

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, MAY 19, 2005**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:03 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on May 19, 2005.

Board Members Present: Marc Orlow, Gary Johnson, Tom Davis, Hope Luken, Susan Moore, William Ryan, Pascal Scoles, Steven Slutsky and Mitch Zimmer.

Board Members Absent: None.

Also Attending: Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; David Sherman, Administrative Assistant, Community Relations; and John Quinn, Director of CITV, Tom Sigafos, Principal, RP; George Wolfinger, Security; Evelyn Zilch, Human Resources Specialist; Tonia Kaufmann, Fine Arts Coordinator; Terese Boegly, Principal, CES; Kathy Lee Thornton and Tracy Langbein, teachers at Ridge Park Elementary School; Rabbi Ken Carr; Rabbi Saul Grife; Dante DelVecchio; Douglas Bernard; students receiving certificates of achievement, their coaches, family and friends; the PWS men's lacrosse team; Mary Theiss, President of the Colonial Education Support Personnel (CESP), and members of the bargaining unit.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and reiterated his Monday announcement that the Board had met in Executive session on 04/27/05, 05/11/05 and 05/16/05 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Dr. Cotter introduced Ms. Kaufmann who recognized students who were receiving certificates of achievement from the Board for their accomplishments in Indoor Drum Line, Indoor Guard, Lab Band, Jazz Band and music awards at district, region and state levels. He also recognized Terese Boegly, Principal of Colonial Elementary School, who introduced students who participated in the Odyssey of the Mind problem-solving competitions and received honors at the local and state level. A complete list of all of those recognized is attached to these minutes at Attachment #1.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the minutes of the work session of 04/18/05, the General Meeting of 04/21/05, the Special Meeting of 04/25/05, the Facilities Management – Transportation Committee Meeting of 05/05/05, the Community Relations/Student Life Committee Meeting of 05/09/05 and Curriculum Committee Meeting of 05/16/05. See Enclosures #1 through #5 and #48. Mr. Zimmer moved and Ms. Luken seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the financial reports. The reports included Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, Capital Project Report, General

Fund/Federal Program Bills, Capital Reserve Fund Report, Food Services Bills/Cafeteria Report, Outstanding Investment Report, Cash Flow Summary, Comparisons of Taxes Collected, Real Estate Escrow Report, Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and Treasurer's Report for the month ending 04/30/05, as shown in Enclosures #6 through #17 for Thursday evening. Mr. Orlow followed up on questions raised about entries on the Bond Fund Report. Dr. Cotter reported that release of the escrow funds for the all-day kindergarten project by Whitemarsh Township were awaiting completion of an engineering punch list. Board members queried whether the district's engineer or the township's engineer authored the list and asked when the list had been prepared. Dr. Cotter indicated that he would have that information for the next meeting. Mr. Orlow also asked for information on the township legal fees that had been paid by the district over the course of the project. Dr. Cotter reported that the information on the fees was in a handout given to the board members that evening. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: The leaders of the boys' lacrosse team thanked the Board for its support in recent years and requested that the Board consider making their team eligible for PIAA league play for the coming school year. They cited their stellar performance during the recent season and the potential loss of teams to play in their current league as these teams entered PIAA competition. Mr. Orlow and Dr. Cotter recognized the team's growth and potential and praised their record. They noted that the committee was already reviewing the request that the team had raised and was seriously considering it in light of some other issues that had an impact on their request. These included the provisions of Title IX and the presence of another established club sport in ice hockey that would also be looking for PIAA status. Dr. Cotter noted that the district had already contacted PIAA about the timing for entering the league and knew that there was a slot available if all of the issues could be worked out.

Rabbi Carr and Rabbi Grife thanked the Board for its thoughtful and thorough response to the recent painting of the high school tennis courts with anti-Semitic and racial slurs. They reported that they had subsequently heard stories from children that raised other concerns and expressed their confidence that the district would address all of the issues in an appropriate and forthright manner. Mr. Orlow stated that the Board, the Administration and the community shared their concerns. Mr. Orlow pledged to keep the community up to date on the issues. He and Dr. Cotter reviewed the information that was available and could be shared, including cooperating with township police, action taken to remove the offensive material from the tennis courts, interactions with staff and students at the high school and middle school on the incident and the issue that it raised, the groups and organizations with which the district was interacting on diversity and tolerance, programs already imbedded in the district's curriculum and activities to foster diversity and tolerance and an ongoing commitment to seeing that no intimidation of any kind has a place in the district. The rabbis thanked the Board again for its ongoing efforts and looked forward to working cooperatively to see that such incidents did not occur again. Mr. Slutsky reported that communication went home to parents from the middle school pledging that such activities would not be tolerated in the district. Mr. Orlow reported that an anonymous tip-line had been set up to report intimidation and bullying. Mr. Zimmer

suggested that communications by the district be sent home by mail so that parents would be sure to see them. Dr. Cotter reported that efforts such as Challenge Day at the middle school were part of the district's efforts to catch children at an early age and reinforce the district's no tolerance policy for bullying and intimidation. Mr. Orlow thanked the rabbis for their input on behalf of the Board and the community.

Staff Report: Mr. Sigafos, Principal – Ridge Park Elementary School, provided a summary of the Federal Programs Review conducted on 03/17/05 and 03/18/05 and an outline of anticipated federal funding for the 2005-06 school year. He was pleased to report that the review team had complimented the district on its handling of federal programs and his disappointment that the funding would decline for the coming school year. The outline of Mr. Sigafos' comments is attached to these minutes as Attachment #2.

Ms. DeLong reported on the cyclical Compliance Monitoring for Continuous Improvement in special education held on 05/03/05 and 05/04/05. She indicated that the district had not yet received the final report of the review but had participated in an exit interview. She reported that the visiting team composed of peers from other districts and an official from the State Department of Education. Ms. DeLong highlighted a number of recommendations that the team had for improving the district's Child Find program and record policy, data on the time spent in special education and regular classroom settings, and participation in standardized state assessments. She also reported on a number of commendations, including positive comments about the district's immaculate compliance record, its current organizational structure, its application of contingency and grant funds, behavior supports and development guidance. She reported that the visiting team praised the district's *Above and Beyond* program comments on the positive feedback that they had received during parent interviews. Mr. Orlow commented on the district's positive communication with its special education families and voiced an interest in the district's approach to the growing interest in autism in a collaborative manner by creating a task force on the issue. Dr. Cotter suggested that the Community Relations-Student Life Committee talk about the best structure. Dr. Ryan asked about the background of peer monitors. Mrs. DeLong described them as special education volunteers who were not part of the Department of Education but were compensated. Mr. Orlow asked how parents were selected for interviews. Ms. DeLong reported that they were selected randomly by the visiting team.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on the annual appointment of the solicitor and the setting of the retainer and litigation rates for the coming year. See Enclosure #18. He noted that the Board had received an update on the scope of the retainer. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the reappointment of Mr. Sultanik as district solicitor and set the fees as outlined in the enclosure. On a roll call vote. All voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on Thursday on Board Policy #216, Student Records Policy. He noted that the policy had been reviewed on Monday evening and was being updated to reflect updated regulations of the State Board of Education, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Dr. Ryan asked if the policy was only two pages in length. Dr. Cotter noted

that the two pages were followed by a multi-page records plan that was part of the policy. Mr. Davis moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the policy on a second reading. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on its annual dues for membership in the Pennsylvania School Boards Association. See Enclosure # 21. He noted that PSBA's services were even more important today as initiatives and legislation such as Act 72 comes forward. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve payment of the fees. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow recognized Ms. Thornton and Ms. Langbein who provided information on their major grant from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation for a Chatter Club that supported the education of autistic children at Ridge Park. The teachers explained the special needs of autistic children and the specific activities that they developed and implemented using the grant funds to help students learn to do defined tasks. The teachers thanked the foundation and the Board for their support.

Dr. Cotter sought Board approval for a list of foundation mini-grants as outlined in Enclosure #49. Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the grants. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Orlow asked the Administration to provide a summary of the success of the foundation in supporting educational innovation by tabulating a list of the grants made and the funds offered to the district since the foundation was created.

Mr. Orlow recognized Ms. Theiss who spoke on behalf of the CESP, the bargaining unit for most of the district's secretaries and its staff nurses and aides, on the issue of contributions for health insurance and the unit's desire to cap those contributions. They expressed their belief that the uncapped contributions had secretaries and aides making the same contributions as other employees in the district earning significantly higher salaries. She told the Board that the bargaining unit recognized and accepted the need for staff to contribute to the cost of their benefits but asked the Board to recognize the differences and to offer the bargaining unit members equity in contributing to the cost of their health care benefits. Mr. Orlow appreciated the willingness of the group to come and outline their concerns but declined to negotiate in public. He noted, however, that the Board had to address the concern of local residents that they had to contribute more each year themselves for less health care coverage than the year before.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter updated his report from Monday evening and listed the personnel actions listed in Enclosures #22 and #23. These included personnel changes, additions to the professional substitute list and secondary summer school staffing. Mr. Orlow asked about enrollment projections for the coming year. Dr. Cotter noted that projections for kindergarten were below expectations for the month of May and that the district would be encouraging parents to complete the registration process. Ms. Luken moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

New Business: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the election of Mr. Bickleman as Board Treasurer for 2005-06 at an annual rate of \$8,427 – a 5% increase over the current year and the election of Mr. Bell to a four-year term as the Board Secretary at an annual rate of \$6,741 for the first year – a 5% increase over the current year. He reported that both men had served well in their positions for many years. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the elections. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought nominations for the appointment of Student Board Representatives to the Board and to the Community Relations – Student Life Committee. He briefly outlined the process the high school nomination and Board interview of the candidates. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to appoint Josh Belkoff as the representative to the CR-SL Committee and Angela D'Alessandro as the representative to the Board. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on designating Wachovia Bank as the depository for school district funds for 2005-06 and approving the listing of investment banks for 2005-06 as shown in Enclosure #24. Mr. Slutsky so moved and Mr. Davis seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on Enclosure #24, a list of the estimates for federal program allocations for 2005-06. Dr. Cotter noted Mr. Sigafos' recommendation to approve the preliminary list and expressed that the belief that Board action that evening was a prudent step. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the annual list. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action to approve the titles on the annual list of textbooks up for adoption and utilization during the 2005-06, as shown in Enclosure #26. He advised that board action on the list amounted to approval of the texts and noted that actual purchases would be made in accordance with the final 2005-06 budget adopted by the Board. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the titles. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the 2005-06 MCIU Special Education Services Agreement. He noted that the agreement, as shown in Enclosure #27, had been discussed on Monday evening. He also reported that the agreement represented a district commitment to a number of service slots, would be reconciled at the end of the year and did not represent the full cost of special education services. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Davis 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 on a first reading on Board Policy #203.1, HIV/AIDS Infection. Ms. DeLong briefly summarized the information that she had covered on Monday evening, confirmed that the policy was not a reaction to the special education compliance monitoring and confirmed that the policy had been forwarded to the district's physician for review. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the policy on a first reading. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a first reading on Board Policy #605, Investment of Funds and Board Policies #318, 418, and 518 – Conflict of Interest. He noted that the policies had been drafted by the solicitor in response to audit findings and would be reviewed by the Finance Committee prior to a second reading. See Enclosure # 29 and #30. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the policies on a first reading. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on the Carbon Lehigh I. U. Data Processing Contracted Services Agreement for 2005-06 and noted that the agreement had been reviewed on Monday evening. See Enclosure #31. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis 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 on a request from a high school advisor to escort a student to the Best Buddies Conference in Bloomington, Indiana from 07/22/05 through 07/25/05 as part of the National Leadership and Training Conference. He noted that the trip had been reviewed in the Community Relations – Student Life Committee. See Enclosure #32. Ms. Luken 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 sought Board action on a request for three teachers to attend the Summer Institute at Yale from 06/26/05 through 06/29/05, as shown in Enclosure #33. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on annual supply bids, including bids for elementary and secondary art supplies, general supplies, technology education supplies, middle school physical education supplies and custodial supplies as outlined in Enclosures #34 through #40. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the MCIU Cooperative Purchasing Bid for fuel. See Enclosure #41. He reported that the MCIU and participating districts were recommending that the bid be rejected and re-bid to address the bidders to secure fixed pricing beyond the first year of the bid. Mr. Bell shared information from the solicitor indicating that the Board's ability to opt out of the bid after opening was regulated by the language in the bid specifications. Mr. Bell and Mr. Bickleman reported that the specifications for re-bidding fuel would include minimum quantities for all participants and that the language of the specifications would not allow them to opt out after the bid was opened. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to reject the current bid and authorize a re-bid for fuel. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested the Board action on Enclosure #42, new auditorium seating at Colonial Elementary School. Mr. Orlow asked about the timing of the installation. Mr. Bell reported that the seats would be installed during the summer. In a response to Board queries about potential delays, Mr. Bell reported that the supplier had assured the

Facilities Manager that the seats would be available for installation during the summer. Dr. Cotter indicated that the gym could be used as an alternate venue for many school events if the seating installation were delayed unexpectedly. Mrs. Moore confirmed the 800 seats would be installed. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to award the bid to ESSJAY at a cost of \$111,172. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the attention of Board Members to Enclosure #50, bids for the expansion of the trainer's room and stadium building at the high school. Mr. Bell reviewed the results of the bid and noted that the district had not received an electrical bid. Securing an electrical contractor would add to the \$334,194 cost for the project. Board members referred the bid to the Facilities Management –Transportation Committee for review and a recommendation for the Special Board Meeting on Thursday, 05/26/05.

Solicitor's Report: No report.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board: Dr. Ryan reported on his lunch meeting with the Executive Director and the director's decisions to pre-screen budget proposals going forward.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that the budget had been unanimously approved by the sending districts and that arrangements had been made to house a number of center programs off-site during building renovations.

Personnel: Mr. Johnson advised that the committee had been looking at enrollment projections and their impact on staffing.

Finance: Mr. Slutsky highlighted the calendar for final budget approval and urged the community to take advantage of the opportunity for public input.

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Davis reported on Mr. Anaya's demonstration of the use of technology in middle school social studies and science in the high school and a grant for a new program that would become part of the high school social studies curriculum.

Facilities Management – Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported the completion of the playground projects at Ridge Park and Whitmarsh Elementary Schools, the stepped-up district patrol of fields and tracks to control unauthorized use of district athletic facilities, a program to increase security at Victory Fields through the use of security cameras and the projected start of the high school library renovation at the close of the school year.

Community Relations – Student Life: Dr. Scoles reported that the community newsletter was being delivered to district homes and the new district website was up and running. He reminded the community of the anonymous tip line (610-834-1671, ext. 2000) for reporting vandalism, bullying, intimidation and other harmful activities on district property.

Legislative: Dr. Ryan reported that the regular legislative meeting had been cancelled but a breakfast meeting with local legislators had been held. Mr. Orlow reported that board

members who attended the meeting were convinced that it was very important for local school boards to be very active in the debates about the future of education in the state. He noted that the level of support for schools in the legislature was varied and that district's had to stay alert and aware of legislative activity in the capital.

Additional Public Comment: None

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 10:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Board Secretary**