

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, MAY 16, 2002**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on May 16, 2002.

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

Board Members Absent: None.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Director of Educational Services – Elementary; Dr. Patricia Iannelli, Director of Educational Services - Secondary; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; Nancy Acconciamesa, Curriculum Supervisor; Dean Bekas; Dick Brickley; Blaine Chipola; Chris Conn; Andrew Fulmer; Amy Kahl; Judi Lipson; Jim Mangano; Michelle Mowad; Bob O’Neill; John Yanan and the students being recognized, their principals, teachers/sponsors, family and friends.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance. He indicated that the Board had met in executive session prior to the work session on Monday evening and again prior to that evening’s meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Mr. Orlow recognized administrators, teachers and sponsors from Colonial Middle School, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School and Colonial Elementary School who, in turn, recognized students in their schools who had distinguished themselves in academic, cultural and athletic endeavors. These included the “Brainy Bunch”, students receiving Johns Hopkins Recognition, poetry winners, participants in the Reading Olympics and the winners of the 4 x 400 relays at the 2002 Penn Relays. A full list of those recognized and awarded certificates of achievement is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the minutes of the Building and Grounds Committee Meeting of 04/15/02, the Work Session of 04/15/02, the General Meeting of 04/18/02, and the Buildings & Grounds Committee Meeting of 04/29/02 the Personnel Committee Meeting of 04/29/02, the Finance Committee Meeting of 05/01/02, and the Curriculum Committee of 05/08/02, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #6 and #44. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the financial reports, which were listed as Enclosures #7 through #18. The reports included the Bond Fund Reports, Capital Projects Reports, and Capital Reserve Fund Reports for the month ending 04/30/02; General Fund and Program Bills; the Food Service Report for 04/02; the Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes, Real Estate Escrow Report and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the month ending 04/30/02; the current Budget Analysis; and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 04/30/02. Mr. Orlow questioned bond fund payments to one vendor. Mr. Bickleman reported that the payments had already been made and were not action items for that evening's meeting. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: Representatives from competing manufactures of roofing materials, a roofer bidding on a district project on that evening's agenda, and the district's roofing consultant, Mr. Chipola of Professional Roof Services, addressed the Board on the bids for a partial roof replacement at Colonial Elementary School. Mr. Yanan of Atlantic Roofing and Mr. Bekis of Tremco argued that the roofing product they had proposed was the equal of the roofing system proposed by Jottan (a competing roofer) and Mr. Mangano of Garland. Mr. Chipola agreed that the roofing systems were basically equal and declined to make significant distinctions between the systems despite questioning by board members and Mr. Bell. Mr. Bell reported that Mr. Chipola had advised him the proposed Garland roof was a more durable roof and the best long-term value for the district. Mr. Chipola acknowledged the high tensile strength of some of Garland's materials, some differences in application procedures, and the long history of the Garland roof proposed versus the lack of history for the Tremco roof proposed. Nevertheless, he reported that the two roofs would both meet the district's need for a 20-year roof. He also reported a personal preference for the Garland roof but offered no solid recommendation for one roof over the other. After listening carefully to the speakers and questioning them extensively, the Board, at the advice of its solicitor, agreed to go into executive session to receive legal advice before reaching a decision on the bids.

Mr. Orlow elected to take an item of new business before proceeding with the planned agenda. He recognized Scott Shearer of Public Financial Management who explained the \$10,000,000 bond sale on 05/16/02, and Robert Jones of Saul Ewing who explained the Bond Resolution that was being presented for Board approval that evening. Their presentations are outlined in Attachments #2 and #3 to these minutes. It was noted that it was a great time to borrow with interest rates low. Mr. Shearer provided information on the Board's A1 rating by Moody's. He noted that the rating placed the district in the top one third of the districts in the state. He noted that the rating might have been higher had there not been a caution about the district's low fund balance. Mr. Jones outlined the bond resolution before the Board. Mr. Orlow had questions about the Board's ability to add or subtract

projects. Mr. Jones reported that the purposes of the bond had been written broadly to minimize the need to amend them but reported that they could be amended at any time by an affirmative majority vote of the Board. A question was raised about the selection of an insurer. Mr. Shearer reported that the bidders picked the insurer but noted that one picked was a reliable company that had been around for a long time. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the Bond Resolution. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Staff Report: Mr. Bickleman made the required formal presentation of the 2002-03 preliminary budget. He briefly explained the proposed expenditures, anticipated revenues, and estimated real estate taxes contained in the district's preliminary budget. His comments closely mirrored the information that he had given before the preliminary budget had been adopted at the general meeting on 04/18/02.

Dr. Iannelli introduced Dick Brickley, Educational Consultant, who provided an update on the district's strategic plan. An overview of Mr. Brickley's comments is attached to these minutes as Attachment #4.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: Mr. Shipman of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation introduced Amy Kahl, a teacher at Plymouth Elementary School. Ms. Kahl discussed her project on Literature Circles that was funded by the foundation. She spoke enthusiastically about students who read assigned books and then took varying roles in small group discussions on the books. She shared some photographs of the students in action and some of their written thoughts on the program. She thanked the district for supporting her attendance at the Pennsylvania Literature Institute and for the foundation's support through the mini-grant that was used to purchase books. Dr. Gorodetzer commended her for working at improving her craft. Dr. Cotter complimented her on the fine work that she was doing.

Dr. Cotter reported that Mr. George Gunning, Jr., who wished to speak on the subject of the name of the high school, was not in attendance. See Enclosure #19.

Mr. Orlow sought Board interest in action on an invoice for PSBA dues in the amount of \$10,725 for 2002-03, as outlined in Enclosure #20. The consensus of the Board was to defer action until it had had the opportunity to meet with representatives of PSBA and learn more about the organization's services.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter briefly recapped his Superintendent's Report, as shown in Enclosures #21 through #23. The recommendations included personnel changes, additions and deletions to the substitute list, recommendations to fill summer school positions in the "Read to Succeed" program at Conshohocken

Elementary School, and a change to the Board meeting schedule for the 2002-03 school year to hold the April work session on 04/21/03 and the general meeting on 04/24/03. Mr. Yunker raised several questions about child-rearing leave and the fact that the status of people sometimes changes because people return from leave but there seems to be no record of them going on leave. Mr. Orlow asked if the Board approved requests for family leave. Dr. Cotter advised that it had not. Mr. Berger explained that the district had handled family leave as a federal mandate and had not sought board approval for such leave in the past. Mr. Yunker inquired how long a staff person would be on leave prior to her returning for the last three weeks of school. Mr. Berger reported her total leave as six weeks. Mr. Yunker suggested that there be some overlap between veteran teachers that were leaving and their less experienced replacements. Dr. Cotter gave an overview of the timing of new hires and the training that followed. He noted that each new teacher met with a seasoned teacher, though not necessarily the teacher who was leaving, and went through a thorough induction program that included mentoring by a veteran teacher.

Dr. Cotter requested a change in the April 2003 meeting schedule so as to move the meeting from the week of spring break to the following week. In response to a board query, he noted that there would be more business to handle the week after than the week before the break. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the superintendent's report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Student Board Representatives Report: Ms. Dougherty reported on the junior prom, AP exams, Adventure Club weekend, Asian Awareness Forum, graduating seniors music assembly, Exchange Club Awards, the senior prom and senior awards. Ms. Kurtz highlighted the accreditation visit, the distinguished graduates luncheon, the girls softball post-season, the spring concert and dance, Mr. Orlow's presentation to the government class, the Dannehower dinner and the middle school production of *Annie*. Ms. Kurtz noted that the meeting would be her last as a student board representative. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. Mr. Orlow thanked her for her service and presented her with a plaque of appreciation from the Board. Ms. Dougherty honored Ms. Kurtz in her role and a Board representative and peer role model.

New Business: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the annual election of a treasurer. He noted that Mr. Bickleman was recommended to continue serving in the position at an annual rate of \$7,280.00. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to elect Mr. Bickleman Treasurer at the recommended compensation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow reported for information purposes only that Barbacane, Thornton & Co. was serving as the district's independent auditor for a three-year period at an

annual fee of \$12,500.00 for the past year, \$13,000.00 for the current year and \$13,500.00 for the coming year.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the annual appointment of the district's solicitor, as shown in Enclosure #24 of the agenda by re-appointing Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Esq. of Fox, Rothschild, O'Brien & Frankel as solicitor under a retainer to \$20,100.00 plus out-of-pocket expenses and litigation rates of \$145.00 per hour, effective July 1, 2002. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the appointment as outlined. In a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board authorization to name First Union as the main depository for district funds during the 2002-03 school year. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to authorize the naming of the depository as recommended. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board approval of a list of investment banks, trusts, and savings and loans. See Enclosure #25. Mr. Bickleman advised that he would be adding Citizens Bank to the list. He noted that district investments would be subject to confirmation of bank maintenance of legally required collateral. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the list. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the appointment of a Student Board Representative. Mrs. Glodeck moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Stephanie Cousounis as student board representative and Sarina Rosenberg as alternate. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the Board had reappointed Mr. Bell Board Secretary for a four-year term starting 07/01/02. He requested Board action on a recommendation to set the annual rate for the 2002-03 school year at \$5,823.00. Mr. Yunker moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the compensation as recommended. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the 2002-03 MCIU Special Education Services Agreement had been scheduled as action item for the meeting but had been deferred until June because of changes in IDEA funding allocations.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the projects listed on the annual Allocation for Federal Programs as shown in Enclosure #26. He noted an increase in Title I funding as part of the "No Child Would Be Left Behind" initiatives. Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Glodeck seconded a motion to approve the list. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board attention to the list of textbooks contained in Enclosure #27. Mr. Sultanik and Dr. Cotter confirmed that the school code required that the Board authorize the acquisition of textbooks between April 1st and August 31st each year. Dr. Lipshutz asked for a testing update from Mrs. Acconciamesa on the 6th grade math assessment. She distributed a report that highlighted those questions on the math assessment on which more than 30% of the students provided incorrect answers. She advised the Board that the preliminary results of the two additional classes included in the report were roughly similar to results of the three classes reported earlier. Dr. Lipshutz and Dr. Cotter noted that the test would prove an interesting tool for monitoring student achievement and asked that the test be administered again the following year so that a comparison could be made of the effect that changes in the delivery of the curriculum for next year. Mrs. Acconciamesa reported that testing would go on continuously. Mr. Yunker pointed out some apparent discrepancies in the reporting for Monday's report to Thursday's. Mrs. Acconciamesa and Dr. Gorodetzer indicated that they would look into the problem. Mr. Orlow noted that there was no breakdown in costs of secondary textbooks. Dr. Cotter and Dr. Iannelli reviewed the reported data with the Board. Dr. Lipshutz inquired about the district's eligibility for a grant for implementation of the LaSalle math program. Mrs. Acconciamesa reported that the district had submitted a letter of intent for the grant and noted that it would not then be necessary to implement the program at the high school to be eligible for the grant. Mr. Orlow asked about what would be done for students who did poorly in the assessment and would be moving into the 7th grade. Dr. Gorodetzer replied by noting the need for significant staff development initiatives. Dr. Cotter suggested that they be part of the building goals for the coming year. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that interaction with colleagues in other districts showed that this problem was not isolated to Colonial and that the district was working hard to address the issue. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Lipshutz seconded a motion to approve the list of textbooks. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board approval of a three-year contract with the Lincoln Center for Family and Youth which operates the Genesis Program at the high school and provides community-counseling services. See Enclosure #28. Mr. Davis 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 requested Board action on a renewal of its contract with Montgomery Early Learning Center for the before and after school and kindergarten enrichment programs at the districts elementary schools, as shown in Enclosure #29. Mr. Bell provided the history on the inclusion of a hold harmless clause that the Solicitor had drawn up for inclusion in district leases. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Glodeck seconded a motion to approve the lease. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board approval of proposed increases in the cost of school lunches as shown in Enclosure #30. The cost of elementary lunches would be \$1.90, the cost of secondary lunches \$2.20 and the cost of adult meals \$4.30. The new prices represented increases of \$0.10. Mr. Orlow requested information on the average cost of a high school ala carte lunch. Mr. Bell said that he would get that information and e-mail it to board members. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the increases. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on proposed changes in the 2002-03 handbooks at the middle and high schools. Dr. Cotter provided some updates based on questions from the meeting on Monday. He noted that the Board was being asked to vote on the concept of weighing AP courses higher than honors courses but not on the actual weighing formula. He reported that the grade "N" was being changed to "CD" – credit denied – and indicated that it would be factored into the GPA and that a student would be eligible to retake the course. Dr. Cotter also reported on the consequences for students not wearing ID badges: counseling for first and second offences, level one consequences for continued violations and insubordination consequences for repeated violations. He also requested that the Board approve a five-minute earlier start and finish for the high school day to help with transportation delays at the middle school. Dr. Lipshutz noted that the provision on the activities code of ethics was missing from the revised draft and that he strongly supported that provision. The provision meant that those who signed the handbook accepted the code of ethics. Mr. Yunker recommended that the Board vote on the handbook revisions as shown in Enclosure #31, including the provision on the activity code of ethics. Dr. Lipshutz made a motion to that effect and included the proposed five-minute change in the class schedule. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

At the recommendation of the solicitor, Mr. Orlow asked Board action on bids for the elementary and secondary art supplies, general supplies, industrial arts supplies and science supplies in Enclosure #32, high school health education supplies and high school and elementary school physical education supplies in Enclosure #33, middle school athletic, health education and physical education supplies in Enclosure #34, janitorial supplies in Enclosure #35, Plymouth Elementary School renovations in Enclosure #36, renovations in the pool locker rooms in Enclosure #37, carpeting in the high school in Enclosure #38, and rewiring of Whitemarsh Elementary School in Enclosure #39. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Sultanik suggested that the Board recess to go into executive session to consider potential legal issues with the bid for partial roof replacement at Colonial Elementary School and telephone upgrades at all K-3 schools. The board was in executive session from 10:50 to 11:18. Upon returning to the regular meeting, Mr.

Yunker moved and Mrs. Glodeck seconded a motion to approve the roof bid of Atlantic Roofing for a Tremco roof in the amount of \$422,000. Refer to Enclosure #48. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor except Mr. Marchozzi. Mr. Marchozzi voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to award the bid for telephone upgrades at the district's K-3 elementary school to Phone America in the amount of \$84,425. Mr. Yunker recommended splitting the bid up and awarding the bid to the lowest bidder for each school. Mr. Bell recommended approving the bid as a K-3 project for ease in monitoring the project and dealing with the vendor for on-going service after the installation was completed. On a roll call vote, all but Mr. Yunker voted in favor. Mr. Yunker voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Sultanik recommended the settlement of tax assessment appeals #99-20584 and #01-23648 as shown in documents provided to the Board. Mr. Carroll moved and Mr. Yunker seconded a motion to approve the settlements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board. No report

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that the budget had passed and that Mr. Yunker had been re-elected treasurer.

Personnel: No report.

Finance: Mr. Marchozzi announced that a capital asset policy had been distributed to the Board for its review. See Enclosure #40. He also asked that the committee take another look at setting a higher amount of funding for a capital reserve fund.

Curriculum and Program: Dr. Lipshutz reported that the committee had discussed the before and after strings program at the elementary level, the handbook changes, math program, and full-day kindergarten. He noted that the strings program would be funded by student payments. He advised that the committee wished to refer the issue of a feasibility study of the facilities necessary to operate a full-day kindergarten program to the Buildings and Grounds Committee. He suggested that the options of a kindergarten center at Conshohocken Elementary, all-day programs at Conshohocken and one other school, and a program at all schools. Mr. Johnson noted that the B&G committee was looking at the issue and at the possibility of doing it as Ridge Park and Whitemarsh Elementary Schools. He reminded the Board that the committee would be interviewing candidates for on-going architectural services to the district. Dr. Lipshutz asked that space needs and costs be part of the study.

Buildings & Grounds/Transportation: No report.

Community Relations: No report.

Legislative: Mr. Carroll gave an update on budget activities and bills pending in the legislature.

Public Comments: None.

Additional Announcement: Mr. Orlow regretfully announced that Mr. Marchozzi had submitted his resignation, effective at the end of the meeting, because of increases in his professional responsibilities. Mr. Orlow thanked Mr. Marchozzi for his fine service. Mr. Yunker moved and Mr. Carroll seconded a motion to accept the resignation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor except Mr. Marchozzi. Mr. Marchozzi abstained. The motion was carried.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 11:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Board Secretary**