

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, MARCH 19, 1998**

The March Meeting of the Colonial School Board of Directors was convened by President Kessler at 8:02 p.m. in the Board Room of the Colonial Elementary School on March 19, 1998.

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

**Board Members Absent:** None.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Stanley Durtan, Superintendent; Dr. Ann Stormes, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; James M. Bell, Director of Operations/Board Secretary; Joseph Bickleman, Controller/Treasurer; R. Scott Klinger, Director of Personnel; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Frank O'Hara, Solicitor; John Likens and Katy Swetkowski, Student Representatives to the Board; Allan Dovberg; Don Flathman; Tom Gibson; Hugh Lipshutz; Michael Macaninch; Cyndi Slagle; Mary Theiss; Karen Tucker; students and parents of students of Plymouth Whitmarsh High School; and members of the Colonial Education Association.

Mr. Kessler led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes:** Mr. Kessler asked for comments or questions on the minutes of the Work Session of 2/17/98, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 2/19/98, the General Meeting of 2/19/98, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 2/23/98, the Curriculum Meeting of 3/3/98, and the Personnel Committee Meeting of 3/3/98 as shown in Enclosures #1 through #6. Mr. Bell advised the Board that corrections suggested by Mr. Carroll to the minutes of the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 2/19/97 had been made and that the corrected minutes were in his possession. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as corrected. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Kessler asked the Board if there were any comments or questions on the Budget Transfer Reports of 3/98; the Bond Fund and the Capital Reserve Fund Reports for the Month Ending 2/28/98; Food Service Bills and Reports for the Month Ending 1/31/98; the Outstanding Investment, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes Collected, and Real Estate Escrow Reports, and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the months ending 2/28/98; and the Budget Analysis of 3/9/98 and Treasurer's Reports for Month Ending 2/28/98, as shown in Enclosures #7 through #17. Mr. Orlow inquired about the nature of the 1998 Bond Fund Reimbursement of \$216,036.42 listed in the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Bickleman reported that it was reimbursement for previously expended funds for

the high school addition. Mr. Orlow asked about the status of reimbursements for work done at other schools included in the bond and shown as anticipated revenue in the current budget. Ms. Brown explained that the Board had to vote its approval before such reimbursement could take place. Dr. Durtan advised that additional reimbursements would come before the Board at a later date. Ms. Brown moved and Mr. Orlow seconded a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** Mr. Dovberg read criteria that the Colonial United Taxpayers recommended that the Board adopt as steps that clubs and like activities had to take before the Board would subsidize scheduled events, including trips to local, state and national competitions. A copy of the criteria is attached to these minutes and shown as Attachment #1.

**Budget Report:** Mr. Kessler recognized Mr. Connolly, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, who presented the budget report for support services, transportation and maintenance. He noted that no additional staff were planned and briefly covered key changes in the budgets for these areas.

**Support Services:** Mr. Connolly explained an \$8,000.00 increase in supplies for the copy center, noting that this item had been under-funded for the past two years and that costs for key supplies, especially paper, had risen during the period. He mentioned that initiatives currently underway should offer improved copier services and an opportunity to stabilize and/or avoid costs in the years ahead. He advised that premiums for the district's basic insurance package were projected to decrease \$25,100.00 for the coming budget year, that worker's compensation rates through the consortium through which the district self-insured for this coverage were expected to decrease \$.12 per \$1,000.00 of payroll thereby helping control costs as payroll dollars rose. Mr. Connolly explained procedural changes that would allow a reduction in custodial overtime by \$2,000.00 and a proposed increase of \$4,000.00 in the budget for summer help to cover contractual increases in wages for part-time help. He highlighted a decrease in contracted grounds services which was, in part, offset by an increase in the budget for grounds supplies as district crews took over this operation. He explained a \$5,500.00 increase in the budget for grounds equipment, noting the need to replace a 1961 tractor. He advised the Board that the net effect of these adjustments was a modest \$2,400.00 increase in the budget for support services. He noted Mr. Bell's efforts to contain costs and develop more efficient ways of getting the work done.

**Transportation:** Mr. Connolly informed the Board of a projected increase of approximately \$198,500.00 in the transportation budget. He cited a contractual increase of three percent in the district's contract with Romano and a similar increase for smaller transportation providers as major factors in this increase. He also noted the proposed purchase of a new van to replace a 1991 van with 144,025 miles, the need for additional CB radios, an anticipated increase in I.U.

transportation for early intervention children, the likely addition of two bus runs on the Romano schedule, and modest increases for vehicle repairs, fuel and driver drug testing costs as factors affecting the budget. He reminded the Board that the transportation was always tightly budgeted and complemented Mrs. Johns on her careful stewardship.

**Maintenance and Facility Improvements:** Mr. Connolly advised the Board that, in accordance with past practice, administrators had toured all district schools, received input from building principals, prioritized facility needs and recommended those priorities which could be accomplished without increasing the budget over the level of expenditure for the previous year. He noted, however, that the process left a number of important projects still to be addressed. He cited the roof to Gym #20 at the high school and rewiring needs at several schools as examples. The roof supports and the gym floor were repaired a couple of years ago but the roof itself had not yet been replaced. He explained that it was leaking and that water had pooled beneath the outer membrane. Mr. Connolly also assigned Buildings and Grounds Committee members the task of visiting specific schools to research and provide input into an eventual review and prioritization of outstanding facility needs. He asked Mr. O'Neill to visit Conshohocken and Plymouth Elementary Schools, Mr. Carroll to visit Ridge Park and Whitemarsh Elementary Schools, and Mr. Pinheiro to visit Colonial Elementary and Middle Schools. He indicated that he would visit the high school. He thanked Mr. Berneski for keeping the issues before the committee and reminded the Board that there were a number of outstanding issues to address in the weeks ahead, including feasibility studies at the high school and Conshohocken and Colonial Elementary Schools and construction management.

Mr. Kessler recognized Ms. Brown, Chair of the Finance Committee, who gave an overview of the budget cycle and provided data on revenue and debt service. During her presentation, she referred to a Finance Committee Report prepared by Mr. Bickleman which outlined much of the data that she presented to the Board and the community. The report is attached to these minutes and listed as Attachment #2. Factual information included in the report is not being duplicated in the body of these minutes. Ms. Brown complemented Mr. Bickleman on the report and its clear presentation of the revenue and debt service data. She advised local residents that copies of the report would be available in the district office up to formal adoption of the budget and encouraged interested parties to pick up and read through copies. She also referred those in attendance and watching at home to the revised budget schedule, noting especially the revised dates for availability of the preliminary budget on 4/13/98, approval of the preliminary budget by the Board on 4/16/98, a public presentation of the budget on 5/18/98 and final budget approval on 6/18/98. Ms. Brown also noted that the budget was a work in progress and that updated information would be included as it was received.

**Old Business:** None.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Kessler noted that the district had received several pieces of correspondence, which are shown in Enclosures #18 through #20, #35 and 36, and #39. These were letters from Jerry Shinfeld, district resident, expressing his opinion on the status of negotiations; Mary Custer, President of the I.U. Board requesting Board action on the I.U. budgets, The Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation on the award of a mini-grant, Ira Brownstein and Brienne Pearson, students at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School requesting an opportunity to address the Board, and Susan Zindel Bisbing, district resident, expressing her opinion on teacher contract negotiations. The letters from Mr. Shinfeld and Ms. Bisbing required no Board Action.

Mr. Kessler noted correspondence from Mary Custer, President of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Board, as shown in Enclosure #19 and recognized Mr. Pinheiro who outlined the proposed Intermediate Unit budget for the coming year. Mr. Pinheiro advised that the budget before the Board contained no increase in costs to local school districts. He noted that much of the work performed by the I.U. was funded by federal and state dollars. He then provided highlights of the four individual budgets which made up the annual I. U. budget package on which the Board would be voting: The General Administration Budget of approximately \$714,000.00, the Curriculum and Staff Budget of approximately \$165,000.00, the State and Federal Legislative Activities Budget of approximately \$100,000.00, and the Instructional Materials and Services Budget of approximately \$1,750,000.00. Mr. Pinheiro noted that the district's contribution to the budget would be \$82,500.00 and reminded the Board that the district experienced additional costs for the special education services which it purchased from the I. U. each year. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the I. U. budgets. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler noted that two students from Plymouth Whitemarsh High School had requested the opportunity to address the Board. (See Enclosures #35 and #36.) Neither Brienne Pearson nor her alternate was able to attend the meeting. Mr. Kessler recognized Mr. Brownstein who read from a letter he had written to the Board. Mr. Brownstein advised that the letter was signed by a majority of the students in the high school, including all class and Student Council officers as well as officers of the National Honor Society and the Black Cultural Awareness Club, He stated that he was standing up on behalf of the district's educators and chastised the Board for not handling contract negotiations in a professional manner. He characterized the remarks of Board members during Board meetings as judgmental and defended the character and actions of the teaching staff, particularly those of several science teachers at the high school whom he felt that the Board had slighted. He placed the responsibility for successful negotiations solely in the hands of the Board and accused the Board of blocking the implementation of block scheduling and attempting to use students as weapons against teachers. He characterized the Board's proposals on performance-based pay as fostering a cutthroat system and

claimed that the Board initiative was motivated entirely by a budget concerns. Mr. Kessler attempted to clarify some of the issues that Mr. Brownstein raised, but Mr. Brownstein responded that he did not wish to debate the issues.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Durtan reviewed his personnel report containing routine recommendations on additions, terminations, suspensions, demotions, leaves of absence, promotions, suspensions, transfers and resignations of staff, as shown in Enclosure #20 and additions and deletions to the substitute list, as shown in Enclosure #21. He covered a recommendation from the high school's Director of Activities to raise the rate of payment for individuals working athletic events from \$29.00 to \$30.00 per event, as shown in Enclosure #21, and a request for Board authorization to begin planning for the 1998 Summer School Program, as shown in Enclosure #22. He characterized the summer program self-sustaining and noted administration's wish to offer it as it has in the past. Mr. O'Neill requested that the Board address Enclosure #22 separately from the other items in the superintendent's report. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the personnel actions shown in Enclosure # 22. Mr. O'Neill abstained. Ms. Brown opposed. All other Board members in favor. Motion carried. Mr. O'Neill moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the remainder of the superintendent's report as shown in Enclosures #21, #23 and #24. All in favor, motion carried.

**Additional Information:** Mr. Kessler asked Dr. Durtan to update the Board on the recent failure of some CEA members to meet contractual obligations. Dr. Durtan reported that he had received a memo from the CEA Strike Task Force indicating that the teachers would be withdrawing from voluntary staff activities. Dr. Durtan expressed his concern in a memo to Carol Cohen, President of the CEA, reminding her that the district contract with the CEA had a staff activities clause and that he expected the educational program of the district to continue uninterrupted. He noted that administrators were strictly enforcing the language of the contract regarding professional responsibilities and was pleased to note that at the time of his report all members of the professional staff were participating in staff activities.

Dr. Durtan informed the Board that Ms. Campbell and Mr. Graham had submitted written responses to the Board's questions on the technology budget and asked that they contact him or the writers if they had any additional questions following their review of the responses.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Mr. Lukens reviewed with the Board the accomplishments of student athletes in winter sports who had distinguished themselves in post-season play and state championship rounds. He also highlighted the fine work of the jazz band in a recent competition, the activities of the Black Cultural Awareness Club during Black History Month in February, the naming of Richard Colletta, Sr. as the Outstanding Science Teacher in the Delaware Valley, and the upcoming band championship on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the high school. Ms.

Swetkowski spoke about events for seniors. These included the senior dinner, the talent show, Senior Superlatives and a dance. She also provided an update on the senior trip, expressed her hope that the contract between the district and the CEA would be settled shortly, reminded the group of the Spring musical, "Bye Bye Birdie" from March 26<sup>th</sup> through March 28<sup>th</sup>, and student involvement in the regional choir, the Physics Olympics, cheerleading competitions, and an anti-vandalism campaign.

**New Business:** Mr. Kessler advised that administration was recommending that a bid, as shown in Enclosure #25, for the provision and installation of a Media Management Distribution System at the high school, be rejected because the district had learned, subsequent to the receipt of the bid, that a portion of it might be eligible for e-rate discounts. He noted that administration was also seeking authorization to re-bid the work. Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. Pinheiro seconded a motion that the bid be rejected and re-bid. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler advised that administration was seeking Board authorization to submit the annual Assurances Regarding the Operation of Special Education Programs, as shown in Enclosure #26, and noted that the Board had reviewed the topic at its Monday work session. Mr. Orlow moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to provide the requested authorization. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler noted that there were three trip requests on the agenda for the evening. Dr. Durtan advised that there was a late addition as well.

The first request was for authorization for the annual Literary Tour of New England, as listed in Enclosure #27. Costs of the trip were to be covered by the participants. Mr. Pinheiro spoke in favor of the trip. Mr. Orlow moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to authorize the trip. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

The second request was for authorization for a trip by two students and one advisor to the National DECA Conference and for funding in an amount not to exceed \$3,470.00, as shown in Enclosure #28. There was considerable Board discussion on the request. Before discussing funding for the trip, Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to authorize student and advisor participation in the event. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. The Board then considered the matter of funding. Several Board members noted that DECA had been given advance notice that students should engage in fundraising to cover the costs of DECA trips and competitions. Mr. O'Neill reviewed the efforts of the Curriculum Committee to develop guidelines for funding student trips and noted that the committee had not found a formula that worked well for all student organizations. Ms. Brown was greatly concerned that the group had not raised sufficient funds for the national conference, despite advance notice that the Board would look critically

at any request for district funding. Mr. Orlow and Dr. Durtan noted that the group had fully funded participation at events at the local and state level this year for the first time in the club's history. Mr. Kessler stressed a need for equity in funding student trips. Mr. Connolly emphasized a need for a policy on the subject. Mr. O'Neill felt that the request had to be addressed in a way that did not shift the burden for this year's trip onto next year's club members. After additional discussion, Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Connolly seconded a motion for the district to fund district participation in the event but strongly encourage the group to undertake additional fundraising events to lower the level of district funding. On roll call vote, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Kessler, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Orlow, and Mr. Pinheiro in favor. Ms. Brown, Mr. Carroll and Mr. Yunker opposed. Motion carried.

The final requests were for Board authorization for two students and an advisor to attend the All-State Choral Festival in Erie, PA from April 22 through April 25, 1998, as shown in Enclosure # 37 and a similar request for authorization of one student and advisor to attend the All-State Orchestra Festival in the same city during the same time frame. Dr. Durtan noted that the Board has fully funded participation in such events in the past. Board members discussed possible transportation arrangements, the differences among groups that have the opportunity to raise funds for student trips and individual students who may not have a similar opportunity. Mr. Orlow asked how funds for such events are budgeted and whether the accounts were currently over or under budget. Dr. Durtan noted that the high school budgeted for such events in activity accounts but could not confirm the current status of the accounts. He indicated that he would provide an update at a future meeting. Ms. Brown moved and Mr. Connolly seconded a motion to authorize student and advisor attendance at the two events and to fund registration, room and board, and up to \$300.00 for transportation for each attendee. On roll call vote, Ms. Brown, Mr. Carroll, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Kessler and Mr. Yunker in favor. Mr. Pinheiro, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Orlow opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler advised that the district had collaborated in recent years to operate a summer consortium for the arts with the Norristown Area and Upper Merion School Districts. The program is a five-week summer arts experience for students completing grades five through twelve who are talented in the arts. He advised that the district's contribution for the coming summer would be \$6,300.00. Ms. Brown moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve participation and funding in the consortium for the summer of 1998, as shown in Enclosure # 29. On roll call votes, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler advised the Board that administration was seeking approval to set the annual fee structure for facility rentals for 1998-99 and was recommending an across-the-board increase of ten percent in fees. Mr. Bell informed the Board that he had reviewed the fee structure and felt that the suggested increase appropriately

addressed the district's need to cover the cost of making the facilities available. He noted that the revised fees would make district fees comparable to those charged by other local districts. Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the fee structure as proposed in Enclosure #38. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Kessler requested that all student clubs, groups, activities, and athletic programs be notified that each request for funding would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and that a policy on funding activities should be developed by the end of the current school year.

Solicitor's Report: No report.

Committee Reports: Mr. Kessler recognized committee chairpersons for their reports.

**Intermediate Unit Board:** Mr. Pinheiro noted that changes had been made in the funding of early intervention children who stayed at the I.U. after they were eligible to enter kindergarten and that he would later share information with the Board on candidates for the I.U. Board.

**CMCAVTS:** Mr. Johnson reminded board members that the annual dinner at the Center for Technical Studies would be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and that reservations had to be made shortly.

**Personnel:** Mr. Pinheiro summarized his report to the Board at the Work Session of March 16<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the committee had held a meet and discuss session with CASEA and was recommending that the Board approve a two-year agreement with administrators that would move the mid-point of all salary ranges up by from 2% to 7% depending on the position classification, adjust the range from 85% - 115% to 90% - 120%, and fund the pool from which performance-based pay would be paid at an amount equal to 2% of current base salaries. The procedures for determining eligibility for performance-based pay would remain unchanged. He advised that these changes would place administrative salaries near the county average. He felt that this move would make it somewhat easier to attract qualified candidates when vacancies occurred. Mr. Pinheiro also advised the community that the agreement was available for review in the district's Personnel Office. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the proposed two-year agreement with CASEA. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

**Finance:** No report.

**Curriculum and Program:** Mr. O'Neill asked his fellow board members to review the material that Mr. Graham and Ms. Campbell had prepared to answer questions about technology initiatives planned for the upcoming budget year. Mr. Orlow

inquired about the progress made to date on installing computers and peripherals at the middle and high school schools and the availability of in-service training. Dr. Durtan replied that tables and printers had been received, that one third of the computers planned for the middle school had been installed, and that installation was scheduled for completion in the middle school within the next four weeks and would start in the high school immediately thereafter. He also indicated that in-service had begun but would become more intensive as all of the equipment came on line. Mr. Kessler asked if staff were overwhelmed by the magnitude of the effort, and Dr. Durtan replied that they were. He noted that the Technology Department had one director and one technician handling the installation effort.

**Buildings & Grounds/Transportation:** Mr. Connolly reminded his fellow board members that there were still a number of important items on the committee's agenda and that several meetings were planned over the course of the next six weeks.

**Community Relations:** Mr. Orlow advised that a town meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 3/25/98 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Whitemarsh Township Building. He noted that there would be an overview of the new county assessment and its impact on the Colonial community and an opportunity to discuss other issues on the public mind. He also advised his fellow board members and the community that the committee was looking into ways to make better use of the district's home page and CITV and would be presenting the Board with ideas and projected costs at a later date.

**Legislative:** No report. Mr. Kessler noted that he had been unable to attend the last meeting and was awaiting information from the meeting that he could then share with the Board.

**Public Comments:** Mr. Engle, district teacher, expressed his concern about the Board's discussion of funding for student trips. He felt that the Board should make support for such activities an honor and a priority.

Ms. Jennifer Stredler, President of the Honor Society at the high school, expressed her support for and thanks to her teachers. Mr. Kessler voiced agreement with much of what she said, stated his belief that the Board had recognized the caliber of the district's teachers by awarding them some of the highest salaries in the commonwealth. He explained the Board's job as making the tough decisions while attempting to be fair to all segments of the community.

Ms. Theiss, district resident, expressed her concern about having 25 children in a kindergarten class and her disappointment with the Board for not appropriately recognizing the honors that students earned when they were invited to state and national conventions and competition. Mr. Orlow noted the Board regularly recognized student achievements at Board meetings.

**Mr. Schaller, a high school student invited to the All-State Choral Competition, noted that district students needed Board financial support in certain areas. He explained that many students engaged in fundraising throughout the school year but that there were only so many times that they could approach family, friends and businesses. He invited board members to attend choral competitions. Mr. Kessler noted that there was a limited pool of funds available for financial support and that the district was not able to support all of the possible activities for which students might be eligible.**

**Ms. Abbott reminded the Board that it receives an annual report on fundraising. Her recollection of the last report was that the high school had raised \$85,000.00. She reminded board members that successful students brought recognition not only to themselves but also to their schools and the community. She felt that such achievements encouraged families with children to move into the district.**

**Ms. Denise Stedler, district resident, expressed concern that board members questioned students who were sharing their feelings about their teachers. Mr. Kessler noted that this was an attempt by the board members to understand the reasons for their feelings and to determine why they were upset. Ms. Stedler responded that they were upset because their teachers were not being shown respect.**

**Mr. Lipshutz, district resident, spoke in support of the Board, noting that the CEA had arrived at the February meeting of the Board in black uniforms and that CEA representatives had shown little respect for and, in one instance, had threatened the Board. He pointed out that the CEA had issued no apologies for this behavior. He expressed disbelief that speakers were accusing the Board of cutting block scheduling when the CEA had refused to allow implementation. He noted that the organization had implemented work-to-rule tactics and that teachers were no longer helping PTO with activities. He stated his opinion that the Board's offer of 11.3 percent in raises over three years, merit bonuses, and fully funded health care benefits was a good offer.**

**Mr. Stokes, district student, accused the Board of holding children hostage and advised board members to listen to students. He noted that students supported their teachers. He stated his feeling that the Board should be thrilled to send students to local, state and national competitions.**

**Mr. Brownstein found fault with the Board for allowing Mr. Dovberg to speak unchallenged and for permitting inaccurate statements to go uncorrected. Mr. Kessler directed Mr. Brownstein to return to his seat for failure to show proper respect to the chair.**

**Mrs. Tucker raised the issue of potential traffic hazards in the parking lot and driveways of Colonial Elementary School at dismissal time, particularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays when parents came to pick students up and take them to religious classes. She suggested looking into a crossing guard. Mr. Kessler asked administration to look into the problem.**

**Mr. Dovberg expressed pleasure that students had come to the meeting and stayed. He directed some comments to members of the audience until Mr. Kessler reminded him to address his comments to the Board. He noted that just criticism was not cruel, that students like community members might not get all they wanted from the Board, and that he had raised concerns about funding for DECA early. Mr. Dovberg also announced that Technology 2000, a seminar on technological advances that would be held at Norristown High School on May 9<sup>th</sup>, was open to the public. He noted that the program was funded by a grant that the Montgomery County Taxpayers Association had secured. He thanked Mr. Graham and members of the district staff for their assistance and encouraged community members to attend the seminar and see first hand the depth and diversity of the work that students and teachers do in the field.**

**Ms. Abbott advised the Board that confusion resulted when board members held side conversations when speakers were addressing the Board as a body. She felt that Mr. Brownstein had been treated unfairly. She said that she was proud of the students for raising their issues and noted that they should be treated with respect.**

**Mr. Rosen, a high school student participating in the National DECA Conference, praised the club sponsor for his hard work, noted that club members had engaged in fundraising, and expressed hope that the Board would help the DECA winners make the trip to Denver. Since Mr. Rosen had arrived at the meeting late, board members reassured him that action had been taken to authorize and fund the trip.**

**Ms. Slagle explained her opposition to merit pay by describing the process as one that would destroy teamwork.**

**Mr. Orlow addressed the audience. He thanked the students for their sincere and heartfelt comments and acknowledged that they were entitled to their opinions. He noted that the Board had been working on negotiations for 14 months and that many meetings had been held in good faith and in an atmosphere of mutual respect. He expressed his opinion that the debate had recently changed from issues to personalities, threats and accusations. Mr. Orlow stated his belief that the Board had not mistreated anyone and that no disrespect had been intended. He noted that the Board and CEA still had a long way to go on negotiations and that little would get done if the debate focused on accusations. He invited the community to focus on the issues and to participate in the give and take of the upcoming town meeting.**

**There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Kessler adjourned the meeting at 10:55 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**James M. Bell  
Board Secretary**