

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, OCTOBER 16, 1997**

Vice President Pinheiro convened the October meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:20 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room of the Colonial Elementary School on October 16, 1997.

Board Members Present: Jack Pinheiro, Beverly Brown, Rich Connolly, Gary Johnson, Allen Mandelbaum, Robert O'Neill, Marc Orlow, 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 Operations/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Controller/Board Treasurer; R. Scott Klinger, Director of Personnel; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Frank O'Hara, Solicitor; Rachael Honowitz and John Lukens, Student Board Representatives; Dr. Sheryl S. Solow, Curriculum Supervisor; Carol Cohen, CEA; Sally Abbott; Lyn Braunewell; Robert Carroll; Maggie Dick; Allan Dovberg; William English; Don Flathman; Charles Forster; Tom Gibson; Christine Glaubrecht; Casey Johnson; Colleen Krumm; Hugh Lipshutz; Ray McMahan; Eileen McNamee; Donald Newmeyer; Yonaira Rodrigues; Mary Theiss; and Andrea Zipfel.

Mr. Pinheiro lead the Pledge of Allegiance and advised that the Board had met in Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal matters from 7:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m. on October 13th and from 7:30 to 8:15 just prior to this meeting.

Minutes: It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. Orlow to approve the minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting of 8/21/97, the Work Session of 9/15/97, the General Meeting of 9/18/97, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 9/22/97, and the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting of 9/22/97, listed as Enclosures #1 through #5. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Financial Reports: It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the following financial reports: The Budget Transfer Report of October 1997; the Capital Reserve Fund Report For the Month Ending September 30, 1997; Food Service Bills and Reports as of August 31, 1997; and the Outstanding Investment, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Escrow, Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, Budgetary/Deficit Status and Treasurer's Reports of September 30, 1997, as shown in Enclosures #6 through #15. At the suggestion of Mr. Yunker, Mr. Mandelbaum and Mr. Johnson agreed to amend the motion to hold the action on the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts until a new statement is received and approve the remaining reports. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: Mr. Newmeyer thanked Dr. Stormes for following up on the two organizations that he has brought to the Board's attention as being involved in abstinence based sex education. He reviewed the eight goals of the 1996 congressional mandate on abstinence based sex education, noted a recent news article on an increase in the number of cases of genital herpes in recent years, and asked the Board to have the district apply for funds under Title V and accept offers from family life organizations to assist in implementing abstinence based sex education programs.

Staff Report: Mr. Pinheiro recognized Dr. Stormes who began an overview which she, Mr. Forster, Dr. Solow, Mrs. Braunewell, and Mr. McMahon presented on the district's K-12 health curriculum and its sexual education component. Dr. Stormes reviewed the four levels of the district's current seven-year curriculum cycle: A written proposal developed by a curriculum committee chaired by administration, review and initial acceptance or rejection of this proposal by Curriculum Council, review and acceptance or rejection of this proposal by the superintendent, and final review and action by the Board. Mr. Forster, Curriculum Coordinator for the district's health and physical education programs noted that the district's program on sexual education was conducted within a Board-approved framework and constantly updated to include the most current information available. He noted that the program was integrated with the district's science and consume/family science programs and was solidly abstinence based. He noted that the curriculum included information on reproductive physiology, contemporary living including marriage, child-bearing, child-rearing and development, and related topics. Dr. Solow outlined the sex education component of the 5th grade health program and noted that it dealt with human growth and development and contained programs which addressed growth from girl to woman and boy to man. The program has a video component which parents may preview and opt to have their children forego. Parental communication is key in this medically based program which covers body systems and glands and the physical and emotional changes that come during puberty. Decision making, the role of peer pressure, personal hygiene and a health and wellness program for life are all part of the program at this level. Mrs. Braunewell reviewed the program at the middle school and stressed that it is abstinence based, continues to build on subjects presented at the elementary level, and is handled in such a way that a rapport and relationship of trust develop between staff and students. Topics include, peer pressure and refusal skills, AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), the influences of drugs and alcohol, and a positive approach to human sexuality. Mr. McMahon addressed the high school program on health and human sexuality, noting that it, too, was abstinence based and dealt mental and emotional health, the consequences of decision making, dating and substance abuse, as well as anatomy, conception, birth and child rearing. He noted that the program stressed that abstinence was the only safe choice to avoid pregnancy and STD's.

Mr. Orlow inquired about what choices, other than abstinence, were covered in the program and was advised that the program dealt with the whole child and presented real life situations. Ms. Brown asked if contraception was included in the program, and Mr. Forster responded in the affirmative. In response to a query from Mr. Connolly, Mr. Forster noted that the district's program had always been abstinence based and confirmed

Mr. Connolly's understanding that it was a balanced approach which placed emphasis on abstinence.

Dr. Durtan noted that the district was pursuing information on abstinence based programs and funding with the Montgomery County Health Department and that funds were community based. He advised that funding applications are not yet available. Dr. Stormes added that the district was first on the list and that staff were ready to participate should program parameters meet district needs and funding become available. Mr. Connolly asked whether it was desirable to have outside organizations handle the sex education program, and Mr. Forster explained through an analogy why it was better to have staff conduct the program and establish a level of comfort with the material and trust between the teachers and students. Mr. Pinheiro and Ms. Brown thanked the staff for a thorough report, and Mr. Pinheiro asked that Board members be issued invitations to the next screening of the videos that are offered as part of the sex education program at the elementary level.

Old Business: The Board considered two proposed policies submitted for Board consideration on second reading.

Dr. Durtan noted that the policy on Copyright Guidelines shown in Enclosure #16 contained a typographical error on page #1, which would be corrected, and that the handbook which was designed to provide guidance to staff had been included in the policy. It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Orlow that the policy be adopted on second reading. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Bell reviewed with the Board the reasons for the updated policy on Use off School Facilities & Equipment as shown in Enclosure # 17. He noted the need to make the language of the policy conform to district practice, the desirability of standardizing personnel charges so that those considering use of the district's facilities would have advance notice of anticipated charges, and the need to allow the Board an annual opportunity to set rental fees to cover the district's maintenance expenses in making district facilities available for outside use. It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to adopt the policy on second reading. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Three pieces of correspondence are shown in Enclosures #18 through #20.

Mr. Pinheiro recognized Ms. Cohen, CEA President. She introduced Mrs. Dick who outlined a project which she has undertaken under a mini-grant from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Excellence. The program is an academic bowl in which teams of students from each 4th and 5th grade section participate in a round-robin tournament which proceeded through elimination rounds and culminated in a championship round. The program's goal is to sustain the enthusiasm for academics that student's experienced in a one-day program held the previous year. Software is used to generate the questions

and reference materials. Mrs. Dick encouraged Board members, staff and residents to attend and participate.

Mr. Pinheiro indicated that Mr. Newmeyer's correspondence on abstinence-based sex education had been addressed earlier in the meeting. He noted Mr. Lipshutz' correspondence recommending the banning of door-to-door fundraising activities in the district. Dr. Durtan reminded those in attendance that, while the district had no policy banning door-to-door solicitations, administrative regulations discouraged it. He also noted that vendors were encouraged to avoid the practice of incentives and stated his belief that the Board would need to develop a policy if there were to be further limitations on door-to-door soliciting.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Durtan reviewed the recommendations listed on Enclosures #21 and #22. He noted that the appointment of a new school psychologist at a salary of \$59,500 had been added to the information included in Enclosure #21. It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Mandelbaum to approve appointments for promotion, employment or transfer, subject to presentation of valid credentials and proper substantiating data regarding salary, and resignations, corrected as shown in Enclosure # 21, and changes to the substitute list, as shown on Enclosure #22. Mr. Yunker inquired about the start date of the new psychologist, and Dr. Durtan advised that the start date depended on the individual's release by her present school district employer. Mr. Orlow inquired about the number of teachers on the substitute list who had substituted in the district in prior years. Dr. Durtan and Mr. Klinger advised that they did not have that information immediately available but would provide it in an update to the Board. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. Durtan announced that the Board had received a list containing the salary of each Colonial School District employee. Copies of the list are available for public review in the Personnel Office. Though the list had been provided for Board information, Mr. O'Hara advised that it would be a good idea for the Board to vote to accept the report. Mr. Yunker and Ms. Brown questioned why the action was necessary. Mr. O'Hara responded that it was an old code requirement and now merely provided the Board the opportunity to acknowledge the data annually. He assured the Board that such action did not preclude the Board from making changes to the list at a later date. It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to accept the list. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. Honowitz reported on the various activities surrounding Spirit Week and Homecoming at the high school, including Jell-O wrestling, color wars, dress-up day, switch day, the powder puff game, the pep rally, the homecoming football game and dance. Mr. Lukens provided an update on the school sports teams, the opportunity for all juniors and interested freshmen and sophomores to take the PSAT's, and the walkathon fundraiser for the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation.

New Business: Mr. Pinheiro noted that three requests for trips were on the agenda. All trips conform to district guidelines.

It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. Orlow to approve a request from Colonial Middle School for trips to Wallops Island, VA and Cape Cod Sea Camp, as shown in Enclosure #23. The trips have been annual events the past several years and have been successful educational enrichment activities. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. O'Neill and seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve a request for a trip by the high school lacrosse team to St. Petersburg, Florida during Spring Break, as shown in Enclosure #30. The trip will not interfere with the annual senior trip. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Connolly and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to approve a request from a teacher at Colonial Middle School for Board authorization to sponsor a trip to Russia, both during Spring Break, as shown in Enclosure #31. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. Durtan indicated that a bid for computer hardware was not yet ready for Board action. He noted that administration would be taking a closer look at the numbers to be sure that they represented the best value for the district. Ms. Brown queried the advantages of leasing, and Dr. Durtan noted that leasing meant less out of pocket dollars initially and offered the opportunity to upgrade some equipment at a later date. Ms. Brown noted that leases could confuse the district's debt structure and affect the district's bond rating. Dr. Durtan advised that administration was exploring options for securing funds to purchase the computers. Ms. Brown asked why the purchases could not be planned out over a five-year period, and Dr. Durtan responded that the Board was currently committed to completing the project at the high school next year.

Mr. Pinheiro indicated that the Board had received Enclosure #24, an informative report on the fundraising budgets for all school and school-related activities planning to raise funds during the school year. He noted also that the Board was aware of the perils of fundraising door to door and the significant effort that went into raising funds.

Mr. Pinheiro raised for Board consideration and approval the corporate resolution to maintain deposit account shown in Enclosure #25. He noted that Board action was necessary because of changes in administrative personnel at the high school. It was moved by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to approve the resolution. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to accept for consideration on first reading the behavior management policy contained in Enclosure #26. Dr. Durtan noted that some changes had been made in the language of the policy to address issues raised by the solicitor and that the supporting handbook had been integrated into the policy. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Pinheiro asked Mr. Bell to review administration's request to purchase a sound system for the high school auditorium, as shown in Enclosure # 32. Mr. Bell stated that the existing system was old and essentially non-functional. He indicated that the school was borrowing equipment from other school areas or from staff for routine audio needs and, in some cases, renting equipment for concert and theatrical productions. He advised the Board that he had researched the reason why the request had not been budgeted and confirmed that it had been raised as a budget item several years ago but had been designated a project to be included in the proposed auditorium renovation under consideration at that time. He also confirmed that the equipment would meet the needs of the high school for the foreseeable future even if the auditorium were renovated at a later date. He noted that administration was requesting authorization to use monies from the capital reserves to pay the difference between the projected cost and \$4,500.00 available from high school, CITV, and the theater program resources had in the current budget year. Ms. Brown raised a concern about the actual availability of capital reserve funds and received the assurance of Mr. Connolly that funds were available to cover the request. Mr. Orlow queried whether a board resolution were necessary to reimburse the fund for architectural fees advanced to cover work on the high school addition. Mr. Bickleman reported that such action was not necessary to cover normal architectural start-up fees. Ms. Brown felt that such a Board resolution would eventually be necessary and suggested that it happen sooner rather than later. Mr. Orlow suggested that administration contact Mr. Saul Ewing for advice. It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. Connolly to authorize the use of capital reserve funds, not to exceed \$6,100.00, to cover the difference between the actual cost of the new sound system and the \$4,500.00 available from high school, CITV and theater resources this budget year. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. O'Neill reported that the Curriculum Committee would be scheduling a meeting to review funding for co-curricular activities and would have a report for the Board at its general meeting in November.

Solicitor's Report: None

Committee Reports:

Intermediate Unit Board: No report.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that the CMCAVTS Board had honored Diane Steelman as Vo-Tech Teacher of the Year. He also noted that the Board had approved a contract with support personnel and was negotiating with teachers on a replacement for their now expired contract. He advised that enrollment was up to 698 students and that there had been a large increase in non-district students.

Personnel: Mr. Pinheiro noted that a report had been given to the Board and community at the work session on the preceding Monday evening.

Finance Committee: No formal report. Ms. Brown asked about the status of Board microphones which had been included in the budget for the current year. She noted that they were necessary if Board members were to be heard during meetings.

Curriculum and Program: No report.

Buildings & Grounds and Transportation: Mr. Connolly advised that the Board had taken action on a variety of issues at the special meeting of October 6, 1997. These included approval for the geotechnical studies needed for the proposed addition at the high school, the approval of design development drawings providing for a 20 foot corridor without columns and an additional stairwell in the main corridor into the proposed science wing, and authorization for three feasibility studies, one each for the east wing of the high school and Conshohocken Elementary School for curtain wall and ventilation needs and one at Colonial Elementary School for ventilation needs. He noted that the district had received a revised estimate for costs of the proposed high school addition at \$10,936,573.00 and that the architect had started construction drawings.

Community Relations: Mr. Orlow reported that a town meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 10/22/97 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at Conshohocken Borough Hall had been rescheduled for 10/29/97. He also noted that the annual report was close to completion and should be out the last week of October.

Legislative: No report.

For Your Information: The Board received several written reports: Report of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, current enrollment figures, pupil adjudication center/suspensions, PWHS Joint Activity Fund Statement and PWHS Athletics Fund Financial Statement, shown as Enclosures # 27, 28, 29, 33, and 34, respectively.

Public Comments: Mr. Dovberg spoke at two points during the comment period. He first read from a letter in which he outlined some ideas for fundraising activities other than door-to-door solicitations. These included joint marketing approaches which would allow adults and children under their supervision to use space in front of stores for fundraising activities and media announcements about fundraising events deserving of community support. He later voiced support for a ban on door-to-door solicitation by students and suggested that organizations soliciting funds remove all incentives for the most sales and the like and instead reward all participants for their participation. He suggested that schools remind parents regularly of the dangers of door-to-door solicitation. Mr. Dovberg also suggested that the district participate in the pilot programs allowing consumers to decide from whom they purchase electric power and learned from Mr. Bickleman that Mr. Berneski had submitted applications for some district schools. He also voiced support for upgrading the sound system in the Board Room so that those in the audience could clearly hear Board deliberations.

Dr. Lipshutz noted that the Board had included funds in the current budget for the installation of computers, screens and scanners in each of the high school classrooms by the start of the school year and hoped that, though installation had been delayed, the Board remained committed to the project. He also recommended banning door-to-door fundraising solicitations and noted that Whitemarsh Elementary School raised significant funds each year without canvassing door-to-door. He recommended eliminating incentives for the highest sales volume.

Mrs. Theiss stated that parent groups organizing fundraisers at district schools provide guidance to those participating in their fundraising projects and strongly advised against door-to-door activities. She also noted that groups have already started discussing the need to change fundraising incentives and to get parents more involved. Mr. Pinheiro asked the Community Relations Committee to look into the subject of fundraising and come back to the Board with its findings and recommendations.

Mrs. Abbott commended the Board for its support for the sound system in the high school auditorium. She also noted that block scheduling was a positive initiative that had broad community support and was dismayed that it had become a bargaining chip in the negotiating process. She asked the Board and the CEA to agree to take it off the table. Mr. Orlow indicated that the Board had not put the item on the table.

Mr. English encouraged the public to come out for the School Board Candidates' Forum sponsored by the League of Women's Voters on 10/21/97. He wondered if the district could send out a reminder. Mr. Pinheiro felt that such a notice should be handled by the media and noted that the League had not yet formally advised the candidates of the debate.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Mr. Kessler adjourned the meeting at 10.24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Secretary**