

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, MARCH 17, 2003**

President Orlow convened the work session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:45 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on March 17, 2003.

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

**Board Members Absent:** Steven Slutsky.

**Also Attending:** Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Patricia Iannelli, Director of Research, Assessment and Technology; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; and Fred Citron, Executive Director of Montgomery Early Learning Centers.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance. He also announced that the Board had met in executive sessions on 02/20/03, 02/26/03, 03/12/03 and 02/17/03 for informational purposes and/or to discuss personnel and legal matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting of 02/11/03, the General Meeting of 02/20/03, the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 02/24/03, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 03/05/03, and the Personnel Committee Meeting of 03/05/03, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #5 of the agenda for the general meeting of 03/20/03. Dr. Cotter advised that the Board had a yellow page hand-out of the narrative of the minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting. Board members had no questions or comments on the minutes.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the financial reports that were listed as Enclosures #6 through #17 of Thursday's agenda. They included the Budget Transfer Report for 03/03, the Bond Fund Report, Capital Projects Report; General Fund and Program Bills, General Fund/Federal Program Bills, Capital Reserve Fund Report; Food Services Bills/Cafeteria Report, Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparison of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Escrow Report and Reconciliation of Cash Accounts for the month ending 02/28/03; the Budget Analysis of 03/03; and Treasurer's Report for the month ending 02/28/03. Board members had no questions or comments on the reports.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None.

**Adjustment to the Agenda:** Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Citron of MELC was in the attendance and would be addressing the Board on his request for Board approval of a 5% increase in MELC tuition fees for its before and after-school program and kindergarten enrichment program in several district elementary schools. Mr. Citron outlined his agency's history with the district and cited many of the issues that contributed to his request for Board approval of a 5% increase in tuition fees for the coming fiscal year. These factors included, among others, increased costs for renting space in the district, the increased cost of hiring and retaining qualified staff, the need for additional staff training, increases in the cost of insured benefits for staff and general insurance coverage for the organization, the cost of unemployment benefits for staff laid off when the district-based day care program closed, and the need to invest more heavily in technology for the programs being offered. Mr. Citron reported that MELC was requesting 5% increases of all of the districts that it serves. He also confirmed that MELC had to provide its own computers for its programs in the district. Mr. Orlow indicated that the Board would take action on Mr. Citron's request at its meeting the following Thursday.

**Budget Reports:** Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Lipshutz and Mr. Johnson to provide budget reports from the Curriculum Committee and the Buildings & Grounds/Transportation Committee respectively. Dr. Lipshutz reported on funding for curricular initiatives and noted that the committee would be reviewing and reporting on the update of the district technology plan in the near future. Mr. Johnson reported on budgeting for the Support Services departments and facilities projects to be funded by the operating budget for the coming year. He noted that the committee would be visiting the middle school and the high school to take a first-hand look at proposed projects. Mr. Bickleman responded to a question from Mr. Yunker on the increase in fuel costs by indicating that he had increased anticipated expenditures to \$1.00/gallon to reflect increases in bid pricing experienced by surrounding districts in recent weeks. He noted that the I.U. would be opening bids for fuel shortly. The outlines for Dr. Lipshutz and Mr. Johnson's reports are attached to these minutes at Attachments #1 and #2.

**Staff Report:** Mr. Orlow noted that Ms. Lipson, Principal of Plymouth Elementary School would be giving a report on Thursday evening on programs and initiatives at that school.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow noted that the Board would be taking action on Thursday evening on the second reading of the proposed Board Policy #801, Public Record. The policy dealt with the process and procedures for requesting public records. Dr. Cotter noted the need to update one timeline to make all aspects of the policy consistent. Dr. Cotter and Mr. Bell provided information on planned fees for the reproduction and delivery of public documents. Mr. Bell confirmed that the district was not planning to charge for documents generally prepared for and made available to the public or for electronic documents sent electronically. In response to queries from board members, he reported that reproduced documents would be

billed at district cost, currently \$0.015 per single-sided sheet and \$0.025 for double-sided sheet and that delivery would be billed at the actual cost to the district for delivery. Mr. Bell and Dr. Cotter agreed to post notice of the policy and costs in the district office and on the district web-site. Mr. Yunker inquired about the district's server capacity for handling electronic delivery of documents. Mr. Bell stated that he would check with the Technology Department and report back to the Board. See Enclosure #18 of Thursday's agenda.

**Correspondence:** The agenda noted a planned presentation on Thursday evening by two teachers who were recipients of mini-grants from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation and a request from the foundation for approval of one major and one mini-grant. See Enclosure #19 of the agenda for Thursday Evening.

Mr. Orlow noted that the Executive Director of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit had requested Board action on the I.U.'s annual administrative budgets as shown in Enclosure #21 of Thursday's agenda. Dr. Cotter reported that the budget represented no additional cost to the district over the budget for the previous year. Mr. Orlow explained the process involved in approving the budget and noted specifically the requirement that both the Board as a body and the board members individually had to vote on budget approval. He also noted, and Mr. Shipman confirmed, that the administrative budgets did not include any services that districts received and paid for services to students. Dr. Ryan commented favorably on the I.U.'s efforts in lobbying the legislature for the needs of member districts.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter briefly recapped his report as it was shown in Enclosures #22 through #26 of the agenda for the meeting the following Thursday. - He highlighted key facets of the personnel report, the substitute list, the extra-duty/extra-pay list, the summer school program for 2003 and the memorandum of agreement related to the proposed appointment of a writing clinic specialist at the high school. Dr. Cotter specifically outlined the scope of the upcoming summer school program. It included not only the traditional remedial program but also several reading initiatives, a music program, an SAT preparation course and the Consortium of the Arts. Mr. Orlow asked about the status of the librarian currently on sick leave. Dr. Cotter reported that she was suffering from a debilitating disease and was not expected to return. He noted, however, that if she did return and the Board approved the administrative recommendation to hire a new librarian, the high school would then have two librarians. Mr. Berger confirmed that the current librarian had not resigned. He noted that she was unlikely to return and that the Personnel Committee was aware of the situation.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow outlined a proposed amendment to Board Policy #004 – Board Committee Functions – that called for adding Student Life to the name and tasks assigned to the committee. He noted that the committee would conduct an annual evaluation of activities at the middle and high schools and review trip

requests, activities and associated policies related to multiculturalism and recordkeeping. Mr. Yunker asked if some of the tasks assigned to the Curriculum Committee should be moved to the new Community Relations and Student Life Committee. He specifically cited the annual review of the school calendar. There was a consensus on the Board that some of the tasks would move. Ms. Glodek asked that a companion recommendation to add an ex-officio student representative to the committee define who the representative(s) would be. The consensus of the Board was to allow the Alternate Student Board Representatives to serve in that capacity. See Enclosures #27 and #28 on the agenda for the Thursday meeting. Mr. Orlow indicated that he would be seeking Board action on the first reading of the policy changes on Thursday evening.

Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to Enclosure #29 of the agenda for Thursday evening, a proposed change to Board Policy #404.1 – Recruitment and Selection. He reported that the policy was an outgrowth of discussions on the eligibility of board members to move into positions of employment with the district. He indicated that the policy would prohibit employment for either a seven-month period following the term to which the director was elected or appointed or from the end of the director's term to the beginning of the next fiscal year, whichever is greater. Mr. Orlow indicated that the Board would be acting on the policy on first reading.

Mr. Orlow reported that the Board would be acting on the first reading of a new Board policy on the care and maintenance of flags. The proposed policy, Policy #701, was outlined in Enclosure #30 of the agenda for Thursday evening and granted the authority to implement the law to the superintendent or his designee.

Mr. Orlow noted that a number of field trips would be on the agenda for Board action on Thursday evening. They included Enclosure #31, a request for a student at the high school to attend the PMEA Orchestra from 03/20/03 to 03/22/03 and Enclosure #32 for two students to attend the PMEA All-State Choral Festival in Hershey, PA from 04/09/03 to 04/12/03. Because the orchestra trip was coming up that week, Dr. Cotter requested Board action on Enclosure #30 that evening. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the orchestra trip. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow reported that the Board would be taking action on two bids on Thursday evening, the installation of air conditioning in six computer labs in the high school and the relocation of the CMS chiller. Mr. Bell reviewed the need to relocate the chiller to meet equipment specifications. He reported that the lone bid for relocating the chiller had come in much higher than anticipated and that the numbers in some areas of the bid seemed out of line. He noted that the administration's recommendation was to reject the bid and to re-bid the project with both the option to relocate the chiller to the roof and the option to relocate it on the ground further from the building.

Mr. Bell also provided some background on the plan to provided air conditioning to six relocated computer rooms using a central chiller to pipe cooled water through the rooms. Mr. Yunker asked why the installation was more expensive than the replacement of the chiller at the middle school several years ago. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the new chiller at the middle school was hooked up to the existing piping system in the building and that considerable new piping would have to be installed at the high school to get the chilled water into the computer labs.

Mr. Orlow asked if any board members wished to make committee reports that evening. All were prepared to make there reports on Thursday. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Johnson about the Buildings and Grounds Committee's proposal to have Polatnick Zacharjasz Architects do a feasibility study to reconfigure the high school library within its existing footprint. Mr. Davis asked if the committee would be seeking a proposal from one or more additional firms. He indicated that he understood that the on-call architect was only to be a resource for Mr. Bell and Mr. Yemm to call upon when they had questions the required input from an architect. He felt that the district should secure several proposals when going out for feasibility studies. Mr. Orlow noted that feasibility studies were professional services and that the Board did not need to seek competitive quotes or bids. He also noted that the Board had moved to contract with a local architectural firm for on-call services that included feasibility studies and noted that the PZA firm had extensive experience in remodeling libraries. Both Mr. Orlow and Mr. Johnson indicated that the district was not obligated to do any actual renovation projects with the on-call architect.

**Solicitor's Report:** No report.

**Other Business:** Dr. Cotter reported that a proposed settlement of tax assessment appeal and a resolution that would bring the district into compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) would be on the agenda for Board action on Thursday evening. He noted both the need to change some district policies related to medical issues for both employees and students and acknowledged assistance of the office of the solicitor in preparing to come into compliance. Dr. Cotter addressed queries from board members on the timing of compliance and noted that the district had to be in compliance for students by 04/14/03 and for staff by 04/14/04. Dr. Lipshutz noted that there were stiff fines for not being in compliance.

**Additional Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**James M. Bell**  
**Board Secretary**