

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, MARCH 18, 2004**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:04 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on March 18, 2004.

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

**Board Members Absent:** William Ryan.

**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; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Stephanie Cousounis and Ryan Moore, Student Board Representatives; Judi Lipson, Principal, Plymouth Elementary School; Terese Boegly and Terry Yemm, CASEA; Sue Castle, CFEI; Sandy Connelly, Janet Hornick, Theresa Hunseker, Amy Kahl, and Elaine Landis, teachers, Plymouth Elementary School; Nancy Boris and Dante DeVecchio.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in Executive session to discuss legal matters on 03/18/04.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the minutes of the Curriculum Committee of 02/17/04, Work Session of 02/19/04, the General Meeting of 02/17/04, 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, the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 03/15/04, and the Community Relations and Student Life Committee Meeting of 03/15/04 as shown in Enclosures #1 through #7 and #41 and #42. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the minutes of the Work Session had been corrected to show all of the relevant pages and noted that two sets of minutes had been added in yellow pages since Monday evening. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on 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. Mr. Orlow asked what update had been made to the Bond Fund Report since Monday evening. Mr. Bickleman advised that an additional payment had been made for engineering services in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the all-day kindergarten classroom project.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

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

**Budget Report:** Mr. Davis provided an update on the proposed curriculum budget for 2004-05. The outline of his comments is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1. Mr. Slutsky outlined information on the development of the 2004-05 operating budget and noted the issues raised in the Finance Committee. He advised that many of the projected costs were items not under the control of the Board. He cited the rising cost of medical insurance, retirement contributions and special education accommodations. Mr. Slutsky also pointed out the negative impact of the sharp decline in the growth of taxable real estate from 5% in recent years to less than 1% in the current year. He advised that the Finance Committee would be taking a close look at the budget for the coming year and would do what it could to meet the needs of the district's students and be a good steward of taxpayer's support.

**Staff Report:** Ms. Lipson, Principal, Plymouth Elementary School introduced five of her professional staff who helped her highlight some of the curricular initiatives at the school. She noted the role of the Success Committee and School Improvement Team in targeting instruction to students who were in need of extra assistance. Ms. Lipson reported that the school had used its climate goal to extend schooling to close gaps in instruction by using technology in math, offer hands-on math opportunities to students with their parents help and to provide independent practice in reading. The teachers outlined the roles of parent newsletters, tip letters and parent workshops to advise and reinforce curricular initiatives. They also explained the efforts underway in computer math clubs that were being piloted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level, the *Take Home a Book* program in all grade levels, and the math bags newly implemented in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Ms. Lipson noted that the programs were funded by the School Improvement Team, the PTO and the building budget. Board members complimented the Plymouth team on their fine efforts and had questions on how newsletters were sent home, how many parents attended evening programs and how recent efforts differed from those in the past.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on three policy revisions and two new policies on second reading. See Enclosures #20 through #24. He recapped discussions on Thursday evening. Mr. Scoles moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve Policy #208, Student Health Exams. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Dr. Cotter highlighted the reformatting of new Policy #227.2, Technology Use Policy – Student-focused, and Policies #452 and #552, Technology Use Policies – Staff- focused. He noted that the policies defined district ownership of the technology, the scope of its use for teaching and learning, the district's oversight and monitoring and the clear expectation that staff and students should have no expectation of privacy in its use. Dr. Cotter also emphasized that the policy covered the issues of use and abuse, security, and willful and accidental damage. Mr. Orlow asked who had access for monitoring the use of technology. Dr. Cotter reported that the Technology Department had access through designated administrators. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policies. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Slutsky noted some grammatical errors in Policy #902 – CITV Policy. Ms. Glodek moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the policy with the changes recommended by Mr. Slutsky. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the 2004-05 Montgomery County Intermediate Budgets outlined in Enclosure #25. He noted that the budgets had been reviewed on Monday evening and would result in a 1.33% increase in the contribution from the district. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the budgets. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow recognized Ms. Castle of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation who offered for Board consideration \$6,265.00 in funding for three mini-grants and a major grant. See Enclosure #26. The grants were for pedometers at Colonial Elementary School in support of *Go the Extra Mile*, an inter-disciplinary instruction linking math and physical education; for two primer K'Nex math sets at Colonial Elementary School in support of math initiatives; for kitchen equipment and food for *The Life Skills Café*, a life skill training opportunity for students at the high school; and for support of post-prom activities at the high school. Mr. Slutsky moved and Ms. Glodek seconded a motion to accept the grants. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Orlow and Ms. Castle noted that the foundation had been able to recoup grant funds from an earlier project because Colonial Middle School had received a Merck Foundation grant for the same project. The recouped funds were to be used to fund other grants. Ms. Castle announced that the foundation would be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and would have several fundraising opportunities coming up. The two already planned were a theater subscription program and a special benefit performance. Ms. Castle advised that information about the events could be found on the district website. A fundraising gala was planned for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and information was to be made available at a later date. Mr. Orlow noted that the foundation had been giving grants for educational initiatives with such regularity that it would be easy to take the foundations efforts for granted. Ms. Castle announced that the foundation had already awarded over \$130,000 in grants to the district. Board members praised the foundations efforts in support of district students.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter summarized for board members his report in Enclosures #27 through #30 and highlighted additions to the report since Monday evening. Mr. Orlow took a moment to recognize Dr. Iannelli who had submitted her notice of retirement effective the end of June. He noted that Dr. Iannelli had ably served the district in many capacities over many years and recognized her service as a music teacher, as a building principal at the elementary, middle and high school levels, and as a District Office Administrator in the areas of curriculum, research, accountability and technology. Mr. Orlow voiced the sentiment of the Board in noting that Dr. Iannelli would be sorely missed. Dr. Iannelli thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve and grow over her 43 years of service in public education. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore 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. Cousounis highlighted the activities of the spring sports teams during recent inclement weather, congratulated the cast and crew of the spring

musical on a great performance, and reported on the senior dinner. Mr. Moore reported on state championship action in boys' swimming and post-season run of the boy's basketball team. He also highlighted the recent jazz festival and the spring fling concert. Mr. Orlow inquired about Ms. Cousounis' college plans. She advised that she had been accepted by two of the schools in which she was interested but had not yet made a decision on which to attend.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a professional conference request for Dr. Sullivan, Principal at the high school and four members of her professional staff to attend Harvard University's Graduate School of Education Summer Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts from 07/26/04 through 07/31/04. See Enclosure #31. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on two student trip requests shown in Enclosures #32 and #33: The PWHS Jazz trip to the Slippery Rock University Jazz Band Festival and a visit to the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and other sites from 04/30/04 through 05/02/04 and the trip by middle school students to the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Technology Student Association (TSA) Conference in Seven Springs, PA from 04/21/04 through 04/23/04. Ms. Glodek moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the trips. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik requested Board approval of the withdrawal of an assessment appeal on parcel #05-00-02888-005 and a proposed settlement of an assessment appeal on parcel #49-00-01309-001, as outlined in materials shared with the Board. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the withdrawal and the settlement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit Board: None.

**Personnel:** Dr. Lipshutz highlighted a proposed compensation plan based on the Board's Meet and Discuss sessions with CASEA, the district's administrator's group. He reported that the plan would be for four years and called for administrators to be evaluated on their value to the district, team work, execution of their job responsibilities and progress toward meeting their individual goals. Compensation was to be 100% performance-based. The rating categories were professional, marginal and unsatisfactory. Under the plan, the Board was to annually fund increases in compensation at 5% of total administrative salaries. Those rated professional were eligible for between 60% and 100% of a maximum increase of 5% based on an objective performance rating of between 60 and 100 points on the approved evaluation form. Those rated unsatisfactory (below 40 points) were not eligible for raises. Those rated marginal (between 40 and 59 points) were eligible for half of the raise to which their rating would otherwise entitle them. Dr. Lipshutz noted that the compensation plan required an immediate co-payment of \$15.00 from each pay for medical insurance and included a "*me too*" clause that linked future co-payments to the co-payments contained in the district's future contracts with its teaching staff. He also noted that the proposal called for a market review of the salaries of the district's principals and assistant principals that might lead to future salary adjustments. Mr. Orlow offered some examples of the increases that administrators might earn based on performance

under the plan. He noted that the CASEA group had willingly accepted the new compensation plan, and he described the plan as a win-win arrangement for the administrators and the district. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the plan. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Dr. Lipshutz noted the need to appoint a CASEA member to the Administrative Committee of the Administrators 403(b) plan and the CASEA recommendation to appoint Mr. Yemm. Dr. Lipshutz moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Mr. Yemm to the committee. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Dr. Lipshutz noted that Mr. Slutsky, Mr. Bickleman and Mr. Yemm would serve on the committee.

**Finance:** Mr. Slutsky advised that the committee had met that evening to discuss the upcoming preliminary budget and would be meeting again in the near future. He encouraged community members to become involved in the budget process by providing input to the Board.

**Buildings and Grounds/Transportation:** No report.

**Community Relations and Student Life:** Ms. Glodek reported that the committee had met on 03/15/04 and that committee review of the district's drug and alcohol policy was underway. She also advised that the committee had met with the PWHS Post-Prom Committee and received an update on the committee's plans. She noted that private funding and a grant from the Colonial Foundation would cover some of the costs. She recommended that the Board co-sponsor the event and pledge \$5,000.00 to help defray the costs. Mr. Orlow spoke in favor of the idea but noted that the board contribution should be viewed as seed money and that post-prom activities should be self-sustaining in future years. Ms. Glodek moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion that the district co-sponsor the event for the current year and contribute \$5,000.00 in funding. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Legislative:** No report.

**Additional Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell  
Board Secretary