

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, FEBRUARY 15, 2001**

President Orlow convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on February 15, 2001.

Board Members Present: Marc Orlow, Robert O'Neill, Robert Carroll, Gary Johnson, Stuart Kessler, Hugh Lipshutz, Thomas Marchozzi, Jack Pinheiro, and Thomas Yunker.

Board Members Absent: None.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; R. Scott Klinger, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administrative Services and Personnel; Patricia A. Iannelli, Director of Educational Services; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer; Alicia Fabrizio and Ashley Kurtz, Board Student Representatives; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Patricia Campbell, Principal – PWHS; Linda Romano, Principal - CMS, Charles Graham, Director of Technology; William Wells, Chairman - Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation; Adam Bailey, Teacher – PWHS, Tom Gibson; Donald Newmeyer; William Price, Head Football Coach – CMS, Chris Witkowsky; and parents and friends of the middle school students and coaches being recognized by the Board.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance. He followed with an announcement that the district had received a grant in the amount of \$300,000.00 in support of its performance-based pay program for professional staff. Mr. Orlow appreciated state support of the district's innovative program. He noted that few districts in the commonwealth were receiving grants and that Colonial School District's would be the largest.

Mr. Orlow recognized Linda Romano, Principal – CMS, who introduced William Price, the head coach of the middle school football team which had had an undefeated season. Mr. Price recognized the players and coaches of the team for their outstanding effort. All those recognized received certificates of achievement from the Board. A complete list of all those recognized is contained in Attachment #1 to these minutes.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on the minutes of the Work Session of 01/16/01, the Regular Meeting of 01/18/01, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 01/23/01, the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 01/25/01, and the Special Meeting of 01/29/01, shown as Enclosures #1 through #4 and #29. Mr. Pinheiro received a confirmation that the minutes of the special meeting had been updated as requested. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the minutes as amended. On a roll call vote all board members voted in favor of Enclosures #1 through #4. All board members except Mr. Kessler voted in favor of Enclosure #29. Mr. Kessler abstained. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow asked for action on the financial reports for the month of January 2001. The reports included the Budget Transfers dated February 2001; the Bond

Fund Report, Capital Projects Report, General Fund/Federal Program Bills and Capital Reserve Fund Report for the month ending 1/31/01; the Food Service Reports for the months ending 11/30/00 and 12/31/00; the Outstanding Investment Reports, Cash Flow Summaries, Comparisons of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Tax Escrow Reports, and Reconciliations of Cash Accounts for the month ending 01/31/01; the Budget Analysis dated 02/08/01; and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 01/31/01, as shown in Enclosures #5 through #16. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. On a roll call vote, all except Mr. Marchozzi voted in favor. Mr. Marchozzi abstained. The motion was carried. Mr. Marchozzi cited his inability to attend the work session at which the reports had been discussed as the reason for his abstention.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None

Staff Report: Patricia Campbell, Principal, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School gave a presentation on the new foreign language laboratory. She thanked the Board for its support of the language lab and gave a Power Point overview of the development, operation and use of the facility. She also shared a number of student comments on the new lab. Adam Bailey, a Spanish teacher at the high school provided additional information on the current and future uses of the facility.

Mr. William Wells, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation, requested Board approval of mini and major grants presented for the Board's consideration. A complete list of the grants is attached to these minutes as Attachment #2. Mr. Wells responded to several questions from Board members about additional information that the foundation board had requested on a major grant application and the foundation's interest in supporting an honorarium for a professor who would handle the training of some mathematics teachers. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the grants as requested by the foundation board. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow noted that two Board policies were on the agenda for second reading: Policy #001, Board Bylaws and Policy #004, Board Committee Functions. Mr. Kessler and Mr. Yunker expressed their belief that Policy #004 was too detailed. They felt that it only represented a snapshot in time and would have to be revised frequently as committee functions changed. They preferred that the policy be phased in more general terms. Mr. Orlow felt that the language of the policy was flexible enough to accommodate their concerns. Mr. Marchozzi and Mr. O'Neill felt that the policy reflected the consensus of the Board that the functions should be in writing and that a defined structure should be in place. They noted that revisions could be made as needed. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve Policy #001 on second reading. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Marchozzi moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve Policy #004. On a roll call vote, all except Mr. Kessler and Mr. Yunker voted in favor. Mr. Kessler and Mr. Yunker voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the Board was reviewing several drafts of the calendar for the 2001-02 school year. Dr. Cotter reviewed the process used to interact with the Colonial

Education Association and the Center for Technical Studies on the calendar and walked board members through the several options before them. When asked for a recommendation, Dr. Cotter recommended option 3C. He said that he considered the option family friendly. He noted that it made Friday before Labor Day and the Monday after Easter were not teaching days. Both Dr. Cotter and Mr. Sultanik advised that the school code required that the district designate five local holidays that were not subject to cancellation. Dr. Cotter recommended 09/18/01, 09/27/01, 11/23/01, 03/28/02 and 03/29/02 as the designated holidays. They are Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the day after Thanksgiving, Holy Thursday and Good Friday, respectively. Dr. Cotter responded to Board questions concerning in-service days, early dismissal days and flex in-service days. Mr. Sultanik also addressed the past practice of having flex in-service time. Several board members suggested alternatives to option 3C but the consensus of the Board was to move forward with that option. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Marchozzi seconded a motion to adopt option 3C as the school calendar for 2001-02. On a roll call vote, all except Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in favor. Mr. Yunker and Mr. Carroll voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow noted neither of the two items of correspondence (Enclosures #20 and #21) required Board action.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter provided a brief recap of his routine Superintendent's Report as shown in Enclosure #22. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the report as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. Fabrizio provided information on the second semester open house at the high school, the Valentines Day dance and the progress being made on planning for the senior trip to Florida in the spring. Ms. Kurtz provided an update on the athletic teams currently in post-season play and upcoming testing programs at the high school.

New Business: Mr. Orlow asked for Board consideration for continuing annual support and funding for the Summer Arts Consortium. He noted that the funding requested for 2001-02 was \$6,300.00, the same as in prior years. Mr. Kessler asked for the justification for providing funds for the summer program. Dr. Cotter noted that it was a summer enrichment program for students gifted in the arts. Ms. Iannelli noted that district funding was primarily for the purchase of materials used in the program and had remained remarkably steady over the years. Mr. Pinheiro noted that the Board had once voted to discontinue funding of the program but had restored the funding in response to strong community support. Mr. O'Neill noted that there was little time during the school year for this enrichment opportunity. Mr. O'Neill moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to provide the requested funding of \$6,300.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to a trip request from Amy LaRue, PWHS Choral Director, to take students on an overnight trip to the Regional Chorus at Strath Haven High School on March 8-10, 2001. See Enclosure #23. Mr. Kessler moved and Mr. O'Neill

seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a bid for a 20-passenger school bus. Mr. O'Neill moved and Mr. Pinheiro seconded a motion to award the bid for the bus to Wolfington Body Company at a cost of \$35,167.00, as shown in Enclosure #24. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report: None

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board: Mr. Pinheiro advised board members that they would be receiving nomination forms for a district representative to the I. U. Board, a position that he has held for a number of years. Dr. Cotter reported that the forms had been included in Board Notes. Mr. Pinheiro noted that, since he would not be seeking reelection to the Colonial School Board, it would be a good idea for the Board to seek a volunteer to replace him. He also reported that the I.U. Board would probably vote the following Wednesday on the four annual budgets that will later be submitted for district approval. He anticipated no increase in funding requests to the district.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that the allied health program at the Center for Technical Studies would be a weighted course for the district's high school students. He also noted that The Joint Operating Committee had hired an architect for a feasibility study at the school.

Personnel: Mr. Pinheiro announced that the committee had a meeting scheduled for 03/05/01. He also recapped for the Board a proposal to increase, at six-month intervals, the salaries of the district's bus drivers until, on 07/01/02, they reached the level of \$14.00 for regular van drivers and \$15.00 for drivers with CDL licenses. He noted that the increase was to encourage drivers to remain with the district and that the initial raise would be retroactive to 01/01/01. Mr. Marchozzi received assurance that the increase was for district drivers only. Mr. Pinheiro responded to a question from Dr. Lipshutz on the financial impact of the increases by saying that the increases for six drivers would not represent a major cost to the district. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the proposal as presented to the Board. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Finance: Mr. O'Neill briefly recapped the budget process and reported that the Curriculum and Buildings and Grounds Committees would be making presentations at the Board work session on 03/12/01 and the Personnel and Finance Committees would be making presentations and the general Board meeting of 03/15/01. He also advised that approval of the preliminary budget was scheduled for 04/19/01, the public presentation of the budget for 05/14/01, and the adoption of the final budget for 06/21/01.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Yunker reported that the committee had looked into and/or discussed several issues at its last meeting. These included grouping for math at Colonial Elementary School, balanced literacy, the proposed budget for curriculum, proposals from parent groups for language training beginning at the elementary level, proposed changes to the family and consumer science programs at the middle school,

lagging participation in music programs, the possible shortening of the curriculum review cycle, and the high school grading system.

Buildings and Grounds/Transportation: Mr. Kessler thanked the Board for acting on the appointment of an architect for the renovation of the high school auditorium on Monday night. He advised that the architect would be working diligently to see that the project was completed on schedule. Mr. Kessler also reported that he had missed the work session the previous Monday in order to attend a legislative reception in Harrisburg. He reported that the local freshman legislator Kate Harper was well informed and would represent her district well. He noted that the other legislators at the reception had issues centered around the possibility of a new “30 and out” retirement bill that might pass and their perception that property tax reform remained a priority. Mr. Bell asked the Board to authorize him to sign the amendment to the district’s lease with Whitemarsh Township for the use of a portion of the township property behind Colonial Elementary School for the high school discus and javelin program. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to provide that authorization. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Community Relations: Mr. Johnson reported on the publication of the spring newsletter, a drive to update program information on CITV, a town meeting for students to be held at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School on 04/05/01, and the availability of negotiations updates via e-mail requests left on the district’s web site. Mr. Yunker requested that the district keep Board minutes on the web up to date. Dr. Cotter noted that the district was working to provide more information on its site. Mr. Carroll noted that the Norristown Area School Board had recently approved an application for a virtual charter school. He inquired about the potential impact of that approval, and Dr. Cotter explained how difficult it was to assess until enrollment figures were in.

Legislative: Mr. Carroll reported that the committee would not meet until 02/21/01 and that he would have a report at the following month’s meeting.

Public Comments: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell
Board Secretary