

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, MARCH 21, 2002**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:36 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on March 21, 2002.

**Board Members Present:** Marc Orlow, Robert Carroll, Thomas Davis, Lynn Glodek, Gary Johnson, Hugh Lipshutz, Susan Moore, and Thomas Yunker.

**Board Members Absent:** Thomas Marchozzi.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; R. Scott Klinger, Assistant to the Superintendent for Administrative Services and Personnel; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Director of Educational Services – Elementary; Patricia Iannelli, Director of Educational Services - Secondary; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph Bickleman, Director of Financial Services/ Treasurer; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; Ashley Kurtz and Colleen Dougherty, Student Board Representatives; Rodger Dombrow, former PWHS Principal; Helen Glessler; Bob Grieshober; Bob O'Neill; John Peters; Mike and Madeline Phillips; Nancy Sellers; and teachers, families and friends of the students receiving certificates of achievement.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance. He also advised that the Board had met in executive session immediately preceding the general meeting to discuss legal matters and personnel issues and would meet again immediately following the meeting to continue the discussion.

**Oath of Office:** Mr. Klinger administered the oath of office to incoming board member, Lynn Glodek. Mr. Orlow took the opportunity to welcome Ms. Glodek to the Board and to note the bittersweet occasion of Mr. Klinger's last Board meeting. He recognized, on behalf of the Board of School Directors, Mr. Klinger's 37 years of service to public education and more than 21 years of service to the district. Mr. Orlow described Mr. Klinger as someone who could always be relied upon and an individual whose accomplishments would last well beyond his retirement. He presented Mr. Klinger with a certificate and plaque as tokens of the Board's thanks and appreciation.

**Student Recognition:** The Board presented certificates of achievement to Colonial Elementary School students for their accomplishments in poetry and to Colonial Middle School Students for their accomplishments in boys basketball. A complete list of those honored can be found in Attachment #1 to these minutes.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action to approve the minutes of the Work Session of 02/19/02, the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 02/19/02, the General Meeting of 02/21/02, the Special Board Meeting of 02/25/02, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 02/28/02, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 03/04/02, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 03/11/02, and the Special Meeting of 03/04/02 as shown in Enclosures #1 through #8 of the agenda. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as amended. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the financial reports that were listed as Enclosures #9 through #20. They included Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, Capital Projects Report, General Fund and Program Bills; and Capital Reserve Fund Report for the month ending 02/28/02; the Food Service Report for the month ending 01/30/02; Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes, Real Estate Escrow Report and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the month ending 02/28/02; the Budget Analysis/Deficit Status Reports through 02/28/02; and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 02/28/02. Mr. Bell and Mr. Bickleman responded to a Board query on the status of an escrow account held by Whitmarsh Township for grading of the WFIL Tract. They indicated that Mr. Bickleman would be requesting release of the escrowed funds now that grading was substantially complete. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the financial reports as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Budget Reports:** Mr. Bickleman presented budget information for the Finance Committee. He provided an overview of the positive and negative factors impacting the district as it moves forward with the preparation of a budget for the 2002-03 school year. A complete outline of his comments is contained in Attachment #2 to these minutes.

Mr. Yunker provided an overview of the budget report of the Personnel Committee. He walked board members and the community through the staffing, salaries and benefits outlined in Attachment #3 to these minutes.

Board members and administrators had a number of comments and questions following the presentations. Mr. Bickleman commented on the impact of the teacher's contract and the Board's longstanding policy of not budgeting for costs that were not known at the time of the budget adoption. Mr. Orlow asked about whether a number of positions under review by the Personnel Committee were currently included in preliminary budget plans or not. Dr. Cotter reported that they were not included and that most would probably not be supported. He noted that discussion was continuing on some staffing issues at the high school, kindergarten aides, and technical support at both the primary and secondary levels. Mr. Sultanik responded to a question about the district's contribution to the state's retirement plan for district employees. He noted that the combination of an increase

in the retirement multiplier, contribution rate and a low return on investments probably meant that the district would be facing significant increases in retirement contributions over the next few years. Mr. Klinger responded to questions about the cost of insured benefits by reporting that health care costs would be rising about 6.4% and that medical costs in future years would depend on a number of factors including claims and ratings. Mr. Orlow noted that the pluses and minuses offset each other and were almost a wash in budgetary impact. Dr. Lipshutz noted that revenue from the performance grant at Colonial Middle School would be offset by expenditures against those funds.

Mr. Orlow received confirmation from Mr. Bickleman that the preliminary budget would be ready for Board action at its April meeting. Mr. Bickleman advised that he would have preliminary numbers available for committee and Board review and discussion within two weeks.

**Staff Report:** Dr. Gorodetzer and Ms. Iannelli reported on Terra Nova and PSSA test results for the previous three years. They highlighted the history of the testing program, the testing and reporting cycles, the district's efforts to align curriculum to standards, and ways in which the testing programs have helped the district track student achievement over the three-year period in the areas of reading, language (writing), and math. Both speakers reported steady growth in the tested areas and dramatic improvement in test scores. They attributed the results to the hard work of administrators, teachers and staff and the development, the setting of building goals and ongoing efforts of school improvement teams. Ms. Iannelli also gave a brief presentation on the state-mandated seals for high school diplomas. Mr. Orlow asked about the steps that the district was taking to communicate with parents about the testing programs. Ms. Iannelli reported that information was being sent to parents each fall and noted that parents could contact the schools and arrange opportunities to meet with school staff to address their questions or concerns. Positive note was taken of a recent CITV video of educational efforts underway at Conshohocken Elementary School.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow noted that the Bond Fund Resolution contained in Enclosure #21 of the agenda was up for Board action. He noted that the Board had taken a preliminary look at the resolution the previous month and discussed it at the meeting the previous Monday evening. He suggested that it was possible to move forward with the resolution pending deletion of some inappropriate language dealing with the structure of the bond. Mr. Yunker sought and received some information from the solicitor on potential impact that borrowing at the Center for Technical Studies might have on the district's ability to borrow. Mr. Sultanik noted that there could be some impact but he and Mr. Johnson noted that it was unlikely that the vo-tech school would be borrowing money in the near future. Mr. Sultanik suggested that the Board act to authorize the bond fund resolution with several modifications which are shown in Attachment #4 to these minutes. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the resolution as

outlined by Mr. Sultanik. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on correspondence from Montgomery County I.U. on the proposed 2002-03 MCIU budgets. See Enclosure #22. He reminded the Board that the total costs would be up in three of the four budgets and the cost to Colonial School District would be up 2.85%. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the budgets. Ms. Glodek sought clarification of her eligibility to vote on the budgets since she was new to the Board and had not participated in earlier discussion on the budgets. Mr. Sultanik assured her that she was eligible to vote if she wished. At the urging of her fellow board members, she joined in the vote. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Board members subsequently voted individually in writing on each of the budgets, as required.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a request from Fred Citron, Executive Director of Montgomery Early Learning Centers for Board approval for a 4% increase in tuition. Board members had received additional information on the reasons for the requested increase. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. See Enclosure #23.

Mr. Orlow noted George Gunning, Jr. had requested an opportunity to discuss renaming the high school but was unable to make the meeting that evening. See Enclosure #24.

Mr. Orlow recognized Madeline Phillips who addressed the Board on the district's policy for transporting daycare students. Ms. Phillips reviewed her correspondence to the Board as shown in Enclosure #39. She sought transportation for her children between a daycare provider in the Ridge Park attendance area and Whitemarsh Elementary School. The district does not currently provide such transportation. She and two other speakers felt that the request would have little impact on the district because a school bus traveled near the daycare center on its way to and from the bus company. Board members felt otherwise and Mr. Orlow explained the precedent that providing such an accommodation would set. He also explained the scope and cost of the district's transportation program and the accommodation that the district had made to permit travel to daycare programs located within attendance areas. Dr. Cotter noted that some daycare providers also provided transportation to and from public schools. Mr. Sultanik advised that the district was under no obligation to provide daycare transportation. One of the speakers reported that the bus company serving St. Philip Neri School provided transportation to the daycare facility. Dr. Cotter was unable to confirm that report. The Board took no action on Ms. Phillips' request.

Mr. Orlow recognized Rodger Dombrow, former PWHS Principal who thanked the Board for its fine work and highlighted many of the initiatives that the Board and the district had undertaken in recent years. See Enclosure #40.

Mr. Orlow noted that Charles Forster, PWHS Athletic Director, wished to donate a 1986 S10 Blazer to the high school athletic department. See Enclosure #41. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to accept the donation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter briefly recapped his Superintendent's Report, as shown in Enclosures #25 and #26 of the agenda. He noted the addition of three departures due to resignations or retirements and the recently received resignation of the Special Education Supervisor. Dr. Cotter also noted the request to appoint Gerald Berger to the position of Assistant Board Secretary. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Ms. Dougherty highlighted the sold-out performances of *Grease*, the Student Counsel anti-vandalism program, the spring fashion show and the Exchange Club honorees. Ms. Kurtz provided updates on spring sports, including the girls' soccer program, the great job that the Grounds Department had done in readying the fields for play, the Montgomery County Foreign Language Competition, the trip by three students to DECA national finals, the second semester open house, the all class orchestra, the senior dinner and spring break.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow requested Board authorization for the attendance of Elizabeth McKeaney, Elementary Math Resource Teacher, at the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. See Enclosure #27. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to authorize the trip. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a request for seven to ten high school students to attend the FBLA State Competition at Seven Springs from 04/08/02 through 04/10/02, as outlined in Enclosure #28. He noted that the request had been discussed on Monday evening. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the trip. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to act on a trip request for the Marching Colonials to travel to Toronto from 05/16/02 to 05/20/02. See Enclosure #29. He noted that the Board had discussed the trip at its Monday evening meeting. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the trip. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Mr. Orlow sought Board approval of an agreement between the district and Central Montgomery County MH/MR on the provision of services by psychiatric social workers. The agreement is contained in Enclosure #30 of the agenda. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow requested Board action to approve a contract with Professional Roof Services for the development of specifications and the provision of construction management services for a new roof at Colonial Elementary School at a cost of \$9,500. Mr. Bell explained the bid specifications and indicated that they had been designed to allow a wide range of reputable materials providers and roofing companies to respond to the bid. See Enclosure #31. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to a proposed Release and Settlement Agreement between Colonial School District and Whitemarsh Township as condemnors and Edward G. Atsinger III and Stuart W. Epperson as condemnees for 46.9976 acres known as the WFIL Tract. Mr. Orlow reported that the final price of the parcel would be \$4,800,000 and that Whitemarsh Township would pay approximately \$1,200,000 and the district would pay approximately \$3,600,000. He also noted that the township would own approximately 25% of the property and the district would own approximately 75%. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote all except Mr. Yunker voted in favor. Mr. Yunker voted in opposition. The motion was carried.**

**Solicitor's Report: Mr. Sultanik asked the Board to accept a stipulation by both a student and the student's parents concerning a violation of the district's drug and alcohol policies. The stipulation would place the student in an alternative education setting, have the student participate in homebound instruction and receive assistance from Montgomery County MH/MR, and follow the rules to reapply for admission to school thereafter. In response to a Board query, Mr. Sultanik advised that the student was expected to be out of school for five weeks. Dr. Cotter noted that the student could return as soon as all stipulations had been met. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to accept the stipulation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board: No report.**

**CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson advised that the Joint Operating Committee had hired an architect to do a feasibility study for upgrading the facilities at the Center for Technical Studies.**

**Personnel: No report.**

**Finance: No report.**

**Curriculum and Program: No report.**

**Buildings & Grounds/Transportation:** Mr. Johnson reported that the district would be working on a number of projects that would be funded by an upcoming bond issue. These included replacement of the classroom roof at Colonial Elementary School, upgrades in the pool locker room, rewiring of Whitemarsh Elementary School, interior upgrades at Plymouth Elementary School, and electrical and data wiring upgrades at the middle and high schools, and a potential upgrade of the District Office.

**Community Relations:** Mrs. Moore reported that the committee had met to look at brochures and posters and other projects to reach out to the community. She also noted that a district circular would soon be in circulation. Mrs. Moore also reported that the committee was looking into the Gold Card program that allowed seniors to attend district events with an eye toward improving program. She reported that the committee was looking into a reorganization of CITV and alerted the community to the upcoming Town Meeting in the gym at Conshohocken Elementary School on 04/22/02 at 7:00 p.m.

**Legislative:** Mr. Carroll provided an update on Appropriations Committee hearings in Harrisburg and the impact of basis and special education subsidies, changes in the retirement system, and the impact of cyber and charter schools. He also reported on proposals to limit the authority to affix seals to diplomas to local districts only and provided brief updates on some items not yet in bill form and discussions underway in the Select Committee on Education Funding. Mr. Orlow raised the issue of a resolution regarding Act 9 of 2001, as shown in Enclosure #33. Dr. Cotter noted that the district had reported retirement costs to the I.U. Mr. Sultanik advised that the Board could act on the proposed resolution pending verification of the numbers. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the resolution. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Public Comments: None.**

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 10:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell  
Board Secretary

