

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, February 15, 2007.**

President Orlow convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:31 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on February 15, 2007.

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

**Board Members Absent:** William Ryan and Mitch Zimmer.

**Also Attending:** Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Gerald E. Berger, Director of Human Resources; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; John Quinn, Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Angela D'Alessandro and Lawrence Ogunkua, Board Student Representatives; Tom Sigafos; Katie Renner; Linda Colantonio.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 01/18/2007, 02/07/2007 and 02/12/2007 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to review the minutes of the Finance Committee, the Curriculum Committee and the Work Session of 01/16/2007, the General Meeting of 01/18/2007, the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee of 02/07/2007 and the Community Relations and Student Life Committee (CRSL) of 02/08/2007. See enclosures #39, #1 through #3, #40 through #42 and #45. Dr. Scoles moved and Mrs. Moore 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 on the list for approval. 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 01/31/2007, as shown in enclosures #4 through #15.

Mr. Orlow questioned the nature of a yellow page addition to the Reconciliation of Cash Accounts. Mr. Bickleman explained that a bank statement was received late and the update simply balanced the account. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mrs. Luken 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:** Ridge Park Elementary School (RP) Principal Tom Sigafos provided information on the "Dream, Reach, Succeed" award program being implemented in the school. The program allows principals and teachers to recognize and honor students who model the "Eight Conditions That Make a Difference." The conditions are belonging, heroes, sense of accomplishment, fun and excitement, curiosity and creativity, spirit of adventure, leadership and responsibility and confidence to take action. Recognition is based on student effort, citizenship, and success at school, home and in the community. See attachment A for a copy of Mr. Sigafos' report.

Mr. Orlow inquired as to how Mr. Sigafos learned of this program. Mr. Sigafos explained that he was part of the National Association of Elementary School Principals' committee that drafted the program in conjunction with The Hershey Company and the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow asked the members to take action on three policies that were before the Board on a second-read basis. He stated that the primary change to the first policy, By-Laws, #001 and Committee Functions, #004, included the creation of a new Board-level committee on Safety and Wellness. See enclosure #16. Mr. Davis moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the policy on a second-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow announced that Mr. Zimmer would chair the committee.

The second policy is District Wide Parental Involvement, #121. See enclosure #17. Mr. Orlow noted that the policy was required by the No Child Left Behind Act for those schools accepting Title I funding. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the policy on a second-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

The third policy is School Facilities and Equipment, #707. See enclosure #18. Mr. Orlow reminded the members that they decided on Monday to return the policy to the Facilities Management and Transportation (FMT) Committee for revisions. He noted that the administration is conducting further analysis to determine the cost to the district in scheduling, billing, custodial work and field maintenance for the extensive use of district facilities by community groups.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow stated that Board approval is requested to accept a check in the amount of \$2,300 from Robert J. Wentz, Jr., Secretary of the Trustees Under the Deed of Trust of Joshua Morris. The gift is to be used by the district for the education of students. See enclosure #20. He noted that this was an annual gift. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to accept the gift. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Bickleman is requesting Board acceptance of the independent audit report for June 30, 2006 prepared by Barbacane Thornton and Company. See enclosure #21. Mr. Slutsky noted that the report was reviewed by the Finance Committee. He also cited the outstanding work of the Finance Office. Mr. Slutsky moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to accept the audit report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a request from Plymouth Whitemarsh High School science teacher Sabina McNally to receive a donation of several pieces of equipment from Wyeth Laboratories. The equipment includes a floor shaker incubator, a spectrophotometer, a PCR machine and a bench top incubator. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the donation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked that the administration send thank you notes to both of the donors.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter outlined his report which included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the proposed Extra Duty/Extra Pay List, a report on Secondary Summer School for 2007 and a report on the Elementary Literacy Summer Program for 2007. See enclosures #22 through #25. He noted that among the additions to the 14 Personnel Report actions from Monday was the resignation of Mr. Sigafos as RP principal. He added that there were eight additions to the substitute list. He also referred members to the yellow page regarding the addition of a 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys' lacrosse coaching position. See enclosure #23a. Dr. Cotter asked Dr. Gorodetzer to report on the summer programs.

Dr. Gorodetzer stated that a series of elementary literacy programs would be held including: the Primary Grade Community Summer Reading Program held at RP for students entering grades 1-3; the Intermediate Summer Reading Program held at Conshohocken Elementary (CE) for students entering grades 4-6; and the Primary Grades Summer Reading Program also held at CE for students entering grades 1-3. She noted that the program at RP was open to all district residents and is designed for students who want to maintain their reading skills. She stated that the programs at CE were for district students based upon the recommendation of the reading teacher, their classroom teacher or the building principal. The fee for each program is \$150, though Title I funding is available to students in the CE programs if needed. Dr. Gorodetzer reported that the secondary program will run from June 25 through July 26, 2007. Courses offered will be identified as student needs are evaluated. A reading specialist may also be included in the positions posted to address reading and basics skills that may be woven into courses.

Mr. Orlow inquired as to the number of students participating in the boys' lacrosse program and whether or not they were all on the same team. Dr. Cotter stated that there were varying levels of ability similar to varsity and junior varsity teams in other sports.

Mr. Orlow asked if there were Title IX implications in adding an additional men's coach. Considerable discussion on the numbers of students participating in boys' and girls' lacrosse ensued. Mrs. Luken explained that the girls had the same opportunity to have a ninth grade team and there was a girls' ninth grade coaching position already established.

Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Gorodetzer if transportation was provided for the summer reading and secondary programs. She reported that it was not and that the lack of transportation had not previously been an issue.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the Superintendent's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Mr. Ogunkua stated that the second semester had begun and the winter sports seasons were winding down. He reported that the indoor track teams had qualified for the state championships, the boys' basketball and swimming teams were entering the district playoffs and the bowling team was competing in Suburban One League and state championships. Ms. D'Alessandro stated that a Valentine's Day dance was recently held and that junior boys were auctioned off to carry books for girls. She said over \$900 was raised to benefit the Make a Wish Foundation and needy district families. She also reported the practice was underway for the spring musical Annie.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider a revision to the policy, Testing for Controlled Substances and Alcohol, #451.1, before the members on a first-read basis. See enclosure #26. Mr. Orlow noted that the policy had been reviewed by the FMT Committee and on Monday evening. Dr. Scoles made a comment on the threshold levels on page 12, specifically as they referred to Blood/Alcohol levels. Mr. Yemm noted that the levels will be discussed in committee but that they were tied to Commercial Driver's License regulations. Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the policy revisions on a first-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the request for funding of the Summer Consortium for the Arts Program. See enclosure #27. The program provides enrichment opportunities for students who are interested in the arts and who have completed grades 5-12. Mr. Orlow noted that the requested funding of \$6,300 was consistent with years past. He also reiterated his comment from Monday evening that the district would not be providing transportation this year because of funding restrictions imposed by

Act 1. Mrs. Moore moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the funding. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a recommended settlement agreement involving a special education student and an alternative placement for a regular education student. He noted that both cases had been reviewed in executive session. Mr. Davis 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 the Board to consider a Professional Conference Request for PWHS Social Studies teacher Brian Costello to attend the National Council for History Education in Williamsburg, Va., from April 12-14, 2007. He noted that the high school administration supports the request and that professional development funds will be used. Dr. Scoles moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the conference request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested that the members take six student trip requests as one item. The trips are for the Marching Colonials to perform at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Va., from May 19-21, 2007; Colonial Middle School students to participate in the Marine Science Consortium in Wallops Island, Va., from May 2-5, 2007; two PWHS students to attend the PMEA Regional Choral Festival at Springfield High School from Feb. 22-24, 2007; PWHS students to attend the Future Business Leaders of America state competition in Hershey, Pa., from April 30 to May 2, 2007, the PWHS girls' lacrosse team to train in Florida over spring break from March 30 to April 5, 2007 and the PWHS Indoor Guard to participate in a Cavalcade Indoor Drill Association at Cinnaminson High School in New Jersey on March 17.

Dr. Cotter noted that the Indoor Guard trip was an addition from Monday's meeting. He stated that Board approval was requested since out-of-state travel was involved. He reported that the other trips were of an annual nature with locations of the Marching Colonials trip and the regional chorus changing each year.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the student trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik noted that the Board had acted on Disciplinary Stipulation #97310 on Monday evening. He asked the members to approve the repository sale of Parcel #49-00-04110-04-04 as detailed in a memo from Mr. Bickleman to Dr. Cotter. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the sale. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: No report.

CMCAVTS: Mr. Johnson reported that the last scheduled meeting was cancelled because of snow.

Personnel: Mrs. Luken stated that enrollment projections have remained steady the past several months and that the committee has discussed the fluctuating need for special education services in the district. She reported that potential staffing needs have been addressed in the preliminary budget including a new math position at the high school and a special education position at Whitmarsh Elementary School. She added that Mr. Berger and his staff will begin attending job fairs in March.

Mr. Orlow noted that a negotiations session between the Board and the teachers' union had been postponed because of inclement weather.

Finance: Mr. Slutsky reported that the Finance Committee met on Feb. 7 and discussed a rate for an Act 1 earned income tax. He stated that since the responsibility for any shortfall in collections would

be borne by the district, they are leaning toward a conservative 0.7 percent increase rather than the 0.6 percent recommended by the Local Tax Study Commission. He noted that the committee also discussed the various resolutions the Board was required to enact. He added that there would be a meeting on March 12 at which the Board will authorize the Act 1 ballot question.

Mr. Orlow reminded the audience of the district's Local Tax Study Commission recommendation of a 0.6% EIT increase and urged public feedback on the issue. He also asked Mr. Sultanik if the Board could publicize its opinion of the ballot question. Considerable discussion ensued as to what extent the district could utilize the non-legal interpretive stated to be written in conjunction with the county election board. Mr. Sultanik noted that it was the opinion of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association that school boards do not take a position on the ballot question.

Curriculum: Mr. Davis noted that the minutes of the Feb. 12 meeting were not yet available. He stated the Dr. Lorraine DeRosa and Dr. Gorodetzer reported on the summer literacy programs. He noted that a presentation was made on the career counseling program at PWHS and that the committee heard a proposal to reorganize the PWHS emotional support program. Dr. Gorodetzer added that Dr. Monica Sullivan and new PWHS career counselor Stacy Anderson detailed the initiatives taking place under the \$180,000 PDE career counseling grant. Among the projects was a non-traditional college fair.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore noted that the new athletic training room in PWHS will be open in the next two weeks, new lighting has been installed at the Plymouth Elementary School parking lot improving security and Whitmarsh Township has granted waivers of land development for the installation of artificial surfaces on Colonial Field and Victory Fields #1. She also detailed the study of district facilities usage and the follow-up to determine the district's cost for scheduling, billing and custodial services.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles reported on the Board's Feb. 6 town meeting to get community feedback on an Act 1 ballot question. He stated that community members could still provide feedback through the district's online poll. He provided members with results of the poll to date. Dr. Scoles reminded senior citizens of the upcoming senior luncheon and matinee performance of the spring musical. He also stated that the next parents' council meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Orlow noted that the survey results seemed to follow the expected trend of senior citizens voting in favor of an earned income tax and those with higher salaries wanting no new tax.

Legislation: No report

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary