

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, JUNE 12, 2006.**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:34 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on June 12, 2006.

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

Board Members Absent: None

Also Attending: Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Gerald Berger, Director of Human Resources; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Jessica Klein and Angela D'Alessandro, Board Student Representatives; Wendy Rothstein for the Solicitor; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Carol Cohen; Tom Sigafos; Jason Bacani; students receiving certificates of achievement, their families and friends.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 05/24/2006, 06/07/2006 and 06/12/2006 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

Mr. Orlow recognized Dr. Cotter who introduced Jason Bacani, Colonial Middle School Assistant Principal, to present student awards. The first group of students had been recognized by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth for their performance on "Above-Grade-Level" exams. The second group of students performed well in the Pennsylvania Math League contest. The Math League offers competitions for each grade level in which students have 30 minutes to answer 40 questions. The Pennsylvania Math League considers a score of 15 or more to be exceptional and states that scores of 30 or higher are rare. All students recognized had scores of 30 or higher. A complete list of the students recognized is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow asked for Board Members to review and approve the minutes of the work session of 05/15/2006, the general meeting of 05/18/2006, and the Personnel Committee of 06/01/2006. See Enclosures #1 through #3. Mr. Orlow noted that the minutes of the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 06/07/2006 and the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 06/09/2006 were available as separate attachments to the agenda and that the minutes of the Curriculum Committee of 06/12/2006 would be available next month. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Zimmer 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 May 2006. The reports included the Budget Transfers, the Bond Fund Report, the Capital Projects Report, the General Fund/Federal Program Bills, the Capital Reserve Fund, the Food Service Bills/Cafeteria Report, the Outstanding Investment Report, the Cash Flow Summary, the Comparison of Taxes Collected, the Real Estate Tax Escrow Report, the Reconciliation of Cash

Accounts, the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 05/31/2006, as shown in enclosures #4 through #15.

Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Davis 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.

Staff Report: Mr. Sigafos reported on the proposed allocation of federal funds to the district as revised and presented to the Board as an update to enclosure #37. He noted the irony in the district receiving fewer federal dollars because it met NCLB goals and explained the increased funding for schools with higher poverty rates. A vote on the federal funds allocation was deferred until later in the agenda.

Old Business: Mr. Orlow noted that policy # 217.1, a revision to the District Graduation Policy which establishes the criterion for special education student participation in commencement ceremonies, was brought before members on a second-read basis. See enclosure #16. Mr. Orlow noted that the policy had been approved on a first-read basis by the Board at its May 18 meeting. He noted that the school code required a 30-day review period before the Board could approve a second read and 30 days had not yet elapsed. Mr. Orlow asked if there was a pressing need to approve the policy prior to graduation on June 15. Mrs. DeLong noted that the updates to the policy reflected the current practice of the district. Dr. Cotter confirmed that there was no immediate need to approve the policy and that the changes were needed to bring the policy in line with current district practice and recently signed state law. Mr. Orlow asked that the policy be brought before the board in July.

Correspondence: Mr. Orlow noted that a request was before the Board to accept a \$15,207 gift from the Plymouth Elementary PTO as a contribution to the new playground equipment at the school. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to accept the gift. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter provided an overview of his report which included an organizational chart for district administrators updated to reflect changes resulting from the retirement of Jim Bell, Director of Support Services; the Personnel Report and Substitutes list which included 35 actions; the Extra Duty/Extra Pay Report; the Long Term Substitutes Report; the designation of two teachers as Master Teachers; an Educational Leave Request; a request to increase the salary of crossing guards in Conshohocken Borough; a CASEA Section 403(b) Representative Appointment; a contract renewal for Act 48 Web-Based Software; and a revision of summer school staffing assignments. See enclosures #17 through #26. Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Cotter to explain the Master Teacher Program. Dr. Cotter stated that in a recent meeting of Master Teachers, the teachers agreed that there was tremendous value in the program. It provides a career ladder opportunity for teachers, creates teacher leaders at the building and district levels, empowers teachers to become more involved in the professional development process and more. Dr. Cotter noted that the Master Teacher designation comes with a \$5,000 per year stipend paid out in two payments. It is a two-year appointment.

Mr. Orlow questioned why 457 user licenses were needed for the Act 48 software. Mr. Berger noted that all teachers were responsible for entering their Act 48 hours into the system but that it was the district's responsibility to monitor the hours. He stated that the PDE required teachers to accrue 180 hours of in-service or professional development. Mr. Orlow asked if the district could

be fined if the records were not maintained. Mr. Berger confirmed that was the case and noted that a teacher's certification became invalid if they failed to fulfill the requirement in a five-year period. Dr. Ryan inquired if this was the second year of the contract. Mr. Berger noted that it was the third or fourth year. Mr. Ryan asked where teachers were in the cycle. Mr. Berger noted that not every teacher was on the same cycle, and it was not a matter of monitoring credits from year to year, but rather from month to month.

Mr. Orlow asked Board Members to consider Enclosure #17 and Enclosures # 19 through #26 in one motion. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve those portions of the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested that Board Members act on the Personnel Report and Substitute list separately. He noted that he needed to abstain from taking part in the vote since one of his sons was included in the report as a summer hire. He stated that school code required him to state publicly and in writing the fact that his son was included on the list. He asked Mr. Bell to provide him with the appropriate form. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the Personnel Report and Substitute list. On a roll call vote all but Mr. Orlow voted in favor. Mr. Orlow abstained. The motion was carried.

Board Student Representatives Report: Ms. D'Alessandro informed Board Members that the high school band trip to Cleveland was a success. She also noted that PWS was certified by the Anti Defamation League (ADL) as a "No Place for Hate" School in a ceremony on Friday, June 9. She noted that PWS student peer counselors and members of the ADL took part in the event. Ms. Klein stated that the senior prom was enjoyed by all, the senior awards program was held at night for the first time and the senior picnic was held on June 9 where students received and signed yearbooks. Ms. Klein noted that graduation practice would be held over the next two days and that the senior breakfast would be held on June 15. She thanked Board Members for the experience of serving as a Board student representative. Mr. Orlow stated that it was a pleasure for the Board to have Ms. Klein serve as a student representative and presented her with a plaque of appreciation on behalf of the Board Members.

New Business: Mr. Orlow recognized Mr. Slutsky and asked him to report on the 2006-2007 school district budget. Mr. Slutsky stated that the final recommended budget was slightly higher than the preliminary budget which was approved in April. The increase was the result of personnel changes and higher fuel costs. Mr. Slutsky noted that the budget came to \$80,257,000, or 6.39% higher than the current year budget. He stated that the district would continue its policy of using a portion of the fund balance to offset costs and keep the tax burden to a minimum. He noted that \$4.5 million of the fund balance would be used and the resulting tax increase would be 3.84%. Mr. Slutsky explained that state mandated programs over which the Board had no control accounted for much of the budget, including pension costs and rising fuel costs. He also noted that federal funding to the district would decrease and that when factored with inflation, the state's share of education funding had decreased by over 2% since the mid 1990's. Mr. Slutsky reported that the taxing date for the budget would be July 1, 2006. He thanked the administration and Mr. Bickleman for their effort in putting the budget together. Mr. Orlow reiterated that the state has added significantly more mandated costs since the mid 1990s while decreasing funding for those programs. Mr. Bickleman pointed out that the actual amount of the fund balance used to offset costs was more than \$3.5 million and not \$4.5 million. He also stated the district has averaged a tax increase of only slightly more than 2.25% over the last five years which was significantly lower than the consumer price index. Mr. Orlow stated that the budget reflected the

board's conservative spending policy. Mr. Slutsky moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the budget. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board approval of the 2006-2007 federal programs allocation estimates as submitted by Mr. Sigafoos. See the revised enclosure #27. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the projects. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that eight contracts were before the board for renewal. The contracts represented agreements with the Central Montgomery County MH/MR; Carol Scheuerman, PT for physical therapy; with Kim Hartranft for occupational therapy; the Lakeside Educational Network; the Silver-Springs Martin Luther School; the Brooke Glen Behavioral Hospital; the Quaker School at Horsham; and the Magnolia School. See enclosures #28 through #35. Mrs. Luken asked if the Lakeside contract represented the purchase of slots for students. Mrs. Delong confirmed that was the case and that the district currently has students enrolled there. Mrs. Luken asked if placement was guaranteed. Mrs. Delong noted that, without the purchase of slots, placement was not assured. Mr. Orlow asked if the number of slots was based on current and projected enrollment. Mrs. Delong indicated that was the case. She also noted that Lakeside is the only place where slots are purchased in advance. Mr. Orlow asked that all of the contracts be considered in one motion. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow stated that Mr. Bell's retirement has prompted the district to change the signatories for the district's various Wachovia accounts as of July 1, 2006. He asked the Board to authorize Mr. Bickleman to do so. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to authorize the change. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to policy #249, Video Recording of Students, which was before the board on a first-read basis. See enclosure #37. Mr. Orlow asked if the policy was limited to recording students on buses. Mr. Bell noted that it was not limited to busing but also included educational and extra and co-curricular recording and the security recording system at the high school. Dr. Cotter noted that the policy had undergone an extensive review by the solicitor's office before being presented to the Board. He noted that the language included the taping of students for instructional and legal purposes. Mr. Slutsky questioned the second sentence of the second paragraph referring to the written consent of a student's parents before any filming may occur that may violate a student's privacy rights may occur. Dr. Cotter noted that the district employed a default agreement at the beginning of the year which provided parents an opportunity to refuse permission for students to be filmed or photographed. Mr. Slutsky asked if that policy had been approved by the solicitor's office. Mrs. Rothstein stated that was the case. Mr. Orlow inquired as to whether or not videotaping as part of a residency investigation was covered under the policy. Dr. Cotter noted that the policy included legal language referencing unbecoming behavior. Mr. Orlow asked how a student enrolling during the school year would be afforded the opportunity to sign the default release form. Dr. Cotter stated that the release was included in the registration packet for new students. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the policy on a first-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a lease between the district and the Head Start Program for a classroom at Conshohocken Elementary School. Mr. Orlow asked if this was a standard agreement. Mr. Bell reported that it was. He also noted that there was a slight increase in fees

and that language had been added with the hope of increasing communication between the two parties and giving the district more control over activities in the Head Start program that might adversely affect CE programs. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the lease agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider a request to send an un-chaperoned student to a national "Best Buddies" conference in Indiana from July 21 to July 24. Dr. Cotter noted that attendance at the conference is mandatory for the high school to maintain its charter in the organization. He stated that the advisor who had attended the conference last year reported that almost all activities were student-centered. Dr. Cotter added that the district had written permission from the student's parent for the student to attend the conference alone. Mrs. Luken noted that the schedule is quite full and the student would be busy until about 10:00 p.m. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the trip request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Olrow noted that the final items of new business before the board were three professional conference requests and asked the board to consider them in one motion. Mr. Orlow stated that the first request was for Pam Tice to attend a Core Plus Math Workshop Conference at Western Michigan University in July. The second request was for Lorraine DeRose to attend a Summer Literacy Institute at Yale University also in July. The final request was for Patricia Tamborello to attend the Annual National Association of College Admissions Counselors Conference in Pittsburgh in October. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that the second request was made by Dr. DeRosa for Christine Cotter to attend the Summer Literacy Institute. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit: Dr. Ryan reported that the recent IU meeting was held at the PaTTAN facility in Upper Merion. He noted that the facility received substantial federal funding and served approximately one third of the commonwealth. Dr. Ryan stated that the IU approved its non-public school budget of approximately \$10.5 million. He also mentioned that the special education budget was funded at \$7.2 million.

CMCAVTS: No Report

Personnel: Mr. Johnson presented the 2006-2007 Administrative Salaries, Non-Bargaining Unit Salaries, and Substitute Salaries and mentioned the Board had discussed the salaries in executive session. He noted that the salaries are available for public review in the office of the Director of Human Resources. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the salaries. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to approve the Superintendent's salary of \$156,184.05 with a one-time bonus of \$14,708.60 to be paid in July 2006. He noted the bonus represented 97% of Dr. Cotter's bonus capacity. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's salary. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Johnson requested that the Board approve the Assistant Superintendent's salary of \$133,316.19 with a one-time bonus of \$7,377.69 to be paid in July 2006. He noted the bonus represented 95% of Dr. Gorodetzer's bonus capacity. Mrs. Moore moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the Assistant Superintendent's salary. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow mentioned that the Board takes employee compensation very seriously and noted that all administrators' salaries were based with goal setting taking place at the beginning of each year.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve changes to the Hall Monitor benefits to provide equity with similar employee contracts in certain areas. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Finance: Mr. Slutsky noted that the recent property tax bill, which was not approved by the State House of Representatives, was actually a tax shift and provided meager relief to a limited number of people. He applauded the efforts of the suburban coalition of schools district in the lobbying effort. He stated that Colonial was one of eight original members of the coalition, and along with Lower Merion, was a driving force behind it. Mr. Slutsky noted that the coalition now included more than 20 school districts. He also stated that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association would shortly be releasing its own property tax proposal.

Curriculum: Mr. Davis reported that the committee met prior to the executive session. He asked Dr. Gorodetzer to report on the World Language Survey at the high school. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that Adam Bailey, Department Chair, presented the survey results to the committee. One hundred ninety-six students responded, and Dr. Gorodetzer noted it was recommended to continue the survey in the fall in an attempt to gain more feedback from students. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that more than half of the students believed there should be a World Language requirement for graduation. She stated that Mr. Bailey and Dr. Monica Sullivan were working to bring the high school and middle school programs more in line with each other. Mr. Davis reported that staffs from the high school and vo-tech school had met to discuss ways of increasing the academic performance of vo-tech students.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported that the Board had been working closely with Chestnut Hill College on a collaborative lease agreement that would enhance both athletic facilities and academic offerings in the district. See enclosure #43. She mentioned that the agreement called for the installation of two artificial surface playing fields, one in the stadium and one on Victory Fields #1. She asked Dr. Gorodetzer to elaborate on the academic aspects of the agreement. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that 12 representatives from the district had met with four representatives from the college on May 23, 2006 to discuss academic initiatives. She noted that two sub-committees were formed. One committee will focus on high school issues such as dual enrollment, college preparation, college-student mentors and the possibility of the college holding evening classes at PWHS. The second, K-12 committee, is to focus on issues such as teacher preparation. Mr. Orlow noted that the agreement had the potential to provide enrichment opportunities for all students but especially for the average student who is often overlooked. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the license agreement contingent upon the two parties agreeing to a field usage matrix. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow took the opportunity to thank Mr. Bell for his 13 years of service to the Colonial School District and the pride he brought to the district's facilities and grounds. Mr. Bell thanked the Board Members for the opportunity to serve the district and for their dedication to the district and its students.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles reminded the audience that graduation ceremonies will be held on June 15. He added that this year marked the 50th anniversary of the first-ever PWHS graduating class and that members of the Class of 1956 would be recognized at the graduation ceremony. Dr. Scoles noted that the CITV studios would undergo extensive renovation during the summer to modernize equipment. He reminded everyone that CITV had been switched to Channel 27 in Plymouth and Whitemarsh Townships and would be switched to Channel 27 in Conshohocken on June 20, 2006.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan stated he had attended a breakfast with Mr. Slutsky and applauded Mr. Slutsky for personally lobbying State Representative Kate Harper regarding proposed property tax legislation. He added that the state had yet to approve a 2006-2007 budget and that the Governor was researching the possibility of furloughing state employees. Dr. Ryan also touched on several legislative proposals that would change the Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gerald E. Berger
Assistant School Board Secretary