

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, AUGUST 17, 1998**

Vice-President Orlow convened the August Work Session of the Colonial School Board of Directors at 8:48 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on August 17, 1998.

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

Board Members Absent: Stuart Kessler, Jack Pinheiro

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; Carol Cohen, CEA; Michael Macaninch; Allan Dovberg; Kathy Dale; Naila Francis; Gail Gallagher; Carol Klein; and Dr. Hugh Lipshutz.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the minutes of the Community Relations Committee of 5/13/98, the Community Relations Committee of 7/6/98, the Work Session of 7/6/98, the General Meeting of 7/9/98, the Buildings and Grounds Committee of 7/23/98 and the Special Meeting of 7/28/98, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #6. Mr. Orlow asked board members if they had questions or comments concerning the minutes. There were none.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow reminded board members that, because financial reports for June had been postponed, they would be reviewing and approving reports for both June and July. He directed their attention to the Bond Fund, General Fund/Federal Program Bills, Capital Reserve Fund, Outstanding Investment, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Tax Escrow, Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, Budgetary/Deficit Status and Treasurer's Reports for June and July 1998 and the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Reports for May and June 1998, as shown in Enclosures #7 through #16, and asked for Board comments. There were none.

Staff Report: None

Public Comments of the Agenda: Mr. Dovberg, President, Colonial United Taxpayers, commented on the comprehensive nature of the update of the district's Professional Development Plan and queried Board familiarity with the document. He asked if there were any added staff benefits or financial incentives in the plan,

and Dr. Stormes indicated that that she believed there were none. Mr. Dovberg asked if staff had to take required courses before they could take elective courses. Dr. Stormes and Mr. Klinger explained that staff had to secure administrative approval for all courses taken and that only those related to the work performed by staff were approved. Mr. Dovberg also asked if courses were taken during school time or after hours. Dr. Durtan responded that courses were not taken during instructional time but that professional staff were granted release time on occasion for other activities such as curriculum development. Mr. Dovberg also queried the amount of professional development funds budgeted. Dr. Stormes indicated that she would have to check the amount but that it was a contractual item.

Old Business: None

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow noted that Beth Cassel-Tableman, a former Colonial School District student, had expressed appreciation to the teachers with whom she worked while attending the district. No action required. See Enclosure #17.

Mr. Orlow noted that Thomas J. Gertzel, Assistant Executive Director for Government and Member Relations, PSBA, requested Board participation in the PSBA Legislative Policy Council Meeting to be held during the PASA-PSBA School Leadership '98 Conference in Pittsburgh on 10/10/98, as outlined in Enclosure #18. Mr. Orlow advised that the district was eligible to appoint three voting delegates to the Legislative Policy Council. In response to a question from Mr. Orlow, Dr. Durtan advised that Board action on the appointments was scheduled for the meeting of 8/20/98. Mr. Orlow reported that Mr. Kessler had expressed an interest in being a delegate.

Mr. Orlow recognized Carol Klein of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation who introduced Gail Gallagher, a nurse at Colonial and Whitmarsh Elementary Schools. Ms. Gallagher was the recipient of a foundation mini-grant. She outlined an HIV-AIDS education program for fifth graders designed to help stem the tide of young people becoming infected with HIV. Mini-grant funds were used to purchase stickers, an age-appropriate video that is on the market and readily available to parents for review, and other materials.

Dr. Durtan advised the Board that an additional piece of correspondence would be on the agenda for the meeting of 8/20/98, a letter from Ms. Cohen of the CEA expressing the position of the CEA on Martin Luther King Day.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Durtan briefly reviewed his personnel report containing recommendations on additions, terminations, suspensions, demotions, leaves of absence, promotions, suspensions, transfers and resignations of staff; Extra Duty, Extra Pay assignments; and conference requests, as shown in Enclosures #19, #20 and #30. He advised that there would be additions to Enclosure #19 for the meeting on 8/20/98. He also indicated that his report for that meeting would

include an enrollment update which would highlight “hot spots” at the kindergarten level at Plymouth and Ridge Park Elementary Schools and at the second grade level at Ridge Park Elementary Schools. He reported that potential increases in enrollment might warrant a recommendation to add additional classes at these locations. Mr. Orlow asked how many unassigned teaching positions had been included in the current year budget. Dr. Durtan indicated that 2.9 positions were in the budget and that this number should be sufficient to cover any unanticipated needs.

New Business: Mr. Orlow advised the Board that contracts for transporting students to St. Joseph’s Preparatory School and Lakeside Youth Service would be on the agenda for the meeting of 8/20/98, as shown in Enclosure #21. He asked Dr. Durtan if these contracts were renewals of current contracts, and Dr. Durtan indicated that they were. He advised that the basic terms of the contract were the same but that the rates listed in the contract represented increases over the prior year. Ms. Brown noted that these rates had increased almost 10% in one case and more than 10% in the other. Dr. Durtan reported that the district was recommending the most economical option available.

Mr. Orlow noted that an agreement for the provision of Occupational Therapy Services, as shown in Enclosure # 22, would be on the agenda for the meeting of 8/20/98. In response to a question from Mr. Orlow, Dr. Durtan reported that the terms of the contract and the rate were essentially the same as they had been in the prior year but that the service provider would be new. He reported that the former provider was moving out of the area.

Mr. Orlow noted that the administration would be recommending early admission to school for several students at the meeting of 8/20/98. Dr. Durtan advised that the students listed in Enclosure #23 met the district’s criteria for early admission.

Mr. Orlow advised that Approval of Corporate Resolutions for District Accounts would be sought at Thursday night’s meeting to update signatories on the high school accounts as a result of the return of Ms. Campbell as building principal. He referred the Board to Enclosure #24.

Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Stormes to provide an update on the Professional Development Plan shown in Enclosure # 25. Dr. Stormes advised that the state required school districts to update the plan every two years and that the process was a routine one. She noted that the report followed a state format and covered what the district had already done and would continue to do in the area of professional development. Mr. Orlow asked about the relationship between the Professional Development Plan and professional evaluation. Mr. Yunker thought that the plan was too general in nature and that it should include action plans to assist staff in meeting district goals. Mr. Orlow asked how it would be possible to assess whether the plan met district needs. Dr. Stormes responded that the plan did not contain the

same details as the district strategic plan and did not reflect all of the many ways that the district worked with its professional staff on an on-going basis to foster professional development. She reiterated the fixed format of the state report and the fact that the reporting format was not designed to include all of the details of the district's efforts. Mr. Orlow asked if the district could include additional information for its own use. Dr. Stormes advised that it would be important to take a look the interaction among principals, teachers and students throughout the year to see how professional development was integrated into the day-to-day operation of the district.

Mr. Orlow reported that the contract shown in Enclosure #26 would permit the Head Start program to continue to operate out of Conshohocken Elementary School in the coming year. He noted that approval of the document would be on the agenda for the meeting of 8/20/98.

Mr. Orlow noted that two additional items would be placed the agenda for the meeting of 8/20/98: A Student trip request and approval of the structural steel contract. Ms. Brown noted that the Board had already approved the award of the structural steel bid to the firm with which the contract was drawn and suggested that no further Board action was required. Mr. O'Hara concurred.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. O'Hara advised that he would be recommending at the meeting on 8/20/98 the settlement of an outstanding tax appeal. He also noted that follow-up action would be needed on the revised Articles of Agreement for the Central Montgomery County Vocational/Technical School. (See CMCAVTS committee report below.)

Additional Comment: None

Committee Reports:

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that agreement had been reached on concerns raised by the Norristown Area and Upper Merion School Districts on the revised Articles of Agreements. Norristown had suggested that the term of the agreement be reduced from 30 to 20 years. Upper Merion had sought language which it believed clarified the procedures by which a school district could withdraw from the jointure. Mr. O'Neill offered supporting comments for approval of the amended agreement. Mr. O'Hara noted that the change in term was the only substantive change between the proposed agreement and the one approved earlier by the Board. He noted that the change in language relating to a district's withdrawal from the jointure reflected no more than what the law would have required without the added language. Mr. Johnson advised that he would be recommending approval of the revised Articles of Agreement at the meeting of 8/20/98.

Public Comments: Mr. Dovberg commented on the improved appearance of the Board Room since the replacement of the carpet. He also spoke favorably about the Pennsylvania Writing Project held at the district during the summers of 1996, 1997 and 1998. In response to a query from Mr. Dovberg, Dr. Stormes noted that the project involved teachers from many districts participating in a variety of courses. Mr. Dovberg asked for information on how many Colonial School District staff attended these courses and additional courses offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education over the summer months.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell
Board Secretary