

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, MARCH 15, 2004**

President Orlow convened the work session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:40 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on March 15, 2004.

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

Board Members Absent: Steven Slutsky.

Also Attending: Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Patricia Iannelli, Director of Accountability and Compliance; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Fred Shipman, Director of Pupil Services; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; and Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in Executive session to discuss personnel and legal matters and for informational purposes on 02/58/04, 03/01/04, 03/10/04 and 03/15/04.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the minutes of the Curriculum Committee of 02/17/04, Work Session of 02/19/04, the General Meeting of 02/19/04, the Special Meeting of 03/10/04, the Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting of 03/02/04, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 03/04/04, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee Meeting of 03/08/04, and the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 03/15/04, as shown in Enclosures #1 through #7 of the agenda for Thursday evening and a handout to be provided. Dr. Lipshutz noted that one page had been included twice and one page was missing in the minutes of the work session. Mr. Bell advised that he would have the correct pages for Thursday evening.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow directed Board attention to the financial reports. They included the Budget Transfer Reports for 02/03; the Bond Fund Reports, Capital Projects Reports; General Fund and Program Bills, Capital Reserve Fund Reports; Food Services Bills/Cafeteria Reports, Outstanding Investment Reports, Cash Flow Summaries, Comparisons of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Escrow Reports and Reconciliations of Cash Accounts for the months ending 02/29/04; and Treasurer's Reports for the month ending 02/29/04, as shown in Enclosures #8 through #19 on Thursday's general meeting agenda. Mr. Orlow had questions about the disbursements for homebound instruction. Mr. Bickleman reported that their were collection primarily from the Philadelphia School District that covered both the disbursements and the district's administrative fees for the transactions.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Budget Report: Mr. Johnson gave a reports on the budgets falling under Support Services. They included the administrative budget and the budgets for both the Transportation and

Facilities Management Departments. A summary of Mr. Johnson's remarks is attached to these minutes as attachment #1. Mr. Orlow asked if the information from Mr. Johnson was being included in the draft of the preliminary budget. Mr. Bickleman reported that it was. Mr. Davis announced that he would be sharing information on the curriculum budget on Thursday evening because the committee was still discussing some issues.

Staff Report: None. Ms. Lipson, Principal, Plymouth Elementary School was scheduled to address the Board on Thursday evening.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow noted that the Board had before it three policy revisions and two new policies for review and action on second reading on Thursday evening. See Enclosures #20 through #24. He indicated that Policy #208, Student Health Exams, had been revised to include input from the solicitor. The policy had been updated in response to legislation on *No Child Left Behind*. Mr. Shipman noted that the language would allow for triage services in emergency situations. Mr. Orlow reported that, changes had been made to the language of the policy and that there had been no change in intent. He advised that the Board would act on the policy on Thursday evening.

Mr. Orlow advised that the new Policy #227.2, Technology Use Policy – Student-focused, and Policies #452 and #552, Technology Use Policies – Staff- focused, undergone significant changes in language based on the solicitor's input. Mr. Orlow felt that some of the language was vague. Mr. Graham reported that Ms. Bollinger of the solicitor's office was a recognized expert in technology policies and was recommending the changes. He noted that they changed the language but not the intent of the policies. Mr. Orlow asked that all staff members receive copies of the policies once they have been enacted. Dr. Cotter advised that all employee groups had received copies of the draft and that the Administration would make sure that all staff received copies of the final policies. The student-focused policy was to be addressed in student handbooks for the coming school year as well. Mr. Orlow indicated that the Board would take action on the policies on Thursday evening.

Mr. Orlow reported that the Board would also take action on Policy #902 – CITV Policy on Thursday evening. He noted that the district had received correspondence from the League of Women Voters requesting that the Board reconsider its position and provide for the broadcast of meet-the-candidate forums. He also noted the district's long-standing policy not to make CITV available for use by others. Dr. Cotter noted that he had sought information from other districts about their broadcast policies but had received only one response indicating that one district shared a cable channel with a local municipality. Dr. Lipshutz felt that the district's standing policy was fair.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow reported that the Board would take action on Thursday evening on the 2004-05 Montgomery County Intermediate Budgets outlined in Enclosure #25. Dr. Ryan briefly reminded the Board of his summary on the budget at past meetings and noted that, while expenditures were rising, the district's contribution would rise by only 1.33%. He reported that Spring-Ford School District was making a big contribution to the I.U. from funds that it was receiving from a settlement on the Limerick Power Plant.

Mr. Orlow noted that The Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation would be offering a mini-grant and a major grant for Board consideration on Thursday evening. Dr. Cotter advised that Ms. Castle would be making the presentation and that one of her announcements would involve an adjustment to a previous grant so that funds from Science Foundation at Merck would be used for the grant and the applicant could approach the foundation for additional support, if necessary. See Enclosure #26.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter summarized for board members his report in Enclosures #27 through #30 of the agenda for action on Thursday evening. He highlighted the personnel changes, additions to the substitute list, proposed extra-duty/extra-pay assignments, and preliminary planning for the Secondary Summer School Program for 2004. He reported that the latter called for charges of \$180.00 per session for district students and \$30.00 for non-resident students and an SAT course for \$150.00.

New Business: Mr. Orlow reported on a professional conference request for Dr. Sullivan, Principal at the high school and several members of the professional staff to attend Harvard University's Graduate School of Education Seminar Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts from 07/26/04 through 07/31/04. Dr. Cotter noted that the institute offered a unique look at best practices as the high school worked on restructuring its curriculum. Dr. Cotter noted that he, Dr. Gorodetzer and Ms. Boegly, Principal of Colonial Elementary School had attended the institute in the past. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that this year's institute focused on redesigning the American high school and had been reviewed by the Curriculum Committee. Mr. Bickleman confirmed that the money would be coming from allocations for the School Improvement Teams. Dr. Cotter confirmed that those attending were leaders in the school and department heads and/or members of the School Improvement Team. See Enclosure #31 for Thursday evening.

Mr. Orlow reported that the Board would be considering on Thursday evening a series of student trip requests on the agenda for Thursday evening. See Enclosures #32 and #33. The PWHS Jazz Band was requesting permission to attend the University Jazz Band Festival at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and other sites from 04/30/04 through 05/02/04. He noted that fundraisers would defray the costs. Dr. Cotter reported that the trip was a reward for students participating in the band and fell over a weekend when no student days would be lost. Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Rickert, a teacher at the middle school, had requested approval to take 13 middle school students to the 26th Annual Technology Student Association (TSA) Conference in Seven Springs, PA from 04/21/04 through 04/23/04. He advised that students were responsible for covering the costs of the trip. Dr. Cotter reported that the students would be sharing a bus with students from Boyertown and that costs had dropped as a result. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the trip would be a first for the middle school.

Solicitor's Report: No report.

Committee Reports: Dr. Ryan presented buttons to his fellow board members supporting efforts by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) against the referendum movement in the state. Dr. Ryan noted that the referendum movement was linked to tax reform in the state but would handicap local board by limiting their ability to fund operations and programs but not restrict state or federal mandates. He highlighted the administrative burdens that it would

impose, including forcing district's to budget before the state budget for education was known, and force the electorate to pay for another election each year. Dr. Ryan felt that the proposal lacked common sense and suggested that the solution for school funding was for the state to increase funding for public education after allowing the state contribution for public education to fall from 42% to 36% in recent years, far below the goal of 50% in years past. Mr. Orlow noted that there was no logic to curtailing funding sources while mandates continued.

Additional Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Board Secretary**