

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, OCTOBER 19, 2006.**

President Orlow convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 8:10 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on October 19, 2006.

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

Board Members Absent: Tom Davis.

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; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Lawrence Ogunkua and Angela D'Alessandro, Board Student Representatives; Leigh Stuart; Charlene Koretz; Rebecca Hepler; Susan Mayson; Reggie Fisher; Peggy Wisniewski; Vince Rosselli; Joe Dooley; Mark Boland; Nancy Piccolo; Katie Lewis; Michele Yavorski; Mindi Richman; Jennifer Esmonde; Erin Dooley; Chad Murray and Alonda Wood.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 09/27/2006, 10/11/2006, 10/16/2006 and 10/19/2006 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

Minutes: Mr. Orlow asked for Board approval of the minutes of the Work Session of 09/18/2006, the General Meeting of 09/21/2006, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 10/05/2006, the Personnel Committee of 10/11/2006, the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 10/12/2006, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of 10/12/2006 and the Curriculum Committee of 10/16/2006. See enclosures #1 through #3 and #35 through #38. Dr. Ryan asked if the Facilities and Maintenance Department move to the new Facilities Management Center (FMC) had been completed. Mr. Yemm confirmed the move had been completed. Mr. Orlow inquired as to when the vacated space in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) would be transferred to classroom space. Mr. Yemm reported that the space would be ready to accommodate two classrooms the following week. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Financial Reports: Mr. Orlow asked the Board to take action on the financial reports on the list for approval. The reports included 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 09/30/2006, as shown in enclosures #4 through #15. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the HVAC work listed on the Bond Fund Report had been completed over the summer and that the transactions represented the release of retainers. Mr. Zimmer moved and Dr. Scoles 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: Dr. Cotter spoke to the success of the “Above and Beyond” plan and its centerpiece, the “Colonial Pathways to Excellence.” He detailed the district, building and individual teacher goal setting that is the focus of the “Colonial Pathways to Excellence.” Dr. Cotter stated that the School Board allocated \$200,000 each year to support the achievement of building awards as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement with the Colonial Education Association (CEA). He stated that the District Improvement Team had awarded funds to each school for goal achievement based on a formula which included the numbers of students in each school. See enclosure #16. Dr. Cotter noted that six of the district’s seven schools met both of their mathematics and language arts goals for the 2005-2006 school year. He added that the program helped to empower staff. Dr. Cotter also lauded the staff for their role in receiving the Classrooms for the Future and College and Career Counseling grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the 2006 Pennsylvania Staff Development Council Best Practices in Staff Development Award.

Mr. Orlow stated that the community was well aware of the phrase “Above and Beyond” but added that most people may not know that the “Colonial Pathways to Excellence” program was the foundation of the “Above and Beyond” plan. He commended the staff for their hard work in setting and achieving goals.

Old Business: None.

Correspondence: None.

Superintendent’s Report: Dr. Cotter noted that two resignations, a title change, a child rearing leave and one replacement had been added to the Personnel Report and Non-Professional Substitute List since his report on Monday. See enclosure #17. He also stated that two individuals had been added to the 2006-2007 Substitute List, bringing the total number of substitutes to 85. See enclosure #18. Dr. Cotter reminded the Board that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List included the appointment of CITV Director John Quinn as girls’ head basketball coach at PWHS and that an addition to the list from Monday was a recommendation for appointment of an assistant coach. See enclosure #19.

Mr. Orlow asked if a staff position which had been budgeted for had been filled. Dr. Cotter indicated a candidate had not been identified as yet. Mr. Orlow asked the solicitor if the district needed to post the position. Upon learning that the position was a non-bargaining unit position, Mr. Sultanik said the district administration should post the position and could seek candidates without the Board formally creating the position.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer 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: Ms. D’Alessandro reported that senior portraits were taken and that the high school was offering a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) prep course. She noted that the PWHS Marching Colonials hosted a successful band cavalcade and that 210 seniors, more than ever before, had already signed up for the senior class trip. She also stated that the students were eagerly anticipating the Homecoming Week activities scheduled for the following week.

Mr. Ogunkua reported that the fall sports teams were winding down their seasons and an open microphone event was held for students. He also noted that there was a positive turnout for a lecture by visiting author Alexandra Robbins on Oct. 18.

Mr. Orlow welcomed Mr. Ogunkua to his first Board meeting. He noted that the Board had two student representative and two alternates and that they rotated attendance at the Board meeting and the Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee meetings. He stated that the committee meetings provide the opportunity for more student input.

New Business: Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider the three options for the 2007-2008 school calendar. See Enclosure #20. Dr. Cotter stated that the purpose was for the Board to set the beginning date for the 2007-2008 school year and that the administration was recommending a post-Labor Day start. He added that the school year end dates were different on the three drafts but that was for future consideration. Mr. Orlow noted that the district was contractually required to review the calendar with the CEA. He added that by establishing the first day of school now families could begin planning summer vacations and activities. Mr. Orlow noted that recently the district had started the school year after the Labor Day holiday. Dr. Cotter stated that there was legislation pending in the state legislature which would require that schools begin the school year after Labor Day. Dr. Ryan confirmed that the legislation was House Bill 1968. Mrs. Luken asked if there had been any requests to start school before Labor Day. Dr. Cotter said no such requests were received. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to establish Tuesday, September 4, 2007 as the start date of the 2007-2008 school year. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow requested Board action on a professional conference request by Mr. Sherman to attend the Annual Pennsylvania School Boards Association Secretaries Conference in State College, Pa., from November 1-3, 2006. See enclosure #21. Mr. Orlow noted that this was Mr. Sherman's first year in the position and added that the district administration supported the request. Dr. Scoles moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider three separate conference requests from the high school as one item. He noted that PWS Principal Dr. Monica Sullivan was seeking approval for a teacher to attend the National Council for Social Studies Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., from November 30 through December 3, 2006; two teachers to attend the National Council of Teachers of English in Nashville, Tenn., from November 16-20, 2006; and three teachers to attend the National Science Teachers Association Conference held in Baltimore, Md., from November 3-4, 2006. See enclosures #22 through #24. Mr. Orlow noted that building professional development funds would be utilized to cover the costs of the conferences. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on two special education agreements. He noted that the first agreement was a renewal of a tuition agreement for two students and the addition of a one-on-one agreement for a third student to attend the Delaware Valley Friends School. The second was a settlement agreement with Discovery Ranch. He stated that the names of the students were not listed for confidentiality reasons and that the agreements were the result of Individual Education Plan (IEP) recommendations. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow stated that Mrs. DeLong and Kathy Ellis, Director of Transportation Services, were recommending that the Board approve a transportation contract for one student to and from Harrisburg and Pittsburgh for a 10-month period. See enclosure #25. Mr. Slutsky questioned the cost of the agreement. Dr. Cotter noted the difficulty in finding a vendor to fill the request given the odd hours of the commute each Friday and Sunday evening. Mrs. DeLong noted that agreement was necessitated by a renewal IEP agreement with the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. Dr. Scoles moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the transportation contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow asked that the Board consider several student trip requests as one item. He stated that Kathy Dunn and Jeff Blizzard, PWHS Ski Club Sponsors, were requesting approval of an overnight trip to Rutland, Vermont from January 5-7, 2007. Mr. Johnson pointed out that there were actually two ski trip requests. Mr. Orlow confirmed that approval was requested for a possible second trip from February 23-25, 2007. He added that students would pay the cost of both trips. See enclosure #26. Mr. Orlow also noted that Board approval was sought for student attendance at the Future Business Leaders of America National Leadership Conference from November 10-11, 2006 in East Brunswick, N.J. See enclosure #27. Dr. Scoles confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the requests had been reviewed by the CRSL committee. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the student trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Mr. Orlow called the Board's attention to the fundraising budgets for all school-related activities in which funds are raised during the school year. See enclosure #28. He noted that the budgets did not require board action.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the recommended bid for the turf installation preparation work on Victory Fields #1 and Colonial Field. See enclosure #39. He asked Mr. Yemm to review the bidding process. Mr. Yemm stated that four different contractors with extensive work in the installation of artificial surface fields had submitted proposals for the job. He stated that Kehoe Construction was the low bidder and was recommended to perform the excavation and drainage installation for both fields. Mr. Orlow inquired as to the approval process with Whitemarsh Township. Mr. Yemm stated that the district had requested a land development waiver from the township for the work on Colonial Field but that the work on Victory Fields #1 was already covered under the waiver granted for the remodeling of the FMC. Mr. Orlow asked when the remaining approvals may be granted. Mr. Yemm stated that he expected the building permits in two weeks and that construction should begin in November. He also confirmed for Mr. Orlow that all contracts were subject to government approval. Mr. Yemm also added that he had hoped to have the bids for the installation of the lighting and artificial surface for Board action this evening but that those bids must first be reviewed with Chestnut Hill College (CHC).

Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Yemm to explain the agreement with CHC. Mr. Yemm stated that CHC would pay back the cost of the turf and lighting installation on Victory Fields #1 over a 10-year period. He added that any savings derived from completing both of the Victory Fields #1 and Colonial Field projects at the same time would go to the district. Responding to Mr. Orlow's inquiry regarding the benefit of the turf, Mr. Yemm explained that the district could save between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year on maintenance costs. He added the product warranty was for 12 to 15 years.

Mr. Orlow asked Mr. Yemm to address residents' concerns about the project. Mr. Yemm explained that in September he sent 148 invitations to neighborhood residents to attend a meeting to discuss the Victory Fields project. He stated that approximately 48 residents attended and heard expert presentations from representatives of Musco Lighting and FieldTurf. He noted that there was considerable concern expressed over the drainage component of the project but detailed how the work will have no affect on drainage. He added that to appease neighbors' concerns, the district was considering raising the height of the detention basin retaining wall. Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that Laurie Smith Wood had been appointed as Communications Director and that the IU Board very reluctantly accepted the resignation of Legislative Liaison Dr. Loreen Stout. Mr. Zimmer noted that Dr. Stout was an invaluable asset to the IU. He added that transportation contracts for the 2006-2007 school year were approved. He concluded by stating that Dr. Janet Sloand had been appointed as the new director of the PATTAN King of Prussia Office.

CMCAVTS: No Report

Personnel: Mr. Johnson noted that list of CSD salaries and wages for the 2006-2007 school year was presented to Board members for review on Monday evening. He noted that the list did not require Board action. The lists are available in the District Office.

Finance: No Report.

Curriculum: Dr. Gorodetzer noted that the Curriculum Committee had met on 10/16 and stated that at that time Dr. Sullivan reported to the committee on the American College Testing (ACT) exam results. She noted that student participation in the assessment had doubled. Dr. Sullivan also spoke to a change in the music credits awarded at the high school to resolve an issue with progress reports. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that there was an extensive conversation at the meeting on the district's inclusion practices which were reported on by Mrs. Delong, Rebe Hayes-Kennedy, Eileen Spector, TC Boegly and Bob Fahler. Dr. Gorodetzer also stated that the committee was provided with the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System (PEVAAS) report which shows value-added gains in student improvement. She reported that Colonial was "in the green, which is where you want to be." Mr. Orlow asked how the PEVAAS report measured student achievement. Dr. Gorodetzer explained that the report used a complex formula which evaluated data over a period of years and anticipated a level of performance growth based on a number of factors including prior years' performance. She stated that the report was meant to insure that lower performing districts can show the growth that students are making. Dr. Cotter stated that when viewed within the context that 17% of Colonial students were on IEPs, the level of student performance was truly amazing.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported that the FMC was now up and running and that the new roof at Ridge Park Elementary School looked great. She stated that the boiler replacements at Colonial Elementary School (CES) and Plymouth Elementary School were nearly completed and that substantial fuel savings are expected. She added that the lighting retrofit in the CES gymnasium was nearly completed, and the retrofit will increase light output 40% and save 60% on utility costs.

Community Relations: Dr. Scoles displayed sample slides from the new “Look at Us” campaign and asked Board members to review the draft of the district’s annual report which was before them as a separate attachment. He noted that the publication was expected to be mailed to community members in mid-November.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan stated that the legislative session had nearly ended. He did report on a number of bills under consideration, including: a 7% contribution to the Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System (PSERS); Act 114 of 2006, which called for the contracting of a study to determine the cost needed to meet all of the state’s education standards; the proposed cable legislation, which he stated was not going anywhere; and a Senate bill which proposed to allow School Board members to sell property to their district, though they must have lived in the district and owned the property for at least 10 years.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David M. Sherman". The signature is stylized and cursive.

David M. Sherman