

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, JUNE 18, 1998**

Vice-President Orlow convened the June Meeting of the Colonial School Board of Directors at 8:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on June 18, 1998.

**Board Members Present:** Marc Orlow, Beverly Brown, Robert Carroll, Rich Connolly, Gary Johnson, Robert O'Neill, Jack Pinheiro, Thomas Yunker.

**Board Members Absent:** Stuart Kessler.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Stanley Durtan, Superintendent; Dr. Ann Stormes, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer; R. Scott Klinger, Director of Personnel; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Frank O'Hara, Solicitor; Darlene Davis, Principal Conshohocken Elementary School; Patricia Campbell, Principal on Assignment; Charles Graham, Director of Technology; Patricia Iannelli, Acting Principal, PWHS; Christine Donovan; Bruce, Carol and Kristin Dormuth; Malcolm Garcia; Tom Gibson; Lisa Knapp; Hugh Lipshutz; Michael Macaninch; Candy Maggioncalda; Donald Newmeyer; Michelle and Claudette Ramsaroop; Rochelle Rocchi; Arup Sharma; Howard, Denise and Jenn Stredler; Amy Stohner; and Lisa Watkins.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Orlow and Dr. Durtan greeted students who had distinguished themselves in the areas of academics, athletics, and school and community service. They also greeted staff working with these students; Carol Dormuth, who was designated Educator of the Year by the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, and board member, Robert Carroll, who was recognized by PSBA for his participation in its 58<sup>th</sup> annual conference. They presented each honoree with a certificate of achievement and introduced him or her to the assembled board members, staff and audience for recognition of their accomplishments. A complete list of those honored is attached to these minutes and listed as Attachment #1.

Mr. Orlow asked for comments or questions on the minutes of the Work Session of 5/18/98, the General Meeting of 5/21/98, and the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 6/8/98, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #3, and asked board members if they had any questions or comments. Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as amended. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow asked the Board if there were any comments or questions on the Budget Transfer Report of 6/98; the Bond Fund and the Capital Reserve Fund Reports for the Month Ending 5/31/98; Food Service Bills and Reports for the Month Ending 4/30/98; the Outstanding Investment, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes Collected, and Real Estate Escrow Reports, and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the months ending 5/31/98; the Budget Analysis of 6/8/98 and the Treasurer's Report for Month Ending 5/31/98, as shown in Enclosures #4 through #14, and the General Fund/Federal Program Bills. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the reports as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None

**Staff Report:** Dr. Durtan presented Ms. Davis, Principal of Conshohocken Elementary School; Patricia Campbell, Principal on Assignment to the District Office; and Charles Graham, Director of Technology who presented information about Conshohocken Elementary School's School-wide Title I Project scheduled for implementation during the 1998-99 school year. The speakers presented the key elements of the proposed program. They noted that Conshohocken Elementary School was the only district school eligible for a school-wide program. They reported that the proposed program would focus on raising the academic achievement levels of students at the school so that they could compete more effectively with their peers when they enter grade 4 at Colonial Elementary School. They explained the sweeping changes that the program would bring to the school and noted that the commitment of board, administration, staff and parents was important to the success of the program. Ms. Davis reported that building staff at Conshohocken Elementary School were enthusiastic about the proposed program and committed to its success. The presenters highlighted the fact that the proposal included all-day kindergarten and called for additional support services. They stressed that it would be fully funded by federal Title I funds and would not have a negative impact on the district's budget or other district students. A summary of their presentation is attached to these minutes and listed as Attachment #2.

Mr. Orlow asked if the school had sufficient space to house an all-day kindergarten program, and Ms. Davis responded that it did. Mr. Orlow and Mr. Yunker questioned whether an all-day kindergarten option at the school would result in enrollment increasing beyond the school's ability to house the additional students. Dr. Durtan and Ms. Davis felt that such an occurrence was unlikely because classes at Conshohocken tended to have fewer students per section than those in other schools in the district. Dr. Durtan also noted that outside groups used space at Conshohocken that could be reclaimed if additional space were needed for the school-wide program. Ms. Brown and Mr. Yunker asked about the steps that would be taken to assess students at the beginning of the program and at stages along the way in order to measure student progress. Ms. Davis and Graham explained that regular assessments were a required part of school-wide programs. Mr. Carroll

asked if reading programs already in place would continue under the new program and learned that they would be. In response to Board queries, Dr. Durtan stated that the district would be contractually obligated to teachers at the end of the program but that personnel movement at the elementary level should allow the district to meet that commitment. Mr. Graham responded to Board concern about on-going funding for the program by noting that Title 1 funds, while not guaranteed, would likely be available for at least three years. Ms. Brown noted that the proposed program addressed a recognized need. She moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the report and implement the proposed program. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. Board members applauded the hard work of all those involved in developing the school-wide program.

**Old Business:** Dr. Durtan asked for Board approval of the sequence of snow make-up days which administration was recommending in conjunction with the approved calendar for the 1998-99 school year. He noted that Mr. Bell had reviewed the tape of the May meeting and had confirmed that the snow make-up day schedule had not been part of the motion to approve the calendar. In response to a Board query, Dr. Durtan noted that 1/18/98 was a scheduled in-service day and that the proposed sequence of make-up days was the same as that adopted the two prior school years. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the schedule of snow make-up days, as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow recognized Mr. Shipman who introduced Candy Maggioncalda and Rochelle Rocchi, teachers at the high school and mini-grant recipients. They presented information on a program in art history that integrated art with world cultures, literature and languages throughout a program that included the development of an illustrated art history time-line. Mini-grant funds were used to purchase the audio-visuals which were an important part of the program. A monthly Art History Week provides a showcase for the students' work.

Mr. Orlow noted that Betty Wilson, Single Audit Coordinator of the Bureau and Fiscal Management of the Commonwealth Department of Education, had informed the district that the district's Single Audit Report covering the Federal Financial Assistance Programs funded by her agency had been approved. No Board action was necessary. See Enclosure #15.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Durtan briefly reviewed his personnel report containing routine recommendations on additions, terminations, suspensions, demotions, leaves of absence, promotions, suspensions, transfers and resignations of staff; additions and deletions to the substitute list; summer school faculty appointments; and the completion of long-term substitute assignments, as shown in Enclosures #16 through #19. He highlighted the proposed appointment of Donna Drizin as Coordinator of Special Education. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the personnel actions contained in Enclosure # 16. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the Substitute List, Summer School Faculty Appointments, and action on Long-term Substitutes as shown in Enclosures #16 through #19. Dr. Durtan noted that summer school appointments were subject to sufficient enrollment. He also noted that long-term substitutes employed at the end of the 1997-98 school-year and re-employed at the beginning of the 1998-99 school year would not be considered beginning teachers. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.**

**Board Student Representatives Report: No report.**

**New Business: Mr. Orlow recognized Ms. Brown who gave a brief overview of the 1998-99 School District Budget as proposed at \$49,281,133.00 and the budget process followed each year. She noted that funding of this budget would require a real estate tax rate of 12.53 mills (a 4.74% increase from the prior year) and reported that the billing date for taxes would be set as 7/1/98. Ms. Brown reported that Mr. Bickleman had developed a series of budget options based on input from Board members. (These are attached to these minutes as Attachment #3.) She reviewed Budget 5(c), a proposal which she favored. In this option an amount equal to two teachers salaries and benefits had been removed. \$100,000.00 in anticipated special education revenue had been added. Revenue figures had been increased in anticipation of a more aggressive collection rate for transfer and interim taxes, and expenditures in the 500 series had been reduced by \$80,000.00. Ms. Brown indicated that these changes would result in a budget of \$49,132,919.00. It would reduce the anticipated increase in real estate taxes to 12.38 mills or 3.49% over the current year. It also called for a Act 511 taxes as follows: 1% real estate transfer tax, a 10% amusement tax, and a \$15.00 real estate tax certification charge and set the billing date for taxes as July 1, 1998. She expressed her belief that district expenditures were overstated and revenues understated and that these differences resulted in larger than expected fund balance each year. She pointed out that the district has no history of comparing a final audited budget to the original budget but indicated that that process would begin this fall. Ms. Brown moved and Mr. Connolly seconded a motion to approve Budget Proposal 5(c) as the district budget for 1998-99. Mr. Yunker noted that the \$100,000.00 in additional funding for special education was for student programs which could result in extraordinary costs and that these funds were not guaranteed. After some Board discussion, Dr. Durtan advised that the funds had been available the past two years. Mr. Shipman noted that competition for the funds had increased in recent years. Mr. Orlow asked if there was Board consensus on the revenue items in Ms. Brown's proposal but received no immediate response. Discussion moved on to the expenditure adjustments that Ms. Brown had proposed.**

**Mr. Orlow noted that funds had not been included in the budget to fund the performance-based pay initiative contained in the recent contract agreement with the CEA. He noted that the fact-finding report had recommended contracting with a**

consultant to assist in implementing the initiative and that additional standardized testing would be part of the program. Funds for these items were not identified in the proposed budget. Mr. Connolly asked if there might be a grant available to fund these items. Mr. Orlow responded that there might be, but he considered the availability of grant funds too speculative to budget. He supported the revenue adjustments that Ms. Brown had suggested but felt that \$100,000.00 to \$150,000.00 should be added to the expenditure side of the budget to cover implementation of the performance-based pay initiative that the Board had worked so hard to have included in its new contract with the CEA. Ms. Brown stressed her belief that the district would have a \$900,000.00 fund balance at the end of the 1998-99 budget year, without raising any additional taxes. She suggested that these monies would be more than enough to cover the initiatives suggested by Mr. Orlow. She also noted that administration had the authority to manage expenditures and did not need additional authorization from the Board to use unexpended funds to cover the performance-based pay initiatives. Mr. Connolly supported Ms. Brown's approach and noted that the Board did not have to micro-manage the budget. He looked forward to Mr. Bickleman's review and the comparison of audited budget to initial budget to see where expenditures were over-budgeted. Mr. Pinheiro indicated that under-spending the budget by just 2% would produce a fund balance of \$1,000,000.00 at the end of the year. He did not see this as a significant problem. He voiced his preference for Budget Option 5 over Budget Option 5(c) as proposed by Ms. Brown. Mr. O'Neill expressed concern over the tax increases that residents of Conshohocken Borough would experience. Mr. Yunker shared some of Mr. Orlow's concerns but noted that Ms. Brown had made some salient points. Mr. Johnson felt that the budget as proposed by Ms. Brown had sufficient funds in it to cover the performance-based pay initiative. Mr. O'Neill called the question. On roll call vote: Ms. Brown, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Yunker in favor. Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Orlow and Mr. Pinheiro opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the annual appointment of school physicians and dentists was on the agenda. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Orlow seconded a motion to approve the appointment of school physicians and dentist named at the rates listed in the agenda. On roll call vote. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow reported that a series of contracts were up for renewal, including Psychiatric Consultation Services (MH/MR), Progression Group, Montgomery Early Learning Center, Inc., Carbon Lehigh I. U. (Data Processing), Davidson School/Instructional Aide, and Physical Therapy, as shown in Enclosures #20 through #25. Mr. Carroll moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the contracts, as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow advised that a series of annual supply bid awards were on the agenda, including elementary and secondary art supplies, general supplies, industrial arts and science supplies, and janitorial supplies. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson

seconded a motion to approve these bid awards as presented to the Board. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Connolly briefly reviewed Board discussion on Monday, 6/16/98 of the need for a new roof on Gym 20 at the high school and again presented the recent bid for a replacement roof to the Board for its consideration. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Connolly seconded a motion to award the roofing project to Professional Roofing Systems, the lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications, at a cost of \$65,000.00. On roll call vote: Mr. Carroll, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Pinheiro and Mr. Yunker in favor. Mr. Orlow opposed. Ms. Brown was not present for the vote. Motion carried.

Solicitor's Report: No report.

Committee Reports:

Intermediate Unit Board: No report.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that Mr. Connolly had been named Treasurer and Mr. O'Hara had been re-appointed Solicitor for the Center for Technical Studies. Mr. O'Hara provided an update on the status of the proposed Articles of Agreement, noting that a draft was circulating that did not change the articles approved by the Colonial Board. He advised that Upper Merion School District was awaiting action by Norristown Area School District before taking action on the articles and that some Norristown Area School Board members were proposing a term of 20 years. Mr. O'Hara stated that, if such a change were adopted by the other districts, he would bring the revised articles to the Colonial Board for action.

Personnel: After briefly reviewing the information which he shared with the Board and the community at the Work Session of 6/15/98, Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the language of the 1997-2001 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the CEA as presented to the Board. Mr. Carroll inquired about changes in the language of the report, and Mr. Klinger reported that some typographical errors and an incorrect salary step had been corrected. Mr. Carroll questioned references to Act 84 in the contract, and Mr. O'Hara reported that, in his professional opinion, the references were accurate. Mr. Orlow noted that in approving the contract the Board would be ratifying an agreement consistent with the fact-finding report. On roll call vote: Mr. Johnson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Orlow, Mr. Pinheiro and Mr. Yunker in favor. Ms. Brown, Mr. Carroll and Mr. Connolly opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve non-bargaining unit salaries as presented to the Board. Mr. Pinheiro noted that the increases were in the 3% range for the personnel involved. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve cabinet salaries as presented to the Board. Mr. Pinheiro noted that the salaries reflected the same increases available to administrators in the CASEA group. On roll call vote, all in favor, except Ms. Brown who was not present for the vote. Upon Ms. Brown's return and on the advice of the solicitor, the Board voted on these salaries a second time. Mr. Pinheiro made and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion to approve cabinet salaries as presented to the Board. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.**

**Finance: Ms. Brown thanked Mr. Bickleman for the superb job that he had done in preparing budget documents, including the many options developed in response to queries and suggestions from board members. She praised his "can do" attitude toward doing even better in the future.**

**Curriculum and Program: No report.**

**Buildings and Grounds/Transportation: Mr. Connolly summarized the presentation made by representatives of Gilbane on Monday, 6/15/98 and the Board discussions which followed. He noted that the district and Gilbane were working on the final language of the contract between the parties on construction management services for the new addition at the high school. He advised that Gilbane was committed to doing all that it could to have the new high school science wing substantially completed and ready for occupancy in the fall of 1999. Mr. Connolly advised that Gilbane was requesting authorization to bid structural steel as an additional prime for the reasons cited at the meeting of 6/15/98 and the abandonment of a home economics room for the 1998-99 school year so that all structural steel work could be completed at the same time. Dr. Durtan indicated that the Gilbane Team was working with Mr. Breslin and the architectural team to have structural steel documents out to bidders shortly. He also advised that he had spoken to the high school administrators and been told that they could vacate the home economics room for the coming school year. Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to authorize Gilbane to work with the architect to bid structural steel as a fifth prime in order to move forward along the timeline needed to have the new annex ready for occupancy in the fall of 1998. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. The Board also directed the superintendent to have the high school vacate the home economics room in question for the coming school year.**

**Dr. Durtan provided information on a schedule for presenting construction drawings to the Board for review and comment. He advised that drawings would be available in the Pupil Services Conference Room from July 15<sup>th</sup> through July 17<sup>th</sup> for Board review and that Mr. Breslin requested Board comment in writing by July 20<sup>th</sup> so that he could come prepared to a follow-up Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting prepared to address Board concerns. Dr. Durtan announced that the committee meeting had been scheduled for July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room at Colonial Elementary School. Mr. Carroll requested that that meeting be**

advertised on CITV. Mr. Orlow asked when construction would go out to bid, and Dr. Durtan responded that the date had not yet been firmly established. He indicated that Gilbane would shortly be establishing a new timeline and that he would provide it to the Board as soon as he received it.

Mr. Connolly reminded the Board that purchase and development of the WFIL tract was still on the Buildings & Grounds Committee's agenda. He noted that committee members' interest in proceeding with the work involved in addressing issues raised by feasibility studies at Colonial and Conshohocken Elementary Schools and the high school had cooled as committee members looked at the work involved in developing the WFIL tract. He explained that the committee had looked at options that included the possibility of constructing a softball field, two soccer fields, 98 parking spaces and eight tennis courts on the property. He also noted that the committee had asked Mr. Berneski to test curtain wall panels a classroom and that further information on creature comfort issues in the three schools listed above would be forthcoming.

Mr. Pinheiro asked if employees of the contractors working on the high school annex would have to be cleared under Act 34 guidelines. Mr. O'Hara indicated that they would if they could reasonably be expected to come into contact with students. Dr. Durtan noted that the issue would be covered in bid documents.

**Community Relations:** Mr. Orlow advised that the committee was working on expanding the district's homepage and asked board members to let the committee know if they had suggestions so they could later be passed along to the vendor working on the project. Mr. Carroll suggested that the district's homepage address be shortened.

**Legislative:** No report.

**Additional Information:** None.

**Public Comments:** None

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell  
Board Secretary