

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, JULY 21, 2005**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:07 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on July 21, 2005.

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

Board Members Absent: Tom Davis and Hope Luken.

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; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Jim Haig and Susanne Marves, The Lincoln Center; Robert Franz and Nancy Mortimer O'Brien.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in Executive session on 07/11/05 for informational purposes and on 07/18/05 and 07/21/05 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow noted that the Board was combining its work session and general meeting into one meeting in July. He requested Board action on the minutes of the Curriculum Committee Meeting of 06/13/05 and the General Meeting of 05/19/05. Dr. Scoles 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 sought Board action on the financial reports. The reports included Budget Transfers, 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 06/30/05, as shown in Enclosures #3 through #14. Mr. Orlow asked a number of questions about entries on the Bond Fund Report. Mr. Bickleman reported that payments were being made to Preferred Construction Services for attendance at township meetings on the new sign at Whitemarsh Elementary School and that pending payments to Willard and Company closed out the plumbing accounts for the kindergarten projects at Ridge Park and Whitemarsh Elementary Schools. Mr. Orlow requested that the Facilities Management – Transportation Committee review furniture purchases for the new District Office. Mr. Bell provided a brief summary of the new purchases and the reallocation of furniture in the new offices and reported that he would have a recap and cost summary for review by the committee at its meeting the following Thursday. Mr. Zimmer moved and

Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the reports subject to the committee's review of the furniture purchases. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Public Comments on the Agenda: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Orlow noted that representatives of The Lincoln Center were in the audience. He directed the attention of board members to the information in Enclosure #15, Staff Report. The enclosure was the annual report for Lincoln Academy at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School. Mr. Orlow reviewed the purpose and goals of this alternative education program and student crisis counseling services at both the high school and middle school levels. Dr. Cotter reported that the administrative team felt that the special services were warranted though the costs were significant. Mr. Haig spoke of the program's community counseling efforts and crisis support role. Mr. Orlow noted that the alternative program at the high school had 35 slots at any given time and the students moved into and out of the program as needs are revised and met. Dr. Cotter noted that the high school based alternative program served student needs well and offered greater flexibility as students moved from the alternative setting to the regular high school setting. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve program costs over the next three years at \$505,316 for 2005-06, \$515,321 for 2006-07 and \$525,632 for 2007-08. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: None.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter summarized his report and listed the personnel actions listed in Enclosures #16 through #17 and in update submitted to the Board prior to the meeting. These included personnel changes and additions to the substitute list. Mr. Orlow requested an update on vacancies that still needed to be filled and student enrollment. There were questions concerning the low figures for kindergarten at Conshohocken Elementary School. Mr. Berger expected the number to rise. Note was taken of a decrease of one class for kindergarten and an increase of one class for 1st grade at Plymouth Elementary School. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve The Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Board Student Representative Report: None.

New Business: Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the reappointment of the district dentist and physicians at the service rates for 2005-06 as listed in Enclosure #29. He noted that all of the individuals had provided satisfactory service to the district over a number of years. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the elections. On a roll call vote, all except Dr. Ryan, voted in favor. Dr. Ryan had stepped out of the meeting for a moment and missed the vote. He returned for the next agenda item. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action to approve two contractual agreements from Pupil Services, Enclosure #18, an agreement with Brooke Glen Group (formerly Progressions) for homebound educational services at \$26.60/hour, and Silver Springs/Martin Luther School at a cost of \$157/IEP student/day. Dr. Ryan moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the contract with the Lincoln Center for Family and Youth had been approved earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on setting prices for school meals for the 2005-06 school year. Board deliberation centered on the district's decision to focus on serving meals with greater nutritional value and the impact that moving away from fried foods and sugary drinks, which had less nutritional value but generated more revenue, would have on the Food Service Program. Board members took note of the fact that operating two cafeterias at the high school had a significant impact on the bottom line of the food service program because it was far more expensive to operate a two-kitchen program. All recognized, however, that neither cafeteria could serve all the students without a significant revamping of the lunch schedule. All board members supported a district contribution to the food service program in the form of a *nutrition subsidy* but there was considerable debate on the size of that subsidy. Mr. Slutsky noted the need for improved nutrition and affordable pricing. Dr. Ryan reported that Conshohocken families supported no increase in meal prices. A number of board members supported a \$0.10 increase in lunch prices and a more modest subsidy. Others supported no increase in lunch prices and a larger subsidy. Most board members felt that adult lunches were a bargain and would continue to be a bargain even if prices were increased by an amount greater than any increase set for student meals. The Board briefly discussed the savings that might be gained by eliminating the cost of providing faculty serving lines in the district's three large buildings. As the discussion drew to a close, Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve a \$0.10 increase in student meals and a *nutrition subsidy* of \$59,000. Mr. Sultanik advised that five affirmative votes would be necessary to pass the motion. On a roll call vote, Mr. Orlow, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Davis and Mr. Zimmer voted in favor. Mrs. Moore, Dr. Ryan and Dr. Scoles voted in opposition. The motion was defeated for lack of the required minimum of five affirmative votes. The Board requested additional information on the cost of adult meals and savings options and agreed to convene a special meeting in the near future to vote on meal pricing for the coming year. Dr. Cotter stressed that the vote needed to be taken within the following two weeks to allow the district to get proper notice out to families before the start of school.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on three professional conference requests dealing with the district's new Forensic Science course. He referred to Enclosures #22, 24, and 25 for three high school teachers to attend Forensic Science Education Seminars, two from 07/21/05 through 07/23/05 and the other from 08/22/05 through 08/26/05. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on two routine conference requests for a teacher to attend a science conference at Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 08/15/05 through 08/18/05 and another to attend the National Association of College Admissions Counselors Conference in Tampa, FL from 09/22/05 through 09/25/05. See Enclosure #23 and #26. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the requests. 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 for 2005-06. See Attachment #1 to these minutes. Mr. Bickleman noted the significant increases over the prices for the previous year because of the rising price of oil. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the annual I.U. Bid for student accident insurance. Mr. Bell briefly explained the administrative recommendation in Enclosure #27. Mr. Zimmer moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on an RFP for music rental and service contracts for students and their families. Mr. Bell explained Enclosure #28 and noted that the RFP required no expenditure of district funds. Mr. Slutsky asked that the district survey families for their input on rental services before the RFP goes out the next time. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to award of the services to Music and Arts Centers as outlined in the Enclosure #28. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit Board: Dr. Ryan reported that meetings at the I.U. had become very lengthy. He briefly highlighted extended school year services, teacher hires, new Board officers, several pending Board retirements, a new contract for teacher assistants, 18 post-secondary scholarships, a national education conference for which the I.U. was seeking 500 volunteers, the passage of the I.U. Budget, a task force on autism and state initiative on health.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported on an amendment to the resolution with Plymouth Township on the subject of land development for the renovation of the Center for Technical Studies. Following the advice of the solicitor, Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the resolution and the accompanying improvement agreement, pending the approval of the solicitor. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Personnel: Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve a three-year bargaining agreement between the Board and the Colonial Educational Support Professionals for 2005-08. Mr. Johnson covered the basic terms of the agreement: salary increases of 3.6%, 3.75% and 3.75% for the three years and increased contributions to health care premiums up to the level in the CEA contract. He noted that the agreement

had been reviewed by the Board and the solicitor and had been signed by the union. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Finance: No report.

Curriculum and Program: No report.

Facilities Management – Transportation: Mrs. Moore briefly reported on the status of summer projects and indicated that work on the PWHS library and main office, the exterior walls at Plymouth Elementary School, the roof and retaining wall projects at Colonial Middle School and the replacement of seating in the auditorium of Colonial Elementary School was on schedule.

Community Relations – Student Life: Dr. Scoles announced that the district would have a tent at the Plymouth Community Day fair and that the District Calendar would be delivered to homes by mid-August. He also reminded the district's senior citizens about the availability of Gold Cards for admission to district concerts, theater productions and sports events.

Legislative: Dr. Ryan commented that the district's performance on PSSA tests bettered the state average. He reported the passage of the state budget and noted the state surplus, the small increase in the state education subsidy and some initiatives on the part of the governor to offer additional subsidies to poorer schools.

Other: Mr. Orlow asked the solicitor if there would be any action on Act 72 in the near future. Mr. Sultanik doubted that there would be any activity until September or October. Other board members doubted activity even beyond that date.

Additional Public Comment: Mr. Franz expressed his opinion that American flags on district mowers violated protocols for displaying the flag and asked that they be removed. He urged the Board to issue a statement opposing the inclusion of *intelligent design* in the curriculum and noted that the Standard and Poor's report on schools showed the district's food service program spent more money per student than other schools in the county. Mr. Orlow briefly explained some of the factors leading to higher food service costs, including staffing two kitchens at the high school.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell
Board Secretary