

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, AUGUST 19, 1999**

Vice President Orlow convened the August meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:01 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on August 19, 1999.

Board Members Present: Marc Orlow, Beverly Brown, Robert Carroll, Rich Connolly, Gary Johnson, Robert O'Neill, Jack Pinheiro and 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; Michael Gordon, Student Board Representative; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Esq., Solicitor; William Wells, President of the Board of Trustees of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation; Melia Boure, A. J. Dauterio, Diane M. Fiske and Kathryn M. Green.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the minutes of the Community Relations Committee of 06/30/99, the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meetings of 07/20/99 and 07/22/99, the General Meeting of 07/22/99, the Special Board Meeting of 08/10/99, and the Community Relations Committee Meeting of 08/10/99, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #6. He also noted that the minutes of the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 07/08/99 had been added to the agenda as Enclosure #36. Board members had no questions or comments. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow referred board members the Bond Fund Report for the month ending 07/31/99; the Capital Projects Report for the month ending 07/31/99; the General Fund/Federal Program Bills; the Capital Reserve Fund Report for the month ending 07/31/99; the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Report of 06/30/99; the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Tax Escrow Report, and the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the month ending 07/31/99; the Budget Analysis of 08/09/99; and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 07/31/99, as shown in Enclosures #7 through #17. Ms. Brown moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the reports as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: Five items of correspondence were on the agenda. Ms. Sueann Hedgepeth, district resident, expressed her opinion about class size at Ridge Park Elementary School in Enclosure #18. Mr. Herbert Maguire, CPA of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Audits and Ms. Betty Wilson of the Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management of the Pennsylvania Department of Education provided confirmation of opinions expressed in earlier correspondence about audits of federal programs funded through state agencies. See Enclosures #19 and #20. Mr. Allan Dovberg, President of Colonial United Taxpayers, expressed his opinion about the district' "Activities Code of Ethics" (Enclosure #37), and Mr. Wells requested the opportunity to present a mini-grant recipient to the Board.

Mr. Wells introduced Kathryn Green, a teacher from Genesis, the alternative program at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, who described a field trip for her social studies students and program staff to Ellis Island. The trip was funded by the Colonial Foundation and provided students and staff the opportunity to tour the facility and learn firsthand about immigrants who passed through the facility earlier in the century. Ms. Green reported that the students were very enthusiastic about the trip and learned a great deal from the experience.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Durtan briefly reviewed the Superintendent's Report as shown in Enclosures #21 through #24. He reviewed additions to his personnel recommendations and the substitute list (Enclosures # 21 and #22) and noted some corrections to data contained in the reports. In response to Board queries, Mr. Klinger reported that he was still trying to fill a part-time teaching position in the foreign language department of the middle school. He also indicated that there were a number of non-professional positions yet to be filled and advised that he had a number of interviews scheduled the following day. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the personnel recommendations and additions to the substitute list. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Dr. Durtan briefly reviewed the extra-duty, extra-pay assignments and conference requests contained in Enclosures #23 and #24. In response to a query by Mr. Orlow, Dr. Durtan reported that the high school administration had, for the most part, addressed the scheduling conflicts that coaches might experience between their after-class schedules and the last class period by scheduling preparation periods for affected staff at the end of the school day. This procedure allowed the coaches to meet timelines for away games without disrupting their class schedules. Several board members commented in passing on a number of the conference opportunities for the coming year. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the extra-duty, extra-pay assignments, as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor except Mr. O'Neill. Mr. O'Neill abstained. Motion carried. Mr. Yunker

moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the conference requests, as presented. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Board Student Representative's Report: Mr. Gordon updated the Board on the first week of training for participants in the fall sports programs at the high school, the initial practices of the Marching Colonials, and preparations by the orientation leaders to welcome the incoming freshman class.

New Business: Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the three policies that were being considered for adoption on second reading at the meeting. Board members had no additional questions or comments on the policies. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the policy on Leave of Absence for Professional Development and Classroom Occupational Exchange, as shown in Enclosure #25. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. Mr. Pinheiro moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the policy on Leave of Absence, Sabbatical Leave for Restoration of Health, as shown in Enclosure #26. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried. Mr. Carroll moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the policy on Promotion and Graduation, as shown in Enclosure #27. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the students that were being recommended for early admission to school under the provisions of Board Policy 6-001. Board members had no additional comments or questions on the recommendations. Mr. Carroll moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the recommendations, as shown in Enclosure #28. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow raised the subject of four routine contracts for transporting students to Devon Preparatory School, Lakeside Youth Service, New Life and Family Services, and St. Joseph's Preparatory School, as shown in Enclosures #29 through #32. Board members had no additional comments or questions on the contracts. Mr. Johnson 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 moved to an outstanding bid for a Spectralight 0200 Machining Center, one of the last pieces of equipment that was part of the technology upgrades proposed for newly scheduled classes. In response to Board queries, Dr. Durtan indicated that the item had been budgeted and that the bid had come in within budget. He also noted that action on another item had been deferred and would probably be rebid. Mr. Connolly moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the purchase, as outlined in Enclosure # 38. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Sultanik recommended Board approval of a tentative settlement of a tax assessment appeal by the Latvian Relief Fund and noted that the

assessment would be increased to \$56,700.00 for the 1998 tax year. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. O'Neill seconded a motion to approve the settlement. On roll call vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

Other New Business: Mr. Pinheiro expressed his belief that Whitemarsh Township would close its athletic fields for the balance of the season. He felt that it would be prudent for the district to follow suit and made a motion to authorize limiting access to district athletic fields to district organizations and those football teams which annually used the stadium field at the high school as their home field. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Bell for his reaction. Mr. Bell said that he had discussed the issue with Mr. Forster, Activities Director at the high school, and had been planning to suggest that administration wait to see what effect projected heavy rains over the weekend had on the fields and then make a decision whether or not to limit access to them. Several board members expressed strong concerns about the safety of student athletes on deteriorating fields and the ultimate cost to the taxpayer if major renovations were required on the fields as a result of over use during the drought. They suggested that the Board do the right thing and take direct action to require administration to avoid overuse of the fields by denying outside groups access to the fields except for the teams that use the stadium field as their home field for football. Mr. O'Neill raised the issue of the impact that the ban would have on the large number of students that participate in the Plymouth Soccer Program. He advised that they would probably be denied the opportunity to play this fall if district fields were closed for the season. The majority of the Board remained firm in their belief that closure of the fields to non-school groups was the correct course of action. Mr. Pinheiro and Ms. Brown accepted the position of the majority and amended their motion to require district administration to limit access to the fields. In response to a question from Mr. Orlow, Mr. Bell indicated that he believed that the course of action proposed was the most prudent one. Mr. Bell asked if the intent of the motion was to limit field access indefinitely, for the entire season, or until a specified future date. After additional discussion, the consensus of the Board was to limit access until administration could convince the Board that the primary concerns of protecting student safety and minimizing field restoration costs to the taxpayer had been met. On roll call vote, all in favor except Mr. O'Neill. Mr. O'Neill opposed. Motion carried.

Mr. Orlow updated the community on the report of the arbitrator for performance-based compensation for professional staff. He reviewed the history of the movement to performance-based compensation. He noted the original recommendation of the Citizens Advisory Committee, the contractual agreement of the Board and CEA to move forward with a performance-based compensation plan, their inability to resolve the issues by the deadlines set and the final decision of the arbitration panel. Mr. Orlow noted that the panel had created a plan that met some of the goals of both parties. He explained that it had both individual and group components which were funded with \$100,000.00 each. He described how the groups would be structured, noted that the focus of the initiative remained student achievement,

explained that additional work was needed to implement the decision of the arbitration panel, and noted the provision requiring the continuing involvement of an educational consultant during program implementation. Several board members provided clarifying details. Mr. Orlow advised the community that the state had amended the school code to provide grants to school districts that had independent merit pay programs for teachers in place and that the district might be able to defray some of the implementation costs of the arbitrators' decision with grant funds. Mr. Sultanik stated his belief that the district had the only such performance-based compensation plan for teachers in the state and noted interest all across the country in the district's plan. Mr. Connolly noted the demands that the plan would place on district administrators. Dr. Durtan agreed that the plan would not be easy to implement but assured the Board that administration would keep the Board fully aware of concerns and needs as they arose. Mr. Connolly noted a 09/15/99 deadline for the Board and CEA to agree on the educational consultant with whom they would work. Mr. Carroll received confirmation that the district had budgeted \$150,000.00 in the current year to implement the program and \$200,000.00 to fund it.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit, Finance, Curriculum and Program, Buildings & Grounds/Transportation, and Legislative: None

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson noted that Walter Slauch, Assistant Principal at the high school had been selected Director of the Center for Technical Studies and would be moving into that position on 11/01/99. He will work with Mr. Ruzicka until his retirement on 01/28/00.

Personnel: Mr. Pinheiro thanked Mr. Klinger for his efforts at getting the district ready for the coming school year. He noted that, because of retirements, Mr. Klinger had had to find replacements for the one out of every seven teachers in the district. He also welcomed Anthony Irwin as the newest assistant principal at the high school and noted that the district would have to find a replacement for Mr. Slauch in the weeks ahead.

Community Relations: Mr. Johnson reported that the first Town Meeting of the new school year would be held at the Whitemarsh Township Building on 10/25/99 and would deal with the topic of school safety. He encouraged the community to come out and participate. Mr. Johnson also announced that the district's new web page would list the bus schedules for the year. Mr. Connolly raised the question of school counselors providing students with abortion counseling and the problems raised at a neighboring district. Mr. Shipman responded by advising the Board that the district's counselors always made it a practice to engage parents in counseling situations unless a court directed a different course of action in order to protect the rights of the child. He noted that, while what happened at a neighboring district would not happen at Colonial under these procedures, his counselors would be studying the recent case in another district in order to learn from the unfortunate

situation. Mr. Connolly also asked if the Buildings & Grounds Committee could provide a quick update on current projects and the readiness of district schools for the start of classes. Mr. Orlow noted that schools would open on time and that cafeteria #7 at the high school would be ready for the start of school.

Public Comments: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

James M. Bell
Board Secretary