

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, MAY 18, 2006.**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:12 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on May 18, 2006.

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

**Board Members Absent:** Steven Slutsky

**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; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator; Kim Newell, Assistant Director of CITV; Jessica Klein and Angela D'Alessandro, Board Student Representatives; Robert Fahler, Principal, CMA; Rachel Weiss; Joy Miernicki; Jen Fitzgerald; Caitlin Szymanik; students receiving certificates of achievement, their coaches/sponsors, families and friends.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 05/18/2006 before the general meeting to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

Mr. Orlow recognized Dr. Cotter who introduced the presenters of the student awards. Tonia Kaufman, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) Band Director, introduced members of the indoor drum line, indoor guard and jazz band, all of whom had won cavalcade championships. She also introduced students earning honors for Montco Band, PMEA District Band, PMEA District and Region Band, PMEA District Chorus, PMEA District and Region Chorus, PMEA District Orchestra, Montco Honors String Orchestra; PMEA District and Region Band and All-State Wind Ensemble. Robert Lorence, PWHS Wrestling Coach, introduced members of his Suburban One American Conference Championship Team. Mr. Sherman presented Coach Lorence with a School Board proclamation and a citation from the Pennsylvania State Senate, which congratulated Coach Lorence on his recent induction into the Pennsylvania Wrestling Hall of Fame and other career accomplishments. A complete list of the students recognized is attached to these minutes as Attachment #1. A copy of the School Board proclamation to Coach Lorence is attached to these minutes as Attachment #2.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked the Board Members to direct their attention to the minutes of the work session of 04/17/2006, the general meeting of 04/20/2006, the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 05/04/2006, the Personnel Committee of 05/04/2006, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 05/08/2006 and the Curriculum Committee of 05/08/2006. See enclosures #1 through #3 and #60 through #63 of the agenda. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis 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 April 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 and the Budgetary/Deficit Status Report and the Treasurer's Report for the month ending 04/30/2006, as shown in enclosures #4 through #15. There was an inquiry about three bills from Preferred Construction Services that had been submitted in the same month. Mr. Bickleman explained that the contractor had held a couple of the bills and then submitted them all together for payment. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore 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:** Mr. Fahler presented a Power Point on the middle school's 2005-06 climate goals of reducing the number of student disciplinary actions and further improving the school's upbeat atmosphere by rewarding positive behavior. The focus was a discipline database that was funded by the School Board. He detailed how the database was used and how it streamlined the accounting of student discipline forms. Mr. Fahler stated that the efficiency of the database was one contributing factor in a significant reduction of discipline reporting and student detentions from the previous year. Mr. Orlow asked if the database was a commercial product or had been created in-house. Mr. Fahler cited middle school teacher Jerome Joyce and the district's Chief Information Officer, Drew Boegly, for working collaboratively with an outside vendor to create the database. Dr. Cotter noted that he was impressed with the improved climate and focus on instruction in the middle school. Mr. Fahler and Dr. Cotter both mentioned that a larger number of students had been recognized at the school's academic awards ceremony than in years past.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on two policies before the Board on a second read basis. The first policy, #217, concerned the district's Diploma Policy that was adjusted to reflect the earning of college credit while in attendance at PWHS. The policy can be found in enclosure #16 of the agenda. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the policy. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow stated that the second policy, #816 on Cellular Telephone Utilization, was necessary given the size of the district and the number of individuals now using cellular phones and other electronic communication devices. See enclosure #17 of the agenda. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policy. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow noted that an invoice for the Board's 2006-2007 dues to the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) had been received. He spoke of the important services that the PSBA provided and singled out the importance of lobbying during the current property tax debate. The invoice and corresponding letter from Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director of the PSBA, can be found in enclosure #18 of the agenda. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve payment of the dues. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a request from an anonymous donor to purchase a six-station Water Boy Drinking System for the PWHS Football Team at an approximate cost of \$900. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept the gift. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider accepting a \$3,000 Department of Education mini-grant funded through House Bill 2775 involving environmental and ecological activities. He asked Dr. Cotter to explain the grant. Dr. Cotter noted that the grant had originally been written to have students visit the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine, NJ for wetlands and ecosystem studies and research but had later been modified to pursue similar activities in a wetland environment in Upper Merion Township. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to accept the grant funds. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Bickleman was seeking Board acceptance of a \$500 donation from Verizon in recognition of volunteer work conducted at Plymouth Elementary School. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the company was making the gift to honor one of its employees who had volunteered at the school. Mr. Orlow asked if there were any conditions to accepting the gift. Dr. Cotter stated that there were not. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Moore 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 detailed his report which included personnel actions, changes to the substitute list and staffing requests for Secondary Summer School and the Summer Elementary Reading Programs. He noted the addition of a full-time tax collector, an additional retirement, the appointment of a Director of Operations and a slight adjustment in the salary of the summer school director as changes from Monday's meeting. See enclosures #19 through #21. Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Bickleman how many retirements were anticipated in the preparation of the 2006-2007 Budget. Mr. Bickleman noted that the figures needed to be adjusted for the latest retirement. 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. D'Alessandro informed Board Members that the Freshman Fling and Junior Prom has been held and were well received by the students. She also happily noted that Advanced Placement exams were completed. Ms. D'Alessandro noted that the PWPrep committee, formed to assist in the five-year plan to reform PWHS, had met with student representation. She noted the successful "soph" hop and the junior class trip to Mermaid Lake that is scheduled for June 10. Ms. Klein stated that elections for the sophomore and junior classes had been held and elections for the freshman class were scheduled to take place the next day. She noted that the senior prom and the post prom party were scheduled for 06/02/2006 and commented on concerts in support of several clubs. Ms. Klein concluded her report by noting that the Senior Awards Assembly was scheduled for 06/06/2006.

Mr. Orlow reported that the Board had interviewed students to fill the Board Student Representative position being vacated by the graduating seniors. He stated that he would like the student representatives to alternately attend the School Board meetings and the Community Relations and Student Life committee meetings beginning with the next school year. He noted that the committee meeting was less formal but offered the opportunity for more input into decision making processes. Mrs. Klein stated she thought the idea would be well received.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow noted that May was the time of year that the Board makes a number of annual appointments, including the election of a Treasurer and a Board Secretary for the 2006-2007 school year. Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Bickleman had served as Treasurer for a number of years and was again recommended for the position at an annual rate of \$8,848. Ms. Luken moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the appointment. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Bell, who had served as the Board's Secretary for many years, was retiring and a replacement was needed. He stated that Mr. Sherman was recommended to assume the secretarial duties at an annual rate of \$3,500. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the appointment. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow also noted that Board Policy required the appointment of Student Board Representatives. He stated that the Board had interviewed Lawrence Ogunkua and Philip Weisgold prior to Monday's meeting. Mr. Orlow reiterated his recommendation that the students alternate attending the School Board general meeting and the Community Relations and Student Life Committee meeting. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the appointments. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow stated that that Board needed to designate one or more banks or trust companies as depositories for its funds. He asked the Board to consider action on the banks as one item.

Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Bickleman had recommended having Wachovia Bank continue as the school district depository for its school funds and the approval of TD Banknorth, N.A. (Hudson Bank) as a public depository for "pass-through" wire deposits and account withdrawals as per enclosure #22. He also called the Board's attention to a list of investment banks, trusts and savings and loan institutions that are recommended for solicitation of interest rates for school investments during the 2006-2007 school year. The list can be found in enclosure #23 of the agenda. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the recommended institutions. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a list of federal program allocations, found in enclosure #64 of the agenda. Dr. Cotter noted that the Title I funding was still outstanding. Mr. Orlow stated that board action on approving the federal program monies would be deferred until the June meeting when information on both Title I and Title II funding should be available.

Mr. Orlow informed the Board members that Dr. Gorodetzer had presented a list of textbooks recommended for adoption and utilization during the 2006-2007 year. See enclosure #24. He noted that Board action would approve the titles and not the expenditure of funds to purchase the text books. Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the list. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action to approve policy #217.1, a revision to the District Graduation Policy, which establishes the criterion for special education student participation in commencement ceremonies. The policy was before the members on a first-read basis. See enclosure #25. Board members asked if the policy embodied current practice. Mrs. DeLong confirmed that that was the case. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policy. On a roll call vote, all vote in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that there was a series of contracts before the Board for approval. The first contract, found in enclosure #26, was for trash disposal over a three-year period. Mr. Orlow asked if the bid was obtained through cooperative bidding with the county intermediate unit. Mr. Bickleman confirmed that that was the case. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the contact. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on the contract with Connect Ed: NTI Group for a communications service, which would allow the district to contact parents and staff in a matter of minutes should the need arise. The agreement can be found in enclosure #37. Mr. Orlow noted that the contract had been reviewed extensively by the Community Relations and Student Life Committee and that changes to the contract that were requested on Monday evening had been made. He asked Mr. Boegly what the timeframe was for installation of the product, if approved. Mr. Boegly noted that the installation would take approximately three weeks and that another two weeks would be needed for staff training. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all but Dr. Ryan voted in favor. Dr. Ryan voted in opposition. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a contract for Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit's Data Processing Contracted Services. See enclosure #28. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the contact. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a contract with Barbacane and Thornton to provide auditing services for a three-year period. The proposal can be found in enclosure #39 of the agenda. He noted that the contract represented a renewal and that the firm had done a superb job for the district in the past. Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow called the Board's attention to a series of special education programming agreements. He stated that the first agreement with the Montgomery County Intermediate unit was for the purpose of purchasing a number of slots for special education placement based on expected usage. He noted that the expense, which was greater than \$500,000 represented a major special education cost. See enclosure #65. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested that the Board consider agreements with The Glen Mills Schools and the Delaware Valley Mental Health Foundations as one item. See enclosures #30 and #33. He mentioned that the contracts were programming for students identified and approved for alternative education placements. Dr. Cotter stated that the Glen Mills agreement was for two regular education students and that the Delaware Valley MHF placements were for students with IEP's. Mr. Orlow stated that board approval for the Delaware Valley MHF placements would be contingent on solicitor and administration approval of contract language. Ms. Luken moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked that the Board consider an extended school year services proposal at Plymouth Elementary School and a pilot summer reading program for selected special education students as one item. The proposals can be found in enclosures # 31 and #32. Board members noted that the proposals represented forward thinking on how to provide better services more efficiently. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the programs. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a request brought for PWHS students to participate in a smoking study, details of which can be found in enclosure #35. Mr. Orlow asked if participation in the study was voluntary. Dr. Cotter confirmed that participation was the option of each student and that parental approval was required. He also noted that confidentiality was assured and stated

that members of the Class of 2010 would be involved in the study. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve participation in the study. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action in a single motion on a request for an exchange student from Belgium to attend PWS for the 2006-2007 school year under the sponsorship of the ERDT/SHARE High School Exchange Program and a request for several students to participate in the National Technology Student Association competition held in Dallas, Texas from June 21 through 25. See enclosures #36 and #37. Mr. Orlow asked if the district had any experience with the organization sponsoring the exchange student. Dr. Cotter said that the district had no prior experience with that particular exchange program but was familiar with the family with whom the student would be staying. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve both requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a professional conference request for three psychologists to attend a conference in Atlantic City on July 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The request can be found in enclosure #37 of the agenda. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Zimmer left the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Mr. Orlow stated that the final item of new business before the Board was the approval of a series of bid requests. He asked the Board to consider the first three items pertaining to the ordering annual supplies for instructional purposes, physical education and athletic supplies for the middle school and computer supplies and copy paper together. See enclosures #38 through #45. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all present voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that that next bid up for approval was for lighting retrofit and lighting control equipment for installation in the CES gymnasium and cafeteria 100 at PWS. The bids can be found in enclosure #46. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all present voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Zimmer rejoined the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Mr. Orlow asked that the next two bids, found in enclosures #47 and #48, for enclosing and air conditioning the libraries at Plymouth Elementary and Whitemarsh Elementary Schools be considered as one item. He noted that the changes would provide properly equipped instructional space in these buildings similar to what was already available in the district's other elementary schools. 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 asked the Board to consider the bids for boiler replacement at Plymouth Elementary and Colonial Elementary together. See enclosures #49 and #50. Mrs. Moore reported that the payback on the district's investment in the new boilers was five years at Plymouth Elementary School and six years at Colonial Elementary School. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the bids. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that the final bid up for approval was for the purchase of a grand piano for the high school. The bid can be found in enclosure #51. Mr. Orlow noted that the piano being replaced was not the large concert piano in the auditorium, but rather the piano housed in the audion. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the bid. 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 after some effort to reach an adequate number of board members to achieve a quorum, the IU Board voted to approve the 2006-2007 operating budget.

CMCAVTS: No Report

Personnel: Mr. Johnson asked Mrs. DeLong to explain the Transition Coordinator position approved for PWHS. Mrs. DeLong noted that the part-time position was for assisting special needs students with making the move from secondary education into the post-secondary world, be that the work force or continuing education. Mr. Johnson noted that an additional teaching position was being added at Ridge Park Elementary School in recognition of increased class size in second grade. Mr. Berger noted that the increase in a teaching position would be offset, in part, by the elimination of a classroom aide. Mr. Johnson stated that a four-year contract agreement had been reached with the Colonial Food Services bargaining unit. Mr. Orlow noted that the contract represented a good result for all involved and cited the work of Mr. Berger in achieving that end. The contract called for pay increases of 3.25% in year one and 3.5% in each of the three remaining years as well as an increased contribution for health insurance. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion carried.

Curriculum and Instruction: Mr. Davis recapped the minutes of the committee meeting and highlighted efforts to adjust the curriculum at the Center for Technical Studies to improve student achievement, purchase health books at the elementary level, participate in a minority achievement consortium and use IDEA funds to pilot the summer reading and extended school year programs approved earlier in the meeting.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore provided a status report on the proposed collaboration between the district and Chestnut Hill College in facilities and educational programming and staff development. She also spoke of the project bids approved earlier in the meeting and the district cooperation with Conshohocken Borough to manage storm water run-off from Conshohocken Elementary School and sidewalk repairs. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to donate obsolete and non-functional technology equipment to a local not-for-profit that refurbished it for use by local low-income families. Mr. Orlow sought and received assurance that the refurbished equipment would be available for interested district families. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles informed the board of a request from the William Jeanes Library asking the district to donate to them a computer that was scheduled for replacement. Dr. Scoles moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to direct Mr. Boegly to fulfill the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Orlow felt that the district should make the same offer to the libraries in Conshohocken and Plymouth Township. Dr. Scoles added that Comcast Cable would be switching CITV from channel 16 to Channel 27 on June 12 and

from Channel 3 to Channel 27 on June 20. He concluded by reminding the Board and public that the June Board meeting had been moved from June 15, 2006 to June 12, 2006 so as to not interfere with the PWHS graduation. Mr. Orlow added that the July 17, 2006 Board work session had been canceled.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan noted the defeat of 17 incumbents during the 2006 primary election. He used a recent edition of a local newspaper to highlight the fact that slots revenue would benefit a number of causes before it would benefit public education. Mr. Orlow reported that he had asked local legislators what came before public education in the distribution of gaming funds and that legislators seemed unable to provide specifics.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M Bell  
Board Secretary

(Sherman)