

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 18, 1997**

The September meeting of the Colonial School Board of Directors was convened by President Kessler at 8:01 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room of the Colonial Elementary School on September 18, 1997.

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

Board Members Absent: None

Also Attending: Dr. Stanley Durtan, Superintendent; Dr. Ann Evans Buhman, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; James M. Bell, Director of Operations/Board Secretary; R. Scott Klinger, Director of Personnel; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Frank O'Hara, Solicitor; Katy Swetkowski and John Lukens, Student Board Representatives; Sally Abbott; Robert Carroll; Linda Chmielewski; Tince Crowder; Allan Dovberg; Don Flatham; Bunny Grunes; Mark Helms; Mirria Kitei; Hugh Lipshutz; Michael Maraninch; Donald Newmeyer; Robert Reed; Shannon Rowley; Alan Sharavsky; Barbara Sharavsky; Karen Tucker; and Frank Whitehead.

Mr. Kessler lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes: It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 8/18/97 as shown in Enclosure #1, the Work Session of 8/18/97 as shown in Enclosure #2, the General Meeting of 8/21/97 as shown in Enclosure #3, and the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting of 9/2/97 as shown in Enclosure #4, as amended. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. Mr. Yunker queried what was missing from Mr. Orlow's announcement as noted on page #2261, the minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting of 8/21/97, as shown in Enclosure #36. Administration will correct the minutes to include the missing statement, and the Board will consider approval of the revised minutes at its October meeting.

Financial Reports and Treasurer's Report: It was moved by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. Mandelbaum to approve the payment of General Fund/Federal Programs Bills (August 1997) and to approve the Financial Reports (August 1997) listed as Enclosures #5 through #15, the Final Budget Transfers as shown in Enclosure #37, and the Treasurer's Report (August 1997) listed as Enclosure #16, subject to audit. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: Alan Sharavsky, district resident, referred to his correspondence to the Board, as shown in Enclosure # 41, and expressed concern about the safety of children walking to school if developments proposed for the WFIL tract and an additional tract along Flourtown Road near the quarry brought added traffic to the area.

Mr. Kessler noted that the Board shared some of his concerns and took the issue under advisement. In response to a follow-up questions and comments on the possibility of housing developments, Mr. Orlow raised a question about Whitemarsh Township seeking part of the WFIL tract for open space. Mr. Pinheiro noted that the tract was on the township's open space plan, but he could not predict actions by the township supervisors. Mr. Sharavsky shared some unsubstantiated information which he had received on development of the area near the quarry. Ms. Brown suggested that residents bring their concerns directly to the attention of the township supervisors. Hugh Lipshutz, district resident added his concern that access from the housing development between Flourtown Road and the WFIL tract through the WFIL tract and on into the housing development between the WFIL tract and Germantown Pike would exacerbate traffic problems in the area. Mr. Pinheiro noted that no access running straight through the tract was planned, though indirect access through the area was included in preliminary plans. The Board has received no formal plans for development of the areas in question.

Mr. Newmeyer, district resident read a prepared statement on abstinence based sex education, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Karen Tucker, President of the Plymouth Whitemarsh PTSO, with the assistance of Mirria Kitei and Tince Crowder, provided the Board with information on a PTSO fund raiser through which afghans depicting the schools of Colonial School District, past and present, could be purchased for \$50.00. The group distributed informational packets which would be included with initial purchases of the afghans, expressed thanks to the many individuals involved in the project, and encouraged members of the Board and Administration, as well as those in the TV audience, to consider purchases. Order forms are available in district schools.

Staff Report: Mr. Kessler advised that, in response to a question from the previous Board meeting, the Board has been presented with written information, as shown in Enclosure # 38, pertaining to the District's health curriculum and specifically its sex education component. Because of a conflict with the Colonial Middle School Open House, an opportunity to interact with staff will be deferred until the October Board Meeting.

Old Business: The Board considered the proposed policy pertaining to copyright guidelines, as shown in Enclosure #17, and presented as a second reading. Dr. Durtan noted that the suggested change to the policy included in meeting materials from the September 15th work session had been deleted and the policy restored to that presented for a first reading at the meeting of August 21st. Mr. Yunker recommended that the suggested changes which made the copyright handbook part of the policy be re-added. The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of including the handbook as part of the policy. Several Board members noted the advantages of keeping policy statements and implementing mechanisms separate and having a handbook which could be revised without going through the process of two policy readings. Several Board members also felt that having the policy and handbook together brought a measure of control to a complicated subject and strengthened the connection between the policy and its implementation. Mr.

O'Hara noted he and Dr. Durtan had worked on the policy together and that the policy, as presented, gave the superintendent appropriate direction. Dr. Durtan noted that including the handbook in the policy was an option which had been followed earlier when the policy on drug testing was adopted. It was moved by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to adopt the policy as presented on second reading. On a roll call vote, Ms. Brown, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Pinheiro in favor. Mr. Kessler, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Mandelbaum, Mr. Orlow and Mr. Yunker opposed. Motion denied. It was moved by Mr. Yunker and seconded by Mr. Orlow to present for first reading the policy as annotated in the materials presented at the work session of September 15th and including the handbook in the policy. On roll call vote, Mr. Kessler, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Orlow, and Mr. Yunker in favor. Ms. Brown, Mr. Mandelbaum, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Pinheiro opposed. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Mr. Kessler noted the correspondence from Thomas J. Gentzel, Assistant Executive Director of PSBA for Governmental and Member Relations advising the Board of the 1997 PSBA Legislative Policy Council Meeting and providing the opportunity for the Board to elect three delegates to attend this meeting, as shown in Enclosure # 18. It was moved by Mr. Pinheiro and seconded by Mr. Gary Johnson to appoint Mr. Kessler, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Orlow delegates to the PSBA Legislative Policy Council Meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

Prior to the meeting, the Board received correspondence from Karen Tucker, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School PTSO President requesting the opportunity to address the Board on an ongoing PTSO Project; from district residents Donald R. Newmeyer, presenting specific information on programs for abstinence based sex education, as shown in Enclosure # 19, and Bruce and Ellen Majer, expressing support for abstinence based sex education, as shown in Enclosure # 20; and Alan Sharavsky, requesting Board input on the proposed development of the WFIL tract, as shown in Enclosure #41. Ms. Tucker, Mr. Newmeyer and Mr. Sharavsky spoke during public comments on the agenda earlier in the meeting.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Durtan reviewed the recommendations listed on Enclosures #21 through #25.

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.

Changes on the Substitute List, as shown on Enclosure #22.

Extra Duty/Extra Pay Assignments, as shown on Enclosure #23.

Adult Education Appointments, as shown in Enclosure # 24.

Contract with an approved private school for a instructional aide, as shown in Enclosure #25. Officially, the aide would be an employee of the approved private school, but the district would be responsible for any and all financial considerations. This has been determined to be the most cost effective means of providing the services.

It was moved by Mr. O'Neill and seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the personnel actions, as recommended by Dr. Durtan and listed in Enclosures # 21 through #25. On a roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. Durtan provided the Board a written update on enrollment. He noted that the increase in enrollment was not as great as had been projected but was within a 2% variation that was standard for such projections. He noted that this year was the first time in eight years that the district had not retained 100% of its 3rd grade students as they moved into 4th grade. The Board and Administration briefly discussed the actual increases, their variation from the projected, and the limited impact these variations had on long-range planning. Board members queried the variations throughout the school year from September to June. Dr. Durtan noted that the district bench marks usually ran from October to October but indicated that he would check the data and report on the typical June - September variation at a later meeting. He will have a follow-up report on enrollment for the Board at its October meeting. Mr. Klinger noted that the figures presented did not include I.U. classes.

Dr. Durtan reported that Mr. Breslin of Breslin Ridyard Fadero Architects had provided an alternative to the corridor design included in design development drawings for the science addition at the high school. In the alternative drawing the main corridor leading to the new wing was widened to 20 feet and included a stairwell to the second floor.

Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. Swetkowski reported that the freshmen entering the high school were adjusting well and that the Back-To-School program for all grades was a success. She also noted that the senior class was already engaged in fund raising for the annual class trip to Florida and provided information on upcoming social and cultural events, including Homecoming in the third week of October. Mr. Lukens provided information on the election of 9th grade class officers, the election of student council officers and coordinators, and student participation in a leadership conference. He also provided an update on school sports events.

New Business: It was moved by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. Mandelbaum to approve the District's submission of the 1997-98 Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act Grant Application. The allocation for the coming year is \$23,908.00. The planned usage of the funds is as delineated in the memo from Mr. Shipman, as shown in Enclosure #26. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. O'Neill and seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the student trip requests from the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Ski Club and School Adventure

Club, as shown in Enclosures #27 and 40, respectively. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Mandelbaum and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to accept the bids of the lowest responsible bidders for ice cream novelties and milk & juice, as shown in Enclosure # 28.

- Ice Cream Novelties
Nelson Dairy Products at prices per dozen as listed in Enclosure #28.
- Milk and Juice
Bechtel Dairies, Inc. at prices per drink as listed in Enclosure # 28.

On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Orlow and seconded by Mr. Connolly to reject bids for a nine-passenger van to transport school students and to re-bid a 1998 vehicle to encourage competitive bidding, as shown in Enclosure # 28. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Pinheiro and seconded Mr. O'Neill to authorize the admission of Francis Doroba, Jr. To Plymouth Whitmarsh High School. Francis has been interviewed by the High School Administration, and his admission has been recommended, as shown in Enclosure #29. In response to a query by Mr. Kessler, Dr. Durtan advised that the student was a Philadelphia resident and would pay the district's full tuition charge of almost \$8,000. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. Durtan presented a proposed revision of Board Policy 2-2050, "Use of School Facilities and Equipment" and recommended Board consideration on first reading, as shown in Enclosure #30. Mr. Kessler noted that the policy had been reviewed by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. Mr. Connolly reported that the changes made the policy consistent with district practice, provided for equitable fees and the means to advise potential users of the applicable fees in advance of their events, and offered some flexibility to Administration. Mr. Mandelbaum questioned the reference to excessive use of the facilities, and Mr. Bell responded by noting that the facilities were in great demand and that care was taken to address the reasonable needs of the district's many constituencies in an equitable fashion by not allowing any one organization or group a disproportionate share of the available time. It was moved by Mr. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Pinheiro to approve the policy for a first reading. On roll call vote, Mr. Kessler, Mr. Pinheiro, Mr. Brown, Mr. Connolly, Mr. Johnson, Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Orlow, and Mr. Yunker in favor. Motion carried. Mr. Mandelbaum opposed. Motion carried.

It was moved by Mr. Connolly and seconded by Mr. O'Neill to approve the contract for Pediatric Therapy Services for the provision of physical therapy to district students, as shown in Enclosure #31. Previously, these services were purchased from the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. Related costs of \$58.00 per hour represent a substantial cost reduction from previous charges for these services. Mr. Kessler queried why the district was providing the services. Mr. Shipman explained that there was a fine line between

medical and educational issues. He noted that when a student's physical abilities limit learning, the issues were addressed in the IEP. Typical examples of areas addressed in the IEP were gross mobility issues and fine motor skills. Examples of services provided include occupational therapy, visual training. Mr. O'Hara cited from applicable regulations medical and related services that could be provided under an IEP. Mr. Shipman noted that the IEP was developed by a team which included professional personnel and the family of the student involved and provided some information on specific instances where addressing physical needs allowed students to focus on academics. Several Board members queried the appropriateness and value of including on the team developing the IEP a physician or others who could provide some guidance not only on the services required but also consider the appropriate source for the services and the funding to cover them. Several Board members questioned whether the district was, in all cases, the appropriate agency to pay for medical services for students with special needs and wondered if it would not be useful to pay for a medical opinion in cases where it was important to determine the effect of medical problems on learning. Board members stressed that they were not questioning that needs exist but rather focusing on how these needs were met and by whom they were funded. Both Mr. Shipman and Mr. O'Hara noted that members of the IEP team must have some ability to aid in the educational placement of the student. At the close of the discussion, Administration was charged with looking into the possibility of including a medical professional on IEP teams, where appropriate. On roll call vote on the issue of the contract for Pediatric Therapy Services to provide physical therapy to district students, all in favor. Motion carried.

Solicitor's Report: None

Committee Reports:

Intermediate Unit Board: Mr. Pinheiro noted that he, Mr. O'Neill, Dr. Durtan and Mr. O'Hara had attended a PSBA presentation on charter schools held at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and that the Board was beginning the process of creating a policy on how to handle applications to create charter schools.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson presented some information on increasing enrollment at the Center for Technical Studies. Enrollment on 9/16/97 was over 700 for the first time since 1990. He spoke of the success of the allied health program and covered the growing number of articulation agreements which the center had with colleges and technical schools. Note was taken of the enrollment drop from junior to senior year which result, in part, from students returning to their home schools for their senior years. Mr. Johnson distributed an written summary of the key points of his presentation, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Personnel: Mr. Pinheiro reported the Board and CEA met with a mediator on 9/3/97 to seek some common ground on their ongoing negotiations and that the mediator was looking for opportunities to meet in smaller groups in the future. Mr. Pinheiro advised that the Personnel Committee would meet in executive session at 6:30 on 9/22/97 to discuss

personnel matters. He thanked Mr. Klinger for the work he had done over the summer to fill all available positions in the district. In response to a Board query, Dr. Durtan indicated that he had had good reports on the new members of the staff and that the mentoring program was in place.

Finance Committee: No report.

Curriculum and Program: No report.

Buildings & Grounds and Transportation: Mr. Connolly advised that the committee would meet in the Board Room on Monday, 9/22/97 to provide a forum to gather opinions on feasibility studies for facility needs in the east wing of the high school and at Conshohocken Elementary School, the need for a geotechnical survey prior to construction of the science addition at the high school, the design development data submitted by the architect for the science addition at the high school. Community members were encouraged to attend.

Community Relations: Mr. Orlow reported that a town meeting which would include an updates on negotiations and major projects was scheduled for Wednesday, 10/22/97 from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at Conshohocken Borough Hall.

Legislative: Mr. Kessler advised that he had represented the Bucks-Montgomery County region at the Legislative Policy Council Executive Board which considered, as part of its agenda, performance-based pay and the privatization of public school services.

For Your Information: Mr. Pinheiro queried whether money from the CMS activities funds followed the 8th grade class when it move on to the high school. Dr. Durtan noted that most of the funds would be used up for on-going activities but would check whether any balance followed the students through the system.

Public Comments: Dr. Lipshutz referred to a recent report on the status of public schools in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. He compared the status of schools in Colonial School District with those in surrounding districts and expressed concern that not enough was being done to prepare Colonial students to compete with their peers from other districts. He questioned that the current educational program was giving the community its money's worth. He suggested that a committee be established to examine the issue. Mr. Kessler took the suggestion under advisement. Board members noted the availability of SAT prep courses in certain districts, suggested several ways in which to track and correlate the data presented in the news report, and discussed the impact that factors such as wealth and test practice had on SAT scores. Dr. Durtan stated that the district wanted to do better, noted that some information was missing from the report, noted that means were distorted by extremes, and that additional analysis was appropriate. He noted that Pat Campbell had done some research on the subject and suggested that Dr. Lipshutz speak with her about her findings. He felt that the district's top students could compete with their peers across the country and advised that the district had already taken steps to

help raise test scores, including requiring that all students take the PSAT and introducing a Barron's book on the SAT into the curriculum.

Karen Tucker queried the availability of parking permits for juniors at the high school. Dr. Durtan advised that parking remained extremely limited and that it was unlikely that underclassmen would be able to park at the school. He suggested that students without parking permits make other arrangements for travel to and from school. Mr. Connolly asked if there was any information on how many students carpooled. Dr. Durtan indicated that he had no hard information on the subject.

Mr. Dovberg suggested that students with special needs, extra-curricular activities and/or good grades be given the first option on available parking slots. He added to Dr. Lipshutz comments on the recent article in the Philadelphia Inquirer on the status of public schools in the Philadelphia region. He noted that those analyzing the information could draw almost any conclusion from the data. He noted that much had to be done in the district, but that the district was also doing a better job than most. Mr. Dovberg stated that the report was based on last year's data and that updated information had recently been released and was being digested. He hoped that the raw material would be available to the public at some point so that it could be determined whether the district had made advances or not. He noted that 62% of the districts funds went for instruction and educational programs and suggested that parents needed to be more involved if students were to get the biggest return on the dollars spent on instruction. Mr. Dovberg suggested that the district should be the payer of last resort for special services for students and that the district look into the possibility of apportioning the cost for medical services for special needs students to parents, health care providers, and the like.

Sally Abbott referred to the report on the vocational technical school and posed some questions on the causes for changes in enrollment from October to June, the status of three-year averaging in determining district tuition payments and which enrollment figures were used. Mr. Connolly answered that the October figures were used.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Mr. Kessler adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell
Secretary