

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, JUNE 21, 2007.**

Vice President Johnson convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:01 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on June 21, 2007.

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

**Board Members Absent:** Marc Orlow

**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; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; David Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Jerold A. Glick; David Reppert.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked Dr. Cotter about awards for the Colonial Middle School (CMS) 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys' Baseball Team. Dr. Cotter noted that Board Awards had been provided to the team prior to the end of the school year for compiling an unbeaten 12-0 season. The awards were listed on the agenda to be included in the official record of the Board.

Mr. Johnson announced that the Board had met in executive session on 05/23/2007, 06/06/2007, 06/20/2007 and before the general meeting to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the minutes of the work session of 05/14/2007, the general meeting of 05/17/2007, the special meeting of 05/24/2007, the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee and the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 06/07/2007, The Curriculum Committee of 06/12/2007, the Human Resources Committee of 06/07/2007 and the Finance Committee of 06/13/2007. See enclosures #1 through #6 and #44 through #45 of the agenda. Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider the financial reports for May 2007. 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 05/31/2007, as shown in enclosures #7 through #18. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Johnson noted that Randi Marmer, Community Relations Coordinator of Tru Mark Credit Union, has informed the district of Tru Mark's donation of \$500 to the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) DECA Chapter to defray costs to attend the

National DECA Competition. See enclosure #19. Dr. Cotter confirmed for Mr. Johnson that Tru Mark planned to sponsor a student-operated bank in PWHS. Mr. Johnson asked for Board acceptance of the gift. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the donation. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked for Board action on a request from Colonial Elementary School Principal Terese Boegly to accept the donation of a half-size cello valued at approximately \$800. See enclosure #20. Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept the gift. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter detailed his report which included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the list of Long Term Substitutes, the designation of three Master Teachers, a request for an additional teacher for the Summer Reading Program, and a request for a staffing replacement for the Secondary Summer School. See enclosures #21 through #24 and #46. Dr. Cotter noted that the personnel report included more than 30 replacements, seven new positions and the extension of a grant-funded position. He added that nine substitutes were added to the Long Term Substitutes list and 12 long-term substitutes were returned to the list of per diem substitutes. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**New Business:** Mr. Johnson asked Mrs. Luken to report on the professional negotiation agreement between the School Board and the Colonial Education Association (CEA). Mrs. Luken stated that after the Board had approved the Fact Finder's report on May 18 and the CEA rejected it, both sides engaged in good faith bargaining and came to terms on a new three-year contract. She noted that the financial terms of the deal were identical to those in the Fact Finders' report, which provided for an average teacher salary increase of 4.25 percent for each of the three years of the contract. She stated that the percentage included the annual step increase received by teachers. Mrs. Luken reported that the agreement included a new no-cost health care alternative and a formulary prescription plan that is consistent with that which can be found in the public sector. She stated that the contract was fair for both sides, allowed the District to keep and attract quality educators, fell within the Board's financial projections and enabled the District to maintain the value added programs that set the District apart from others. Mrs. Luken moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the professional negotiations agreement with the CEA pending a review of the contract language by the District solicitor. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson stated that the contract was a fair compromise. He thanked CEA President Chad Murray and his negotiating team as well as Mr. Berger, Dr. Cotter and the administration for their efforts in reaching an agreement.

Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Slutsky to detail the Final 2007-2008 District Budget recommended for Board approval. Mr. Slutsky stated that the budget of \$84,817,000 represents an increase of \$4,560,000 or 5.68 percent over the 2006-07 spending plan. The Final Budget includes a real estate tax rate of 15.99 mils, an increase of 3.40 percent. The new real estate tax rate equates to an additional \$52.00 per year for each \$100,000 of assessment or an increase of \$76.43 on the district's median assessed value of \$146,990. Mr. Slutsky reported that budget included the addition of 8.27 teaching positions and 15 support staff positions. He noted that salaries and benefits accounted for more than 66 percent of the budget. Mr. Slutsky stated that the budget was influenced by unfunded state mandates for retirement benefits, which rose 15 percent, and special education costs. He noted that the state governments funds less than 12 percent of the

District budget and the federal government funds less than one percent. Mr. Slutsky noted that the Board decided to use nearly \$3.5 million of the District's projected fund balance to help offset the real estate tax increase. Mr. Slutsky moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion that the Board adopt the 2007-2008 Budget in the amount of \$84,817,000. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to approve the 2007-2008 taxation rates, including a millage rate of 15.99, an Act 511 Earned Income Tax Rate of 1.0 percent, a Real Estate Transfer Tax Rate of 1.0 percent, an Amusement Tax Rate of 10.0 percent and a Real Estate Tax Certification Fee of \$20.00. He noted that the Billing Date for 2007-2008 Real Estates Taxes is July 1, 2007. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the taxation rates and billing date. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board approval of Physician and Dental Agreements for the 2007-2008 school year. He noted that the contracts were with Dr. Glenn Miller and Dr. Esther Smith and represented a 3.0 percent increase from the previous year. See enclosure #25. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider contracts for the Lakeside Education Network and Medical/Partial Hospitalization as one item. See enclosures #26 and #27. He noted that the contract with the Lakeside Educational Network included the purchase of six regular education slots and four special education slots. The contract represents an increase of 3.0 percent over the previous year. He stated that the Medical/Partial Hospitalization contracts establish fees for the Colonial Medical Group, Brook Glen Behavior Hospital and C & K Therapy Associated, LLC. All fees are increased 3.0 percent from the previous contract. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on four special education renewal contracts together. The contacts are with the Silver Springs/Martin Luther School, Talk, Inc., the Ambler Day School and the Lakeview Neurorehabilitation Center in New Hampshire. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the renewal contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider five special education placement agreements as one item. Agreements are with the Methacton School District for tuition costs for a Methacton student in the 2007-2008 school year of \$54,315 and \$8,048 for extended school year services; the Oasis School District for \$19,000 with a fully executed settlement that waives FAPE; the Mill Creek School for one student at a cost of \$32,400; the Upper Merion School District for two students at a cost of \$42,465.07 and with RTM Academy for a rate of \$110.00 per day as needed. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the placement agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on three special education settlement agreements. The first is for a settlement and release for compensatory education and associated costs of one student. The second agreement is with the Creffield School regarding one student at a rate of \$24,850. The third agreement is with the Delaware Valley Friends School for one student at a rate of \$32,400. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the settlement agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked for Board approval to sign a "Consent to Assignment" reflecting the Asset Purchase Agreement involving Foundation's Behavioral Health and United Health Services. See enclosure #28. At the request of Mr. Johnson, Dr. Cotter explained that United Health was buying out Foundation's Behavior Health and the District's contract with Foundation's Behavioral Health was being assigned to United Health Services. He added that Board approval of the consent to assignment was pending solicitor review. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the signing. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a request by the Director of Human Resources, Jerry Berger, to renew a contract for "MyLearningPlan.com," a web-based professional development management program for implementation on July 1, 2007. See enclosure #29. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the new contract. Mr. Berger confirmed for Dr. Ryan that the software program was for keeping records of staff professional development hours that teachers needed to maintain their certification. He also confirmed for Dr. Ryan that the state mandated that districts are responsible for keeping track of the records for teachers. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a proposal to increase lunch prices for the 2007-2008 school year. See enclosure #47. He noted that the recommendation is to increase student lunch prices by 10 cents. An elementary meal will now cost \$2.55, while the cost of a middle school meal will range between \$1.35 and \$2.85 and the cost of a high school meal will range between \$2.30 and \$4.05. Adult lunch prices will also increase to \$5.10. Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the price increase. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson sought Board authorization to renew the District's summer employment contract with the Center for Technical Studies to assist in the installation of Technology. See enclosure #48. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to approve the contract renewal. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson referred the Board to a request from PWHS Principal Dr. Monica Sullivan for approval to allow an exchange student from France to attend the school during the 2007-2008 school year. If approved, the student will stay with a host family in the Plymouth Meeting area. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to act on four professional conference requests together. The first is for three supervisors to attend a professional conference on Formative Assessment in Nashua, N.H., from July 10-12, 2007. District professional development funds will pay for the conference. See enclosure #30. The second is for CMS teacher Caroline Koch to attend a professional conference on cooperative learning in Orlando, Fla., from July 13-15, 2007. The building administration supports the request and building professional development funds will cover the expenses. See enclosure #31. The third request is for Ridge Park Elementary Principal Jason Bacani to attend a Leadership Conference in Virginia Beach, Va., from July 29 - August 1, 2007. The District administrative conference budget will be charged. See enclosure #32. The final request is for PWHS College Counselor Pat Tamborello to attend the National Association for College Admission Counseling Conference in Austin, Texas from September 26-30, 2007. Building Professional Development funds will be utilized. See enclosure #33. Mr. Zimmer

moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Mr. Johnson requested that the Board consider five student trip requests as one item. The first is for a high school student to attend a mandatory national conference for "Best Buddies" in Bloomington, Ind., July 20-23, 2007. See enclosure #34. The second is for three to five members of the High School Yearbook Staff to attend a workshop at Gettysburg College on July 29-August 1, 2007. See enclosure #35. The third and fourth requests are for the PWHS cheerleaders to attend a competition in Pittsburgh, Pa., November 16-17, 2007, and a competition in Williamsburg, Va., March 14-17, 2008. See enclosures # 36 and #37. Mr. Johnson noted that the final request was before Board members as a blue page and was for the PWHS football team to attend a camp in Green Lane, Pa., August 19-23, 2007. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the student trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik asked Board members to act on three assessment appeals collectively. The first is for parcel #49-00-10312-00-7 located at 411 Ridge Pike in Plymouth Township. The current assessment has increased to \$629,754 from \$151,550. The second is for parcel #49-00-09250-00-7 located at 437 Irwins Lane in Plymouth Township. The assessment will decrease from \$7,662,440 to \$7,012,440 in 2007. The third is for parcel #65-00-00868-50-7 located at 7170 Lafayette Ave in Whitmarsh Township. The current assessment of \$7,226,540 is decreased to \$6,870,000 for 2005 and to \$6,406,275 for 2006. Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the assessment appeals as presented by the solicitor. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

**Committee Reports:** No Report

CMCAVTS: No Report

Personnel: Mrs. Luken discussed the Memorandum of Meet and Discuss between the Board and the Colonial Administrators and Supervisors Education Association (CASEA) and recommended the continuation of the agreement through June, 2012. The agreement calls for administrators' salaries to be based completely on performance and includes a three-year revolving cycle review of salary levels. She also noted the salaries for the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent. She noted that both salaries are based on a formula that takes into account the salaries of similar positions at seven like districts in the area. The top and bottom of those salaries are discarded and an average is calculated from the remaining five salaries. She also stated that Dr. Cotter is entitled to a performance bonus of up to 10-percent of his salary, and Dr. Gorodetzer is entitled to a performance bonus of up to seven-percent of her salary. She noted that both administrators had earned 100-percent of their bonus. Mrs. Luken also stated that the committee was proposing approval of salaries for CASEA/Cabinet and the Administrative Assistants/Confidential Secretaries salaries for 2007-2008. She noted that all of the salaries are available for public review in the District office. Mrs. Luken moved and Dr. Scoles seconded a motion to approve the CASEA agreement, the salaries for the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, CASEA/Cabinet and the Administrative Assistants/Confidential Secretaries. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 8-0.

Finance: Mr. Slutsky reminded everyone that Act 1 was soundly defeated across the state and stated that the District's approved 2007-2008 Budget fell within the guidelines of the legislation.

Curriculum and Instruction: Mr. Davis noted that the committee met on June 12 and reviewed the results of focus group discussions with PWHS seniors. He noted that Dr. Miki Garlin and Pat Tamborello provided the results, which Mr. Davis termed positive and encouraging. He stated that students were in favor of the block schedule and that Vo Tech students also took part in the discussions.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore stated that the Buildings and Grounds staff was implementing a plastic recycling program that should be in place for the next school year. She reminded everyone of the paper recycling program that is already in place. She noted that the turf installation on Colonial Field is complete and that the project received rave reviews from community members who attended graduation. She stated that the installation of turf on Victory Fields #1 is well underway and the project should be completed in July. She concluded by reporting that the CITV renovation will be finished in time for the next school year.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles reported on the Colonial Cares Coalition kick-off held on June 7. He noted that the group of District and PWHS administrators and representatives of the local police departments will meet over the summer to research and recommend for implementation best practices for combating drug and alcohol use among students. He noted that Mr. Orlow was preparing a letter detailing the project for distribution to the community.

Safety and Wellness: Mr. Zimmer noted that he also planned to discuss the Colonial Cares Coalition and thanked Dr. Scoles for his report.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan described the status of the Commonwealth's 2007-2008 budget and noted that the senate had cut out \$329 million worth of education spending. He speculated that the house members would reinstate the spending. He noted that the percentage of state's contribution to local school district budgets will decrease for the 35<sup>th</sup> straight year. He echoed Mr. Slutsky's comments that Act 1 was defeated in 493 of the state's 501 school districts.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary