

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, JANUARY 19, 2006**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:05 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on January 19, 2006.

**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; Jessica Klein, Board Student Representative; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator; John Quinn, Director of CITV; T.C. Boegly, Principal, CES; Denise Marks, Assistant Principal, CES; Sergio Anaya, Technology Curriculum Specialist; Chad Murray, President CEA; Matt Bradford; Jeff Bram; Mickey Engle; Robert Franz; Jared Gamble; Kristen Krail; Jordan Sones; Maile Sones; Michael Van Buren and Marcia Wright-Soika.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in Executive session on 01/19/06 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the minutes of the Board Reorganization Meeting of 12/05/05, the Special Meeting of 12/05/05, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 12/12/05, the Personnel Committee Meeting of 12/15/05, Facilities Management - Transportation Committee Meeting of 01/05/06, the Special Meeting of 01/05/06, the Community Relations – Student Life Committee Meeting of 01/09/06, the Finance Committee Meeting of 01/11/06 and the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 01/17/06. See Enclosures #1 through #6, #46, #47 and a blue page distributed to the Board that evening. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the financial reports for November and December. The reports included the Budget Transfers, 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 11/30/05 and 12/31/05, as shown in Enclosures #7 through #18. Mr. Bickleman confirmed that the updated Bond Fund Report included the retainage for the Conshohocken Elementary Curtain wall Replacement. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

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

**Staff Report:** Mrs. Delong presented a report from the district's Multicultural Awareness Committee. See Attachment #1 to these minutes for the basic text of her comments.

Mrs. Boegly reported on the multi-cultural team building program that came earlier in the school year at CES. The goals of the program were to develop a sense of classroom and school community; recognize, respect and appreciate individual similarities and differences among peers; and explore and experience a variety of roles as they relate to teamwork and leadership. Mrs. Marks and Mr. Bram contributed to the presentation. A video testimonial at the closing of the presentation confirmed the students' positive reactions to the two-day schedule of team building activities.

Mr. Engle and Mr. Sones demonstrated a software program developed by Mr. Sones to help parents schedule conferences with high school teachers.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a revision of Policy #125.1, Adult Evening School Salary Schedule. He reminded all that the revision in Enclosure #19 updated the salary ranges for teachers and noted that classes were run only when there was sufficient enrollment to cover the cost of the program. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the Board had approved the policy change on a first reading at its general meeting in November 2005. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policy on a second reading. On a roll call vote, all voted on favor. The motion was carried.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow requested Board action on three pieces of correspondence requiring Board approval:

- Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to accept an annual donation from the Secretary of Trustees under the Deed of Joshua Morris in the amount of \$2,600. See Enclosure #20. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.
- Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept a donation of \$2,000 from a party that wished to remain anonymous to the PWHS baseball program. Mr. Slutsky inquired about Title IX implications. Mr. Sultanik suggested that the Board seek any legal counsel that it might require on the issue in executive session. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.
- Mr. Slutsky commented on the independent auditor's unqualified opinion on the district's budget for the year ending 06/30/05. He noted that the report confirmed that the district had internal financial controls and best practices in place, took an appropriately conservative approach to budgeting, followed sound accounting practices, and was one of the few districts around that properly accounted for activity funds. He thanked Mr. Bickleman and his staff for their fine work. Dr. Ryan commented positively on Mr. Bickleman's assistance to the auditor in drafting the report but expressed the opinion that some references in the report did not reflect the importance of the subjects at hand. Mr. Bickleman thanked the Board for its support and respect. Mr. Slutsky moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a

**motion to approve the audit report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter provided board members an update of his Monday report outlining personnel actions, changes to substitute lists, proposed extra-duty/extra-pay assignments and appointments of Adult Evening School instructors for the spring of 2006. See Enclosures #21 through #24. Ms. DeLong confirmed that an aide included in the updated report was required by an IEP team decision that the support of an aide was necessary. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. Klein provided an update on a number of events and activities at the high school, including the winter concert, the open-mike program of the Gay-Straight Alliance, course selection, the DECA Club members participation in state competition, the dedication of the renovated library, the band banquet, the National Art Induction, a dance for Habitat for Humanity and the current first place standings for several school sports teams.**

**New Business: Mr. Orlow sought Board action on two new Board policies; Policy #118, Participation in Extra-curricular Activities by Home Education Students and Policy #220, Student Wellness. See Enclosures #25 and #26.**

- **Dr. Cotter confirmed that the activities policy had been upgraded since Monday evening to require that home-schooled students request participation in extra-curricular activities thirty (30) days prior to the start of the activity. During discussion, board and cabinet members noted that the policy was based on a template that met state education requirements and that both home-schooled and regular students had the same rights under the policy. Dr. Cotter and Ms. DeLong noted that the only difference between the in-school and home-schooled students was the 30-day timeline for application for home-schooled students so that academic eligibility could be determined. Mr. Sultanik responded to Board queries about the language stating that students could be dismissed from extra-curricular programs by reporting that the language in the policy really applied to all students because participation in extra-curricular programs was a privilege, not a right. Mrs. Moore moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the policy on a first reading.**
- **Mr. Orlow indicated that Policy #220, Student Wellness, had been reviewed and discussed on Monday evening and stressed that the district would reach out to the community for members interested in serving on the Wellness Committee. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Slutsky 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 requested Board action on a contract with the law firm of Sweet, Stevens, Tucker and Katz, LLP to represent the district in special education cases. The contract was effective 07/01/06 and had been reviewed Monday evening. See Enclosure #27. Mr. Sultanik reported that rates paid to solicitors representing districts in such cases were subject to guidelines approved by the districts' insurance carriers. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a settlement agreement that called for a special needs student to move from one local non-public school to another. The case had been reviewed in executive session on Monday evening and the solution found in accordance with the child's IEP. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the settlement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a series of professional conferences contained in Enclosures #28 through #30. All had been reviewed on Monday evening. The trip to ASCD and the National Council for History Education were for district professional staff to make presentations at the conferences. The trip to an exemplary high school in Virginia was an opportunity for high school teachers and district curriculum supervisors to observe best practice in connection with the district's multi-year reform efforts at PWHHS. Dr. Gorodetzer reported that her office coordinated air travel for professional conferences using web-based resources to secure discounted airfares. Ms. Luken moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the trips. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow sought Board action on Thursday evening on a series of student trips. These included the annual Senior Class trip to Disney World from 04/13/07 through 04/17/07, a PWHHS Social Studies trip to Washington, DC on 05/21-22/06 for 46 students, a one-day, out-of-state field trip for CMS students in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Art Show Activity Club to the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ on 05//4/06, PWHHS DECA Club trips to the state competition from 02/22/06 through 02/24/06 and the national competition in Dallas, TX from 04/29/06 through 05/03/06, and a trip by the PWHHS Boys Tennis Team to Hilton Head for spring training from 04/28/06 through 05/03/06. Students, their families and/or their organizations provided funding for the trips. The projected number of students for the DECA trips was an estimate based on anticipated qualifiers. See Enclosures #31 through #36.**

**Ms. Luken left the meeting at 9:20 p.m.**

**Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the high school class trip. On a roll call vote, all present voted in favor. The motion was carried. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the overnight history field trip to Washington and the art field trip to Hamilton, NJ. On a roll call vote, all present voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the DECA trips to state and national competitions. On a roll call vote, all present voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Ms. Luken returned to the meeting at 9:22 p.m.**

**Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the boys tennis team trip to Hilton Head, SC. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.**

**Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a bid for the renovation of the building on Victory Fields to house Facilities Management, the district Safety Officer, Residency Investigator**

and Copy Center; the renovation of the current Facilities Management Office and adjacent store room at PWHS to house a new Trainer's Room and Custodial Office; the renovation of two spaces adjacent to the pool and Gym #47 at PWHS to be team rooms for girls and boys and the addition of one new bay to the building at the PWHS stadium. See Enclosure #37. Mr. Orlow noted that it was more cost effective to package the projects into a single bid to get the best overall price. Mrs. Moore reported that the package would result in appropriate support of the educational and extra-curricular programs of the high school by relocating some District Office functions currently in the high school to the building at Victory Fields and using the vacated space for educational and extracurricular programs. In response to Board queries, Mr. Sultanik advised the Board that it could approve and issue a Notice of Intent to Award the bid of to the lowest responsible bidders, contingent on receipt of all governmental approvals. Dr. Ryan raised some concerns about the budget implications of funding for the projects. Mr. Orlow indicated that current bond and capital reserve funds were available for the project and reported that Board committees would be looking into options for additional bond funds for capital needs as well as the option for using fund balances for capital needs. Mrs. Moore moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to issue a Notice of Intent to Award the bids as outlined in the recommendation in Enclosure #37, contingent on receipt of all governmental approvals. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik requested board approval of Disciplinary Stipulations #94523 involving violations of the district's drug and alcohol policy. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the stipulations. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit Board: Dr. Ryan reported that the board was taking a second look at the annual administrative budget proposal. The proposal called for an approximate \$3,000,000 (4.89%) increase in expenditures and a 3.57% increase in district costs. Mr. Orlow announced that he would be voting against the proposed budget when it came up for Board action. He indicated that the district had looked to the I.U. for help in forming a coalition to raise with the legislature the concerns of many districts with pending legislation on tax reform and had found the I.U. completely unresponsive on that critical issue.

**CMCAVTS:** No report. Mr. Johnson advised that the Joint Operating Committee would not be meeting in January.

**Personnel Committee:** No report.

**Finance Committee:** Mr. Slutsky reported that the committee had looked into the possibility of a new bond offering and felt that, if there were still physical plant issues that need to be addressed, the district might want to take advantage of current rates. He noted that there could also be an advantage to the district in doing its borrowing prior to the adoption of mandatory tax reform measures similar to those in Act 72.

**Curriculum and Program:** Mr. Davis shared the minutes of the most recent committee meeting. Those minutes are attached to these minutes as Attachment #2.

**Facilities Management and Transportation:** Mrs. Moore noted the Board's approval of construction bids, contingent on the district receiving all governmental approvals, as reported earlier in the meeting and outlined in these minutes. She also reported on the formal dedication of the renovated PWS Library and again invited the community to visit the facility. Mrs. Moore confirmed that the planned playground upgrades at Plymouth and Whitmarsh Elementary Schools were slated to be completed in the spring of 2006.

**Community Relations – Student Life:** Dr. Scoles encouraged community members to visit the renovated library at the high school and to use the tip line at 610-834-1670, extension #2000 to report any concerns or incidents that negatively impacted the district's multi-cultural awareness program. Dr. Scoles announced the second annual Seniors Matinee for the spring musical. He advised all seniors interested in attending the free luncheon and performance that they could make reservations on line at the district's website, [www.colonialsd.org](http://www.colonialsd.org).

**Legislative:** Dr. Ryan reported that public school education in Pennsylvania cost \$18,500,000,000 and that state support for the public education was only \$4,000,000,000. He noted that most of the burden for funding public education fell on local communities. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Sultanik for his assessment of the latest tax reform efforts in Harrisburg. Mr. Sultanik felt that there was a consensus to require back-end referendums on school budgets that exceeded certain limits and that the main topic still under discussion in the legislature was the source of funding for tax reform. Mr. Orlow noted that the House and the Senate had passed conflicting bills on the issue.

**Additional Public Comment:** Mr. Franz reported that he had just received that day a zoning notice for the proposed Facilities Management Center. He went on to say that he had seen the projected increase in benefits for the coming year and noted that the district's pension contributions would be going up 37%. He felt that increase was just the start of future increases. Mr. Slutsky reported that the increases had been going up annually since the pension system raised the multiplier for benefits from 2.0 to 2.5 a number of years ago. Mr. Bickleman reported that sizable increases were expected for the next five to seven years. Mr. Orlow reported that the district's contribution was 19% of payroll and that the state did not have the money to reimburse the district for its share of burgeoning pension costs.

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