











“Literature provides a powerful lens to understand cultures, communities and experiences that are both different from and similar to our own,” said Superintendent Jack R. Smith. “Offering unlimited access to this curated collection is just one step in a multipronged effort to engage our community on issues of racism, bias and equity.”

MCPS is working to [interrupt bias and expand learning opportunities](#) so that all students feel valued and learn at their full potential. As part of those efforts, an [anti-racist system audit](#) will focus on evaluating the current climate at MCPS, identifying the needs and recommending actions required to combat racism. It is anticipated that the findings and recommendations will be presented to the Board of Education in October 2020.

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**For more information contact the Public Information Office**

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**From:** [Montgomery County Public Schools](#)  
**To:** [ALL MCPS Employees](#)  
**Subject:** MCPS Press Release: Board of Education Meets Virtually and Takes Tentative Action on Return to School Framework; Renames Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School; Awards Contract for Anti-Racist System Audit; And Takes Action On Board Policies  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 12:59:49 PM

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Maryland's Largest School District

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

## **Board of Education Meets Virtually and Takes Tentative Action on Return to School Framework; Renames Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School; Awards Contract for Anti-Racist System Audit; And Takes Action On Board Policies**



**November 17, 2020**

The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) conducted a virtual business meeting on Tuesday, November 10, 2020. During the meeting, the Board tentatively approved Montgomery County Public Schools' (MCPS) Return to School Framework; voted to rename Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School as Odessa Shannon Middle School; discussed the reimagining of the Office of Human Resources and Development; awarded a contract for the MCPS Anti-Racist System Audit; and took action on two board policies.

The agenda for the meeting, with links to related materials, can be viewed on the [Board of Education website](#).

Watch the recording of the [November 10, 2020, meeting](#).

### **Return to School Framework**

The Board received an update and voted to take tentative action on MCPS' framework for the phased return of students to in-person learning beginning January 2021. The framework was presented to the Board of Education on November 6 and outlines the district's plan for a phased-in return to in-person instruction. MCPS will begin a phased-in return to in-person instruction beginning January 12, 2021, with a focus on specific special education programs and certain Career and Technology Education programs that require hands-on experiences for licensure. If health metrics continue to be met, larger groups of students will begin phasing in on February 1, 2021, the start of the second semester. MCPS can only move forward with this plan if health metrics are met. MCPS

parents have been asked to [complete a survey](#) to indicate whether their child(ren) will remain in a virtual-only model for the second semester or if they would like to engage in in-person learning experiences. The survey closes December 3, 2020.

MCPS continues to collaborate closely with the county health officer and other county leaders on its Return to School plan.

View the [presentation](#).

Read the [Resolution](#).

### **Renaming of Col. E Brooke Lee Middle School**

The Board of Education unanimously approved renaming Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School as Odessa Shannon Middle School. At its meeting on June 29, 2020, the Board of Education unanimously adopted a resolution (Resolution No. 350-20) that set forth the following three names for consideration for the re-naming of Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School: Josiah Henson, Katherine Johnson, and Odessa Shannon. At its meeting on September 10, 2020, the Board continued its discussion on the re-naming process and voted to recommend four names, including the addition of Brigadier General Charles Edward McGee, to the School Re-naming Advisory Committee (Committee) for consideration (Resolution No. 424-20). In accordance with MCPS Regulation FFA-RA, *Naming School Facilities*, the Committee was convened by Mrs. Kimberly N. Hayden Williams, principal, Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School. Pursuant to MCPS Regulation FFA-RA, the final responsibility for officially renaming a school building rests with the Board of Education.

In 2018, the Board awarded Odessa Shannon a Distinguished Service Award for Public Education. She worked tirelessly for more than 40 years on behalf of students, especially students of color, to receive equal educational opportunities. She began her public career as a teacher in Baltimore City public schools. Later, she worked for the federal government and became the national program director for the Equal Opportunity Commission. She also served as deputy director of the Montgomery County Department of Family Resources and executive director of the Montgomery County Human Rights Commission. She was elected to the Board of Education in 1982 as the first African-American woman elected to public office in Montgomery County. Although she resigned from the Board in 1984, she continued to be involved in public education and MCPS. She has received numerous awards, including the NAACP (Washington Committee) Legal Defense and Educational Award for Exceptional Achievement in Advancing the Rights of Minorities and Women, and Maryland's Hornbook Award for Outstanding Service to Education.

Read the [resolution](#).

### **Reimagination of the Office of Human Resources and Development**

The Board received an update from MCPS staff on the reimagination of the Office of Human Resources and Development (OHRD). OHRD is committed to the All Means All



approach to student success. In collaboration with other key offices across MCPS, OHRD's reimagining work aims to address the disparities in student outcomes by closing gaps in access, opportunity, and achievement for all students, in all of MCPS classrooms and schools. Explicitly, OHRD will address the dimensions of teaching quality and school leadership quality that are presented in the MCPS All In: Equity and Achievement Framework. The impact of the work of OHRD is evident across schools as recruiting teams identify new talent, onboard them to the organization, provide scaffolding and support methodologies, and guide them through effective professional development; all with the goal of retaining high-quality educators in MCPS.

Read the [memorandum to the Board](#).

### **Award of Contract: MCPS Anti-Racist System Audit**

The Board voted to award a contract to Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium to conduct an Anti-racist System Audit for a total amount not to exceed \$454,680 for Fiscal Year 2021. At the Board of Education meeting on July 14, 2020, Dr. Monifa B. McKnight, deputy superintendent, presented the vision behind the implementation of a systemwide Anti-racist System Audit. Throughout August and September 2020, stakeholder feedback from students, staff, and the community was collected and synthesized to inform the Request for Proposals (RFP). At its work session on October 19, 2020, Mr. Troy E. Boddy, director, Equity Initiatives Unit; Ms. Stephanie S. Sheron, executive director, Office of the Deputy Superintendent; and Mr. John S. Landesman, coordinator, Study Circles, presented an update to the Board on the work completed thus far around the audit. The Anti-racist System Audit will provide an opportunity to examine the district's systems, practices, and policies that do not create access, opportunities, and equitable outcomes for every student's academic and social emotional well-being. Furthermore, the audit will provide the opportunity to examine not only the student experience; it presents the occasion to analyze policies and practices that impact staff, as well. Therefore, MCPS will engage in a systemwide audit to examine the following areas: Workforce Diversity, Work Conditions, K–12 Curriculum Review, Equity Achievement Framework Progress, Community Relations and Engagement, and Evaluation of School Cultures.

Read the [memorandum to the Board](#).

### **Action on Board Policies**

#### ***Policy IDA, School Year Calendar***

The Board voted to temporarily suspend the part of Board Policy IDA, *School Year Calendar*, that requires the superintendent of schools to present the proposed school year calendar for the following school year to the Board's Policy Management Committee (Committee) for review in early fall, as well as the part of Policy IDA that requires the Board to adopt the calendar for the upcoming school year no later than the end of December 2020. The Board also approved a modification to the timeline for the adoption of the 2021–2022 school year calendar and directed the superintendent to

return to the Committee with a proposal for developing the 2021–2022 School Year Calendar when future conditions and requirements are clearer, no later than March 15, 2021.

Read the [memorandum to the Board](#).

### ***Tentative Action, Policy IQD***

The Board voted to take tentative action on Board Policy IQD, *Academic Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities*. A July 11, 2019, memorandum for the Board requested that the Board’s Policy Management Committee (Committee) review Policy IQD, benchmark with similarly situated school systems, review system data on eligibility, and consider bringing forward a recommendation to the Board during the 2019–2020 school year. The proposed amendments in the Committee recommended draft encourage student engagement in extracurricular activities, including but not limited to interscholastic sports, student government, fine arts, academic teams, and other group activities. Proposed amendments are supportive of broad student engagement and identify academic eligibility standards for middle school and high school students’ participation in interscholastic sports. The Committee also recommends that the policy be renamed Policy IQD, *Extracurricular Activities*. The policy will now be sent out for public comment.

Read the [memorandum to the Board](#).

### **Annual Legislative Priorities**

The Board reviewed and held a discussion on its 2021 Annual Legislative Priorities. The Board discussed its key priorities aligned with its core values of learning, respect, relationships, excellence, and equity.

View the [2021 Annual Legislative Priorities](#).

### **Recognitions**

The Board approved the resolution recognizing November 11, 2020, as [Veterans Day](#).

The Board approved the resolution declaring November 16–20, 2020, [as American Education Week in MCPS](#).

### **Future Meetings**

The Board of Education is scheduled to hold its next business meeting on Thursday, December 3, 2020. The virtual format of this meeting will continue, given the current COVID-19 crisis. The agenda is subject to change. Please check the Board of Education website and [meeting calendar](#) for further information.

### **About the Board of Education**

The Montgomery County Board of Education is the official educational policymaking body in the county. The Board is responsible for the direction and operation of the

public school system. The Board consists of seven county residents elected by voters for a four-year term and a student elected by secondary school students for a one-year term. Board members are elected countywide but run at-large or from the Board district in which they reside.

Montgomery County Board of Education: Mrs. Shebra L. Evans, president; Ms. Brenda Wolff, vice president. Members: Ms. Jeanette E. Dixon, Dr. Judith Docca, Mrs. Patricia O'Neill, Ms. Karla Silvestre, Mrs. Rebecca Smondrowski, and Mr. Nicholas Asante, student member. Dr. Jack R. Smith, superintendent of schools and secretary-treasurer. Office of the Board: 240-740-3030.

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