Carroll students, which may include initial start-up costs, if there are also a future operational savings possible? For instance, the development of special education programs that will both return non-public out-of-county students to Carroll and avoid the future placement of students out-of-county.

For this information to be considered fully as a part of the study, I hope to meet with all of you no later than July 16, 2012. I understand that the request for Commissioners' representatives may require public discussion by the Commissioners and, as always, I will make my staff available to assist in that discussion.

Finally, I want to ensure that you are available to participate in a joint work session with the Board of Education on January 9, 2013. We will formally present the results of the committee's work at this meeting. We will review the process of the study and obtain reactions to possible actions based on the options presented. It remains the goal to complete the report from the study and present it to both boards in December 2012, allowing for time to review the report in advance of the work session. From my perspective it is imperative that the boards jointly discuss the findings of the study and attempt to achieve consensus for action.

The Board of Education and I are fully committed to working in partnership with the Board of Commissioners on this project. Thank you in advance for the consideration that the Board of Commissioners will give the specifics of this request. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Stephen H. Guthrie
Superintendent of Schools

c: Board of Education
File

Discussion with Commissioner Howard
Facilities Study
July 25, 2012

Commissioner Appointees – DH does not believe any action was taken. It came up while he was away for death in family. DH will revisit with BCC now that he is back. SHG – we will get them up to speed as we are informed and involve them in the rest of the process.

SHG shared the purpose of these discussions. No ascribing comments to specific Commissioners. Synthesize comments and then review for common ground.

1. Should the Board of Education vote to close a school(s) and the facility reverts back to County what are the planned actions that the you feel is appropriate to take with the facility; SHG provided old examples of Hampstead, Union Bridge, New Windsor. DH – only consistently discussed BCC need is a business incubator. Believed they looked at some very old former schools. Ex. – 20 classrooms in a building somewhere that could be utilized. Discussion has been part of non-profit workgroup as contingency to prevent disruption of services. Honestly don't think there is any market. Entertain the idea of some County uses in a five-year period.

SHG – not sure that the cost would be prohibitive to convert to business space. DH – agree. Would have to be a limited, temporary County use.

2. Should the Board of Education vote to close a school(s) and the property reverts back to County, what are the planned actions do you feel is appropriate to take with the property; SHG – concern was raised by municipalities. DH – Good question. Lack of understanding that we would simply take on your maintenance cost. Not sure how that would be better or different. Same question with Charles Carroll. Fields and building as community center came up.
3. Should the public use of facilities both in the building and the fields that presently occur at each school facility continue; SHG – Also CCC and Rec Councils and community groups. We are confused about where the savings would be. DH – If you surplus it, it would have to be us. DH – Also wouldn't there be new standards to put an old school back online.
4. If the you feel that the property should be sold, what impact, if any, will the proceeds have on the school system's operating or capital budget;
5. Is your response to question #4 different if debt is still owed on the facility and/or property;
6. Is real estate market information for school facilities and property available; DH – Doesn't think there is any market
7. What are your thoughts for both the system-wide and individual school levels for enrollment versus capacity, assuming that the Commissioners do not believe that each school in the county should be at 100% of capacity; SHG – framed this discussion. Offered some explanation and focused on what 100% means. 94-95% would be ideal

capacity for us in our mind. Used analogy of unemployment rate. What are the Commissioners looking at as an ideal? DH - pointed out awareness of functional capacity for MS v. state-rated capacity. DH - No idea of others' standards. Obviously you have to have some room for movement and growth. SHG - Then I am instructing my team to refocus that discussion from 100% to something workable, which I know may upset some. DH - Understand. Also have to account for the fact that you may have spikes at certain schools in any given year and you can't redistrict.

8. Relative to question #7, which of the following factors do you think are legitimate considerations when determining the ideal enrollment versus capacity ratio:
 - a. Room for future growth in overall student population;
 - b. Special education programs and students that have a very disproportionate ratio of student to teacher space and staffing; and
 - c. Negative impact on the general student-teacher ratio and class size that would result in a misalignment with state law, regulation, or Board of Education policy; and
9. Do you support using existing space for developing programs that will provide better service to Carroll students, which may include initial start-up costs, if there are also a future operational savings possible? For instance, the development of special education programs that will both return non-public out-of-county students to Carroll and avoid the future placement of students out-of-county. SHG - some options aren't closing schools but rather utilizing space and trying to move or grow programs to increase service or provide it locally. Gave examples of autism programs and other community uses. DH - Understand and support those options.