

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, AUGUST 15, 2005**

President Orlow convened the work session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:37 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on August 15, 2005.

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

Board Members Absent: William Ryan and Steven Slutsky.

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; Tom Sigafos, Principal, Ridge Park Elementary School; Evelyn Zilch, Human Resources Specialist; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Nancy Mortimer O'Brien and Dave Repert.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in Executive session on 08/10/05 and 07/18/05 and 08/15/05 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow directed the attention of board members to the minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 07/18/05, the General Meeting of 07/21/05, the Finance Committee Meeting of 07/27/05, the Facilities Management – Transportation Committee Meeting of 07/28/05, the Community Relations – Student Life Committee Meeting of 07/28/05, the Special Meeting of 07/28/05 and the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 08/15/05. See Enclosures #1 through #6 of the agenda for Thursday evening and material to be provided at that time. There were no questions or comments on the minutes.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow recapped the financial reports on the list for approval on Thursday evening. The reports included the Bond Fund Report, the Capital Project Report, General Fund/Federal Program Bills, the Capital Reserve Fund Report, the Food Services Bills/Cafeteria Report, the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Escrow Report, the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 07/31/05, as shown in Enclosures #7 through #16. Mr. Orlow asked about the status of the escrow funds connected with the classroom additions at Ridge Park and Whitemarsh Elementary Schools. He noted that Whitemarsh Township was still holding the funds almost a year after the district received certificates of occupancy for the additions. Mr. Bickleman indicated that he would contact the township and request release of the funds.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Orlow recognized Mr. Sigafos and Mrs. Zilch who gave reports on the midpoint review of the district's Strategic Plan and Continuing Profession Education Plan, respectively. See Enclosures #17 and #18 for the general meeting on Thursday. Mr. Sigafos outlined the process for updating the plan and the many points of pride involving district initiative that put it at the forefront of educational reform. These included the *Above and Beyond* program, *Pathways*, technological innovations, and the Continuing Professional Education Plan. He noted that the details were included in the appendices of the Mid Point Review. Mr. Orlow asked how current the data in the report was. Mr. Sigafos and Dr. Gorodetzer reported that it was current through the end of the 2003-04 school year. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that data for the 2004-05 year was just coming in but confirmed that updated data would be included in the district's plan as it became available. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Sigafos to send a notice to families on the district's email list that the Strategic Plan was available for review on the district website. Mrs. Zilch briefly outlined the process that professional staff follow to meet the state guidelines for 180 hours of professional development within five years. She noted the districts cutting-edge approach to professional development. Mr. Orlow asked the committee that worked on the professional education plan to seek additional community input. He noted that both the report on the Strategic Plan and the Continuing Professional Education Plan would be on the agenda for Board action on Thursday evening. Mr. Orlow also reported that Dr. Gorodetzer would provide information on the district's summer programs that night.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: None.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter summarized his report and listed the personnel actions, evening school programs and staffing and enrollment update listed in Enclosures #21 through #24 for the Thursday evening. Dr. Cotter provided information on class sizes for the coming school year. They range from 10 to 17 in kindergarten, 14-21 in 1st grade, 14-19 in 2nd grade, 13-20 in 3rd grade, 20-21 in 4th and 5th grade and 18-20 (based on required English classes) in 6th, 7th and 8th grade. Mr. Berger confirmed that the lower range of the enrollment numbers in grades K through 3 were for Conshohocken Elementary School.

New Business: Mr. Orlow noted that a revision of Board Policy #203, Student Health, Safety and Welfare was on the agenda for Board action on a first reading on Thursday evening. Mrs. DeLong confirmed that the revision had been updated to reflect present practice in the district.

Mr. Orlow advised that a new Board Policy, #811, School Bus Idling would also be on the agenda for action on a first reading on Thursday evening. Dr. Cotter reported that the policy had been developed to control staff and student exposure to diesel fumes, reduce the time that students had to wait on buses once they arrived at school and make the district eligible for EPA grants that would help fund a move toward vehicles and diesel fuels that were more environmentally friendly.

Mr. Orlow noted that the several routine transportation contracts would be on the agenda for Board action on Thursday evening and that he would like to address them in a single motion. He noted that the contracts represented the most efficient and economical option for the district. They were a contract with Devon Preparatory School to transport two students for \$15.00 per student per day, St. Joseph's Preparatory School to transport 21 students for \$5.50 per student per day and a parent to provided transportation to Harrisburg for pick up to the Pittsburgh School for the Deaf at the IRS rate of \$0.405 per mile.

Mr. Orlow reported that two special education agreements would come before the Board for approval on Thursday evening and that he would like to take action on them in a single motion. They were an agreement with Talk, Inc., a non-profit organization operating the Magnolia Speech School Demonstration Program and the Upper Merion Area School District for full autistic support, occupational therapy and itinerant speech and language services for one student at a cost of \$39,451. Materials were available to board members but not in agenda enclosures for reasons of student confidentiality. Mr. Orlow noted that they were the most appropriate and cost-effective solutions for the students in question. Mrs. DeLong confirmed that the agreements were renewals of existing services.

Mr. Orlow referred board members to a recommendation to accept an exchange student who wishes to attend PWHS and forwarded an application through the American Scandinavian Student Exchange, an accredited and reputable exchange organization. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the district had worked with the organization in the past. He explained that applications arrived in different ways and that this application did not involve an exchange with a PWHS student who would study abroad. Dr. Cotter also reported that Dr. Sullivan and Mrs. DeLong had screened the organization and that the application had identified the local host family in the district. See Enclosure #29 for Thursday evening's meeting.

Mr. Orlow noted that the high school senior class sponsor had requested Board approval for two students to attend the Annual PSBA Student Delegate Program in Hershey, PA from 10/26/05 through 10/28/05. Dr. Cotter reported that the students had been screened by Dr. Sullivan and Mr. Forster. Several board members commented on the value of the program and the positive impact it had on student attendees. Refer to Enclosure #30 of the agenda for the general meeting on Thursday.

Mr. Orlow directed the attention of board members to four bids on the agenda for Board action on Thursday.

- Board members had questions about the energy management systems that involved costs beyond those of the boilers themselves. Mr. Bell explained the energy and money savings involved in extending recent energy management system upgrades to the new boilers. He cited the relatively short payback period for the investment and provided information on the systems that had been installed in renovated buildings in recent years. Facilities Management Committee members confirmed the financial payback for the investment in the systems. See Enclosure #31.**
- Mr. Orlow noted that the ice cream, milk and juice bid fixed prices but did not obligate the district to purchasing set quantities of the products. See Enclosure #32.**

- Mr. Bell referred board members to a hand-out for the purchase of eight (8) additional cameras on buses serving the district. He pointed out that the lowest responsible bidder was the firm that had provided cameras in recent years.
- Mr. Orlow noted a bid for science room furniture that would be on Thursday's agenda for Board action. Board members had questions about the need for new furniture for the high school science wing since furniture had been purchased for the wing when it was built approximately six years ago. Dr. Cotter provided information on the need for the new furniture and the problems with the current furniture. The issues revolved around the need for sturdier tables for physics lab work. Dr. Cotter also reported that the existing tables would be used elsewhere in the science wing or for technology applications and that desk-chair units would go to classrooms in need of replacements thus avoiding some other furniture purchases. Mr. Bell provided some additional back-up information and noted that tight bid results confirmed very competitive bidding. Both agreed to provide additional information prior to the general meeting on Thursday evening. Board members asked which rooms had tables that were being replaced so that they could visit and see the old equipment first hand. See Enclosure #33.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: None.

Additional Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**James M. Bell
Board Secretary**