

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

President Orlow convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:04 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on November 15, 2007.

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

**Board Members Absent:** Dr. Pascal Scoles and Steven Slutsky.

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. 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; Lawrence Ogunkua and Sarah Corcoran, Board Student Representatives; Crystal Taylor; Sharon Corcoran and David Reppert.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 10/24/2007, 11/07/2007 and 11/12/2007 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the minutes of the Work Session of 10/15/2007; the General Meeting of 10/18/2007; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of 10/23/2007; the Human Resources Committee, the Community Relations and Student Life Committee and the Finance Committee of 11/01/2007 and the Curriculum Committee of 11/12/2007. See enclosures #1 through #5 and #43 and #44.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on the financial reports on the list for approval. The reports include 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 10/31/2007. See enclosures #6 through #17.

Mr. Zimmer 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, 7-0.

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

**Staff Report:** Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Principal Dr. Monica Sullivan updated Board members on the status of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program being implemented in the high school and Colonial Middle School (CMS). AVID is a nationally recognized, in-school academic support program that targets students in the academic middle and prepares them for college eligibility and success.

Responding to a question from Mr. Orlow, Dr. Sullivan stated that parent permission was required for student participation. She reported that parents were invited to an orientation meeting and individual follow-up meeting if desired. Parents also took part in the contract signing dinner hosted by the school for participating students. She added that 17 AVID students would take a least one honors level course during the school year.

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow directed Board members to review five drafts of the 2008-2009 school calendar. See enclosure #18. He stated that drafts #4 and #5 reflected Board feedback from Monday's meeting. Dr. Cotter stated that drafts #1 and #2 reflected traditional schedules, draft #3 includes a modified spring break, draft #4 included 183 instructional days for students and concluded school during the second week in June. He added that draft #5 incorporated 182 student days and an in-service day on the date of the May primary election. Dr. Cotter confirmed that the new and revised drafts had been forwarded to the Colonial Education Association (CEA). Mr. Orlow stated that the Board would act on the calendar in January following the contracted CEA review period.

See Board Student Representatives Report below for more Old Business.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter led Board members through his report, which includes the Personnel Report and Substitute List, a list of Activity/Team Sponsorships and the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List. See enclosures #20 through #22. He stated that there were 11 additional actions since Monday, including one retirement, one resignation, a child rearing leave, four replacements and four more substitutes. He stated that there were no changes since Monday to the Activity/Team Sponsorships and the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List.

Mr. Orlow noted that this was Mr. Berger's last Board meeting and thanked him for his hard work and dedication to the District.

Mr. Moore inquired if the assistant coach position listed on the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List was a new position. Mr. Berger stated that the transaction was filling a vacancy.

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, 7-0.

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Mr. Ogunkua reported that the PWHS Admissions Open House on October 25 attracted 54 individuals. He stated that parent-teacher conferences were held on October 31 and November 1 and that the winter sports teams had begun to practice. He added that a college counseling night for juniors and their parents was held on November 8. Ms. Corcoran stated that 50 people attended a college athletic recruiting assembly last night and that the student production of *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* was playing through the weekend. She added that the National Honor Society induction will be held next week.

Mr. Orlow redirected Board members' attention to an item of Old Business that was overlooked. He asked the Board to act on Board Policy #437, Teacher Exchange Programs. See enclosure #19. He stated that the policy was before the Board on a second-read basis. He stated that the policy revisions establish expectations for teachers returning from an exchange program.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Zimmer 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, 7-0.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to consider recommended payouts for the Anti-Vandalism Program. See enclosure #23. The program establishes funds at PWHS and CMS to cover the cost of repairs resulting from acts of vandalism. Mr. Orlow stated that the Board is asked to consider returning one-half of the unspent money from the 2006-2007 program to each school's student council as an incentive to reduce vandalism. The suggested high school payment is \$2,130 and the recommended middle school payment is \$1,174. Mr. Johnson also noted that the Board is requested to re-establish the program for the 2008-2009 year. Mr. Orlow stated that funding for the next year will be \$5,000 at PWHS and \$3,000 at CMS.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the Anti-Vandalism payouts and re-establish the program for the 2008-2009 school year. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider a signatory authorization request for the food service account and revised depository authorization and agreement certificates as one item. See enclosures #24 and #25.

Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on a proposal for PWHS history teacher Robert Culp to participate in a teacher exchange program in Australia or New Zealand. See enclosure #26. Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Culp was previously approved for a similar request but no suitable situation was found.

Mrs. Moore moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the teacher exchange request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a request to approve utilization of "A+ Test Prep and Tutoring" for homebound instruction in the areas of foreign language, math and science. See enclosure #27. Mrs. DeLong confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the subject areas listed were the hardest to staff.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider three professional conference requests as one item. See Enclosures #30 through #32. He stated that the success of the Above and Beyond Program was predicated on a commitment to best practices and staff development and these requests were associated with that. Mr. Orlow asked Dr. Gorodetzer to highlight the requests. Dr. Gorodetzer explained that one request was for six professional staff members to attend the National Staff Development Conference in Dallas, Texas from December 2-5, 2007. The emphasis is on the District's instructional coaching model, which is a target area for this year's professional development program. She stated that the second request was for a team of administrators and teachers to attend a training institute on Sound Grading Practices in Portland, Oregon from December 5-7, 2007. The teachers are expected to return with an action plan for implementation in the District. The third request is for Donna Drizin and Donna Galambos, both from Whitmarsh Elementary School, to attend the Council for Exceptional Children Conference in Boston, Massachusetts from April 2-5, 2008. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that this request was in line with the District's goal of improving practices for students with special needs.

Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the professional development requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on two student trip requests as one item. See enclosures #33 and #34. The first request is for PWHS student Molly Flanagan to attend the National High School Honors Orchestra Festival in Albuquerque, New Mexico from February 26, 2008 – March 1, 2008. The second request is for the PWHS girls' lacrosse team to travel to Florida for training during spring break, March 15-22, 2008.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the trip requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a recommended bid for the replacement of stage curtains at PWHS. See enclosure #35. He noted that four Requests for Proposals were distributed and two bids were returned, with Pittsburgh Stage, Inc., submitting the low bid. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the

job will be paid from the Capital Reserve Fund and not the Bond Fund. Mr. Yemm also reported that, if approved, the job would be completed by the end of December.

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, 7-0.

**Solicitor's Report:** None.

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that the IU welcomed a new cabinet member, Dr. Kenneth Voss, the Director of Non-Public School Services. He noted that the IU reviewed its four general operating budgets for the 2008-2009 school year in October. He stated that the Budgets total \$600 million and the Colonial Board will act on the IU Budgets in December. He stated that the District's contribution to the IU budget is expected to decrease by 20.1 percent. This reduction reflects the IU's move to a fee for services approach rather than a reduction in programs.

CMTHS: Mr. Johnson noted that ninth-graders will get the chance to attend the Montco Technical High School next week to see all of the programs that the school offers. The visit will provide students with a global perspective of the school. They may follow-up in depth if interested.

Human Resources: Mrs. Luken stated that the enrollment report was steady. She added her thanks to Mr. Berger and wished him the best for a long retirement.

Mr. Orlow noted that upper level administrators do not fall into a defined bargaining unit for retirement benefits. He asked the Board to act on a resolution confirming Mr. Berger's rights to benefits based upon the Administrator Compensation Plan and the Memorandum of Meet and Discuss between the Colonial Board of School Directors and the Colonial Administrator's and Supervisor's Education Association.

Mrs. Luken moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the resolution. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Finance: No Report

Curriculum and Instruction: Mr. Davis reported that Adam Bailey provided the committee with a report on his teacher exchange experience in Mexico. Mr. Davis stated that the exchange was successful on both ends. He added that Dr. Sullivan provided descriptions for course additions at PWHS. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that the committee had reviewed the professional conference requests approved this evening and on Monday. She also said Nancy Acconciamesa shared proposals for possible District use of the Angus Tract on the Dixon Estate.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported that the District has received a \$35,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to purchase B-20 diesel fuel. The grant is intended to cover the difference in cost between the less expensive regular ultra-flow diesel fuel and the more expensive environmentally friendly B-20 diesel fuel. Mrs. Moore asked Mr. Boegly to explain the Obsolete Equipment Disposal list before the Board for action. See Enclosure #37. Mr. Boegly explained that there were 160 old monitors, two servers, 42 old cell phones and 90 old computers that no longer had value to the District and were taking up space. He recommended several methods of disposal including donation, recycling and having the IU sell the equipment on E-Bay. Mrs. Moore asked if any of the equipment could be donated. Mr. Boegly noted that the monitors were not energy efficient and would cost more to run than they were worth. Mrs. Luken recommended donating the cell phones to an effort run by Whitmarsh Township.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to allow Mr. Boegly to remove the obsolete equipment from the District. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 7-0.

Community Relations: Mr. Orlow reported that the District had far exceeded its goal of 500 pillows in support of the Adam C. Conboy Memorial Fund's Operation Bedding.

Safety and Wellness: Mr. Zimmer reported that the committee received an update on the Countywide Law Enforcement Alerting and Safety System. Mr. Antal reported that the equipment has been installed in all schools and is ready for operation. Mr. Zimmer reported that the Girls on the Run program will begin at Colonial Elementary School in February. He added that the committee reviewed and supported a proposal for improving security at the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School. The proposal includes the installation of three mantraps to be located at the entrances to the corridors connected to the main lobby. In addition, electronic hardware would be added to the doors that separate the pool lobby from the art corridor. The proposed hardware would keep the doors locked at all times with the exception of the times that the students are changing classes.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan reported that The House Education Committee held a public hearing on a proposed statewide health care benefit program for school employees. He added that a costing out study estimated the cost of educating the children of Pennsylvania was \$22 billion without transportation and food services. It was estimated that local taxpayers were responsible for \$18 billion of that funding. Dr. Ryan reported that several property tax relief initiatives proposed increases in the sales and income taxes and incorporation of a countywide collection of the EIT.

**Public Comment:** None

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary