

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, JULY 20, 2006.**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:09 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on July 20, 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; 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. Sultnik, Solicitor; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Frances Zeock; Michael Zeock, Jill Forster, Tom Kuestner.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 06/12/2006, 07/17/2006 and 07/20/2006 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked Board Members to review and approve the minutes of the Curriculum Committee of 06/12/2006, the General Meeting of 06/12/2006 and the Finance Committee of 07/06/2006. See enclosures #1 through #3. He also noted that minutes of the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 07/06/2006 and the Personnel Committee of 07/17/2006 were before members as yellow pages. Mr. Berger stated that a correction needed to be made to the General Meeting minutes to reflect that the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent bonuses were approved for July 2006 and not July 2007. 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 June 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 06/30/2006, as shown in enclosures #4 through #15. He also noted that an update to the Bond Fund Report was before Board Members as a yellow page. Mr. Orlow questioned why disbursements for "Application 1" appeared on the Bills for Approval list pertaining to the Facilities Management Center and athletic training room project for a second consecutive month. Mr. Bickleman explained that "Application 1" could refer to two different components of the project as they were all listed together. Mr. Orlow requested that individual projects be separated for the purpose of clarity. He also questioned disbursements for the full-day kindergarten project at Whitmarsh Elementary School that was completed in 2004. Mr. Yemm explained that a change of business owners and bookkeepers resulted in a delay of payment. Mr. Slutsky moved and Dr. Ryan 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:** Jim Haig, Lincoln Academy Center (LAC) Director of Community Programs, and Beth Mueller, Director of Financial Operations, presented an annual review of the center's services to the Colonial School District and educational program housed in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School. Mr. Haig detailed the support services to at-risk students, the crisis response program and the alternative school Lincoln Academy at PWHS, formerly know as the Genesis program. A copy of the LAC report can be found in enclosure #16 of the agenda.

Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Haig if the mentoring program he referenced was new. Mr. Haig explained that the program had been in operation for a number of years but had seen a drop off in participation. He stated that the program was recently re-introduced and now has 20-25 teachers participating. Mr. Orlow referenced regional and national school crisis and inquired as to how referrals to the LAC program were handled. Mrs. DeLong noted that the referral system was a collaborative process among teachers, counselors, LAC staff, parents and more. She stated that anyone could make a referral including the individuals themselves. She added that all referrals receive follow-up attention.

**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 the Board on a second-read basis. See enclosure #17. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the policy clarified the practice already in place. Dr. Cotter also reminded the board that approval of the policy was deferred at the June meeting because the necessary timeline for approval had not been achieved since the first reading on May 18. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Johnson 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 Board would defer action on policy #249, Video Recording of Students found in enclosure #18, pending further review by the administration and the solicitor.

**Correspondence:** None

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter led Board Members through his report which included a Waiver of Return from Sabbatical and the Personnel Report, which included approximately 36 actions. The Personnel Report can be found in enclosure #19 of the agenda with an update in the yellow pages. Dr. Cotter asked the Board to take action on the waiver request first. Mr. Orlow noted that the request had been reviewed by the Personnel Committee and by the Board in executive session. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the waiver request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow inquired as to the status of teaching positions remaining to be filled. Mr. Berger noted that one and one half special education positions were open at the high school as well as one full-time special education position, a French position and a music position at the middle school. He stated that interviews had been conducted for those positions and recommendations would be forthcoming. Mr. Berger also noted that one elementary special education position had just been posted. Mr. Orlow asked if they were any hot spots regarding enrollment for the upcoming school year. Mr. Berger noted that the administration was keeping an eye on the second grade enrollment at Whitmarsh Elementary school but that class sizes were currently acceptable and the school principal was satisfied. Mr. Bickleman confirmed for Mr. Orlow that flexibility

remained in the budget to cover the positions. Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Johnson 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:** None

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow noted that a list of physicians and dentists with specified rates for services to be provided during the 2006-2007 school year was before the Board for approval. See enclosure #20. Mr. Orlow inquired as to whether or not any of the physicians were new to the district. Dr. Cotter and Mrs. DeLong said that all of the physicians had been retained by the district last year. Mrs. DeLong noted that Dr. Christine Stullcamp, of the Colonial Physicians Group, had been retained by the district during the previous year and that for the purposes of flexibility the administration was seeking approval of all doctors within that group this year. She confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the physicians were retained to perform student and employee physicals and examinations. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the list of physicians and dentists. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider two requests for early admission to Kindergarten. He noted that the students had been recommended for admission by district staff in compliance with Board Policy #201 and that students were not identified for privacy purposes. See enclosure #20. Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Cotter to explain the early admission process. Dr. Cotter stated that the district received requests from parents who feel their child possesses the social, emotional and intellectual capacity to begin school early. He stated that the child then is screened by a school psychologist. Mrs. DeLong added that the applicant is first screened by a guidance counselor before a full evaluation is performed. She also noted that the birthdays of the two applicants were within a week of the district's registration cutoff date. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the early admission requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow stated that Board authorization was requested for a number of special education placements. He asked members to consider placements in Ambler Day School, Eagle Hill School and Quaker School of Horsham, Wyncote Academy, Delaware Valley Friends School and Foundations Behavioral Health also known as the Lifeworks Alternative School as one item. See enclosures #22 through #26. Mrs. DeLong detailed the placements for the Board. Mr. Orlow noted that the Board was about to make a decision on special education placements less than two months before the start of the school year. He stated that the newly enacted property tax reform legislation, Act 1, requires school districts to adopt budgets four months earlier than was previously the case. He said that the requirement was just one part of the new legislation that will make the school budget process more difficult and will require more guesswork to predict expenses. Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the special education placements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a request to increase school lunch prices by 10 cents. See enclosure #27. He stated that the goal of the district is for the food service operation to pay for itself. However, he noted that the revenue from the lunch prices did not cover the cost of the food service operation. Mr. Bickleman stated that a \$26,100 loss was projected without a price increase for the 2006-2007 school year and that the increase in lunch prices would boost revenue by \$49,000. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the lunch price increase. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a request for four to seven students to attend the Pennsylvania Association of Student Council State Conference in Bethel Park, Pa., during the first week in November. See enclosure #28. Mr. Orlow noted that students had previously attended the Pennsylvania School Boards Association conference and inquired if the two activities were related. Dr. Cotter stated that the two organizations were independent but that there may be an overlap in student participation. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the trip request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow directed the Board's attention to a bid request involving television equipment before them as a yellow page. The bid is for replacement and upgrades to equipment in the Colonial Instructional Television studios. Mr. Orlow inquired as to why two of the three bidders declined to bid on the project. Dr. Cotter explained that the district wanted a comprehensive vendor to provide all of the requested equipment and the staff training for that equipment. Mr. Yemm added that only one vendor was large enough to represent all of the brands of equipment requested in the bid. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the bid was well within the \$350,000 budgeted for the project on the bond fund. Mr. Orlow asked how the administration estimated the cost of the equipment. Mr. Johnson stated that the individual equipment items were on the state bid list. Mr. Yemm assured Mr. Orlow that the equipment would be delivered and installed before the start of the school year. Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Dr. Cotter stated that a student accident insurance item was before the Board as a yellow page. Mr. Orlow noted that Board action was requested to approve a bid to provide this coverage. The Board considered deferring action pending further review but it was noted that fall sports practices began prior to the next board meeting. After considerable discussion, Mr. Yemm explained that the product was bid by the Intermediate Unit and that the same company was providing the same coverage at the same price as adopted for the 2005-2006 school year. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the student accident insurance. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik requested board approval of disciplinary stipulation #11125 and an assessment appeal which improved the market value of the property at 5165 campus drive. Mr. Orlow noted that both items had been discussed in executive session. Mr. Sultanik asked for separate motions on the items. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the disciplinary stipulation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the assessment appeal. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow spoke about the Act 1 property tax reform bill and the requirements it placed on school districts. He stated that the district was required to form a Local Tax Study Commission which would make a recommendation on a ballot question to adopt either an earned income tax or a personal income tax to further supplement property tax relief. Mr. Orlow noted that the commission was to consist of five, seven or nine residents. Mr. Sultanik added that those who paid district property tax but lived outside of the district could also serve on the commission.

Mr. Orlow directed the administration to seek applicants for the position through newspaper advertising, announcements on the district web site and e-mail distribution list and by sending letters to members of the Act 72 Citizen's Advisory Committee. He also recommended that no board members serve on the committee.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: Dr. Ryan stated that he attended his final meeting as a member of the IU Board and was presented with a certificate for his service. He noted that Mr. Zimmer would be replacing him on the IU Board. He stated that the IU approved nominal increases for its administrators and reduced hours for assistants.

CMCAVTS: No Report

Personnel: Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion for the Board to approve amended contracts for the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to reflect benefits consistent with the CASEA Agreement and the addition of a 457 Plan. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Finance: Mr. Slutsky noted that the committee had discussed the lunch price increase and the implications of Act 1 which had already been covered in the meeting.

Curriculum: Mr. Davis called the Board's attention to the minutes of the June 12 Curriculum Committee meeting found in enclosure #1.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion requesting Board approval of an amended contract with Sague Transportation which states that the district will provide the fuel necessary for the vendor to fulfill its obligation to the district at a cost of \$1.80 per gallon at the district's pumping station. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mrs. Moore noted that the committee was pleased that there was interest in the proposed Site Watch program which would involve collaboration among the district and its three municipalities in monitoring and supervising facilities useage. She noted that the summer building projects were on schedule and stated that the lighting retrofit in PWHS and CES would increase output 40 percent while saving 60 percent on energy costs.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles stated that the district calendar would be mailed in August to students' families and seniors on the Gold Card list. He noted that the Colonial Players Alumni would be presenting the musical "Into the Woods" July 27 through July 30 and that Plymouth Township Day would be held on July 22.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan noted that the state general assembly approved its budget on July 2. He encouraged voters to exercise their right to vote on the EIT or PIT tax question required by Act 1.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
School Board Secretary