



OPEN SPECIAL SESSION

TIME: 4:00 p.m.

Location: J.M. Tawes Career & Technology Center

PRESENT: Board Members: Chairperson Warner Sumpter, Vice Chairperson Margo Green-Gale, Mr. Troy Brittingham, Mrs. Penny Nicholson; Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John B. Gaddis, Deputy Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Tom Davis and Director of Schools, Mrs. Tracie Bartemy; Board Attorney, Mr. Fulton Jeffers and Recording Secretary, Ms. Melissa Tilghman were also present.

ABSENT: Board Member, Mr. Robert Wells was excused from the meeting.

Chairperson Sumpter declared a quorum and called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

On the motion of Board Member Nicholson and a second by Board Member Brittingham, the Board voted 4:0 to approve the adoption of the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Somerset County Public Schools' 2017-2018 Academic Calendar Change

Dr. Gaddis and the Board discussed the State's denial of SCPS request to have the additional three days students missed from school due to inclement weather waived. He stated that Baltimore County was the only system who received the waiver request. Dr. Gaddis informed the Board that next school year, there will be a minimum of three inclement weather days included in the calendar. Once those days are used, holidays will be taken.

Chairperson Sumpter stated that he attended the waiver hearings and the State Board determined that the eastern shore was effected by flooding, not inclement weather.

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, a motion was made by Vice Chairperson Green-Gale and a second by Board Member Brittingham to approve the 2017-2018 Academic Calendar change as follows:

- June 14, 2018 will now be a full day for all staff and students
- June 15, 2018 will now be a full day for all staff and students
- June 18, 2018 will be a ½ day for students and a full day for staff
- June 19, 2018 will be the last day of school, with a ½ day for students and a full day for staff

The motion carried 4:0 and the revised 2017-2018 Academic Calendar was approved.

Dr. Gaddis stated that any staff member that has a vacation or other commitment during those extended school days that was planned prior to April 24, 2018 will be excused for those days. Proof must be provided.

Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERNIP) (A)

Mrs. Beth Whitelock, Supervisor of Human Resources presented the Early Retirement Incentive Plan to the Board. (See Attachment A)

On the recommendation of the Superintendent, a motion was made by Board member Brittingham and seconded by Board Member Nicholson to approve the Early Retirement Incentive Plan. The motion carried 4:0.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Board Member Nicholson and a second by Vice Chairperson Green-Gale, the Board voted 4:0 to adjourn the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Dr. John B. Gaddis, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by Recording Secretary, Melissa Tilghman

Brigidaire (Ret.) General Warner I. Sumpter
Board of Education Chairman

**Somerset County Public Schools
Early Retirement Notice Incentive Plan (ERNIP)
Guidelines**

Full implementation of the (ERNIP) plan with an effective date of July 1, 2018, is subject to final approval of the Somerset County Board of Education and final approval of the Board's budget.

Rationale for Developing a Retirement Incentive Plan (ERNIP)

- A. Maintain a competitive work force
- B. Permit the Somerset County Public School System to project their future vacancies with a greater degree of accuracy, which consequently provides:
 - 1. Development of subsequent years salary budget with a greater degree of precision and,
 - 2. An opportunity for advanced hiring strategies knowing the expected turnover
- C. Provide incentive for retirements that otherwise might not have occurred with the goal to prevent layoff (RIF's)
- D. Create permanent budget savings
- E. Avoid unemployment costs

Early Retirement Notice Incentive Plan (ERNIP) Guidelines:

- 1. Eligibility Requirements:
 - a) Employees must have at least 30 years of service as of 6/30/2018 and be eligible for full service retirement benefits described in the State Retirement Plan in which they are a participant.
 - b) Employees must retire from Somerset County Public Schools under an ordinary service retirement.
- 2. Employees must submit application for the ERNIP to the Supervisor of Human Resources no later than May 18, 2018 including:
 - a) Signature of employee representing his/her understanding of the ERNIP
 - b) Signature of witness
- 3. The employee will sign an agreement stating he/she will retire no later than July 1, 2018. The Superintendent of Schools will seek Board action if applicable. Human Resources will notify the employee in writing of the Board's action.
- 4. The ERNIP will result in a retirement incentive payment equal to 10%* of the employee's base salary as of June 30, 2018.

* The Maryland State Retirement Agency has ruled that ERNIP will not count toward earnable compensation for retirement calculations.

5. The ERNIP will be granted to the first 10 employees that submit the enrollment form and have approval from the Superintendent. Eligible employees that have already submitted notice of intent to retire prior to May 1, 2018 will be eligible for the incentive and will NOT count towards the first 10 employees to submit the ERNIP enrollment form.
6. If due to an unforeseen hardship situation, an employee decides he/she cannot retire July 1, 2018, the employee must request in writing to the Human Resource Supervisor, a special consideration of rescinding their retirement. The request must be made within 15 days prior to the employee's scheduled retirement date, and state in detail the hardship conditions that have led to this request for waiver. The Superintendent or his/her designee, at his/her sole discretion, may take the recommendation to the Board for approval.
 - a) If approval from the Board is not granted, the terms of the signed agreement will stand.
 - b) If the Board approval is granted, the employee will not receive the 10% retirement incentive payment on July 15, 2018. The incentive payment will then be given to the next employee that submitted their ERNIP enrollment form, as indicated by time and date stamp received in the Human Resources Department.
 - c) In either case, the employee will be notified in writing by Human Resources, of the Board's action.

**Somerset County Public Schools
Early Retirement Notice Incentive Plan (ERNIP)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)**

Does the ERNIP 10% count toward my retirement?

No-a final ruling was issued by the Maryland State Retirement Agency in 2008 regarding a similar matter.

Who is affected by the ERNIP?

Any employee who has at least 30 years of service and is eligible for full ordinary service retirement and is enrolled in the Maryland State Retirement/Pension System.

When does the ERNIP begin?

It is effective July 1, 2018, which means if you retire July 1, 2018 you will receive 10% of your FY18 base salary as a stipend on July 15, 2018.

How can I confirm when I am eligible for full retirement?

You must refer to your retirement benefits statement issued by Maryland State Retirement Agency. Contact the agency directly at 1-800-492-5909. You can verify your hire date with the Board of Education – Human Resources Department.

Can I use my unused sick leave to get full retirement?

No, your unused sick leave is added to your benefit after you are eligible for full retirement.

Can I use my military service to get full retirement?

Yes, (if you are in the Maryland State Pension System). You must adhere to MSRA's established guidelines regarding this matter.

When do I have to submit the enrollment form?

You must submit the enrollment form to the Supervisor of Human Resources no later than MAY 18, 2018.

What happens when I submit the enrollment form?

The Human Resource Department will verify that you are eligible for full service retirement and have at least 30 years of service.

What is the benefit of the ERNIP?

Once your enrollment form is approved by the Board, you will receive the retirement incentive payment of 10% of your base salary.

What if I have an unforeseen hardship and cannot retire July 1, 2018?

The employee must submit a request to rescind his/her retirement to the Supervisor of Human Resources. The request must be made within 15 days prior to July 1, 2018 and state in detail the hardship conditions. The Superintendent, at his/her sole discretion, may take the recommendation to the Board for approval.

What if I still have questions regarding the plan?

You can email Beth Whitelock at bwhitelock@somerset.k12.md.us. Specific questions regarding the state pension system please contact a SRA Retirement Counselor at 1-800-492-5909.

Will the ERNIP be offered again in 2019?

There is no guarantee that this plan will be offered in 2019.

What if I have out of state service or private school service that I can purchase to make me eligible for full service retirement?

The ERNIP requires you to be eligible for full service retirement and have at least 30 years of experience.

The enrollment form requires my signature to be witnessed. Does the witness have to be someone in the Human Resource Department?

No, the witness can be anyone. Please print the name under the signature.

When will the 10% be paid?

You will receive the retirement incentive payment of 10% of your base salary on July 15, 2018.