

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462  
MINUTES, AUGUST 16, 2007.**

President Orlow convened the general meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on August 16, 2007.

**Board Members Present:** Marc Orlow, Gary Johnson, Tom Davis, William Ryan, Mitch Zimmer and Hope Luken\*

**Board Members Absent:** Susan Moore, Pascal Scoles, Steven Slutsky

**Also Attending:** Vincent F. Cotter, 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 M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Risa Vetri Ferman, Montgomery County First Assistant District Attorney; Joe Lawrence, Plymouth Township Deputy Police Chief; Michael Bailey, Whitemarsh Township Police Lieutenant.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on 08/08/2007 and 08/13/2007 to discuss informational, legal and personnel matters.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to approve the minutes of the General Meeting of 07/19/2007, the Facilities Management and Transportation (FMT) Committee, Safety and Wellness Committee, the Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee and the Human Resources Committee of 08/02/2007 and the Curriculum Committee of 08/13/2007. See enclosures #1 through #4 and #32 and #33.

Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the minutes. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to take action on the financial reports on the list for approval on Thursday evening. The reports include 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 07/31/2007, as shown in enclosures #5 through #14.

Answering Mr. Orlow's question from Monday evening, Mr. Bickleman stated that the amount for Militia Hill Security on the Bills for Approval List was \$729.00. He noted that the bill was for the installation and repair of security equipment in the Facilities Management Center.

Responding to a question from Mr. Orlow, Dr. Cotter and Mr. Yemm reported that there was nothing new since Monday on the status of the District's escrow payments to Whitemarsh Township for completed construction projects.

\* Mrs. Luken joined the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

\*\* Mr. Sultanik joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the Financial Reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** Mr. Robert Franz of Wildflower Drive in Whitemarsh Township asked if the \$241,792.50 contract with the Perkins School for the Blind was for one student. Mr. Orlow indicated that it was. Mr. Franz asked what percentage of that bill represented an unfunded mandate from the state. Mrs. DeLong stated that the District will receive 60 percent of the cost back from the state. Mr. Franz stated that if folks were wondering where their tax dollars are going, that was a good example of how the District's hands are tied by state mandates.

**Staff Report:** Mr. Orlow stated that the School Board and District administration promote and do whatever they can to provide a safe environment for students in terms of the prevention of drug and alcohol use and violence. He reminded the community that the Board created a Safety & Wellness Committee in March and created the Colonial Cares Coalition in collaboration with local law enforcement in June. He noted that District and law enforcement representatives have met throughout the summer and have planned initiatives for the coming school year. At Mr. Orlow's request, Dr. Cotter reviewed the plan, which states that the Colonial School District (CSD), in collaboration with local law enforcement, will conduct an extensive security review of District buildings by the end of November and random periodic searches of student lockers and vehicles parked on District property that will begin no later than the end of October. See enclosure #15.

Mr. Orlow noted that representatives of the Plymouth and Whitemarsh Township Police Departments and the District Attorney's Office were present. He stated that Montgomery County First Assistant District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman had participated in the Board's Safety & Wellness Committee meetings on this topic and was instrumental in compiling the DA's Safe Schools Recommendations. He invited her to address the Board.

Ms. Ferman stated that she was pleased to work with the Board on the Colonial Cares Coalition. She said that the most important goal in the law enforcement community is the safety of our children, and since children spend so much time in schools, it is only natural for law enforcement to collaborate with the school community. She commended the CSD and the School Board for its willingness to take part in the joint venture. Ms. Ferman also stressed the importance of random searches as a vehicle to keep schools safe.

Dr. Cotter reviewed the District Goals for the 2007-2008 school year. See enclosure #35. He stated that the District Goals cover four main areas, Student Achievement, Accountability, Public Relations and Student Safety and briefly reviewed each area. Mr. Orlow stated that the District Goals represent a lot of hard work and planning and emphasize what the District wants to focus on in the coming year. He noted that the goal attainment will be measured and accessed throughout the year.

Mr. Johnson moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the District Goals. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Davis questioned whether item # Ib-3 regarding the Center for Technical Studies included a review of the curriculum. Dr. Cotter stated that it could include that.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter reviewed his report which included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List, a list of Adult Evening School teachers for the fall 2007 semester and the Enrollment Report. See enclosures #16 through #19. He noted that there were yellow pages associated with enclosures #16, #17, and #19. He stated that there were five additional resignations, 12 more replacements, one new transfer and an update of the enrollment report since Monday. Dr. Cotter also informed Board members that they had a blue page in front of them, which included more recent actions. Mr. Zimmer asked for clarification on the replacement for a teaching position. Mr. Berger explained that a current teacher switched positions to fill the vacancy and a replacement was hired for her old position. Mr. Berger also directed Mr. Orlow to the back of the last yellow page to find the action he questioned. Mr. Berger confirmed for Mr. Orlow that at that moment, all teaching positions were filled.

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, 6-0.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to review Board Policy #604, Construction Project Change Orders. See enclosure #20. Dr. Cotter noted that there was a yellow page addition since Monday to bring the policy in line with the Administrative Regulation, which he noted was also supplied on the back of the yellow page per Board request. Mr. Orlow noted that the FMT Committee had discussed the policy recommendation. There was considerable discussion as to whether or not the specific cost percentages should be moved from the Administrative Regulations to the Board Policy. Mr. Orlow asked the Board to act on the policy on a first-read basis and recommended further review of the issue in committee.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the policy on a first-read basis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to consider a series of Special Education Transportation Contracts as one item. The first contract with the Devon Preparatory School includes a rate of \$15.95 per student/per day. See enclosure #21. The 2006-2007 rate was \$15.50 per student/per day. Currently there are two students attending the school, but this could change during the school year. The second agreement is with St. Joseph's Preparatory School at a rate of \$6.82 per student/per day. See enclosure #22. The 2006-2007 rate was \$5.82 per student/per day. At present, 21 CSD students attend the school, the same number as last year. The third contract is with the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf at a rate of \$6,200 per child for transportation between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh at the beginning of the week and then back to 3820 Hartzell Drive in Camp Hill at the end of the week. See enclosure #23. The fourth contract stipulates the District will reimburse the parents for transportation of a student to the Pittsburgh School for the Deaf, via Harrisburg, at a rate of \$0.485 per mile or current IRS rates effective August 21, 2007 through June 20, 2008. See enclosure #24.

Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to the transportation contracts. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow directed Board members' attention to a Transportation Equipment Contract with Bus Radio and noted that there were a number of issues with the contract that were discussed on Monday. See enclosure #25. Dr. Cotter noted that the solicitor's office reviewed the contract and stated that there would be no issue if the money flowed directly from Bus Radio to the Colonial Foundation or if the money went directly from Bus Radio back into the District's General Fund.

Mr. Sultanik noted that there could be 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment issues if the contract included any terms in which the District could control programming content. There was considerable discussion as to how frequently the District would review the content, how determinations as to the appropriateness of the content would be made and by whom. Dr. Cotter noted that Holiday music programming is another sensitive issue. Mr. Sultanik suggested that the District research clients that use the service to ascertain if they had any issues with the Bus Radio programming content. Mr. Sultanik confirmed that the contract covered the District's right to object to programming that has aired. Dr. Cotter noted that there was still time to review the contract before the school year. He noted that there would be a Special Meeting of the Board on August 29, and they could act on the contract at that time. Mr. Orlow stated that the Board would defer action on the contract until the next meeting.

Mr. Orlow asked that Board members consider two Special Education Service Agreements separately. The first is with the Crefeld School (EA) to place a student at a cost of \$24,850 with an enrollment fee of \$500 for the 2007-2008 school year. He noted that this was a new agreement. Dr. Cotter informed the Board members that they had a blue page in front of them that contained the corresponding settlement agreement for their review and approval. Dr. Ryan moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the service contract and the settlement agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

The second agreement is a renewal agreement with the Perkins School for the Blind at a cost of \$241,792.50. Mr. Orlow noted that Mr. Franz had questioned this contract earlier in the meeting. Mrs. Delong confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the state will reimburse Colonial 60 percent of the contract cost.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Dr. Ryan seconded a motion to approve the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the MCIU Cooperative Purchasing Bid for various types of fuel for the 2007-2008 school year. See enclosure #26. Mr. Bickleman noted that the recommended bid for Heating Oil #2 was from Petron at a variable price that currently stood at \$2.16 per gallon. He stated that Farm & Home provided the recommended bid for Bio-Diesel and Gasoline. The Bio-Diesel price was fixed at \$2.5377 per gallon, while the fixed price for gasoline was \$2.58 per gallon. He stated that more than \$300,000 was budget for Heating Oil #2 and \$250,000 was budgeted for Bio-Diesel. He noted that the District was applying for a grant that could provide reimbursement of 14-cents per gallon on the next lowest bid for Bio-Diesel Fuel.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the cooperative bid for fuel. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on a list of administrative conference requests for the 2007-2008 school year. See enclosure #27. He noted that the Administrator Compensation Plan and the Memorandum of Meet and Discuss for the Colonial Administrators and Supervisors Education Association provided for professional development funds to be allocated for conference attendance.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the administrative conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to act on a student trip request for the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) Marching Colonials, under the direction of Tonia Kaufman, to participate in a Cavalcade of Bands hosted by Kingsway Regional High School in Woolrich Township, New Jersey on Saturday, September 15, 2007. See enclosure #28.

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to approve the student trip request. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a bid to provide various types of ice cream products. See enclosure #36. Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the bid. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Sultanik reviewed a list of assessment appeals which he stated had been reviewed by the Board in executive session. See enclosure #37. Mr. Sultanik stated that it was his firm's recommendation that the Board intervene in the noted appeals.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to approve the Solicitor's Report. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Dr. Ryan asked if the Board could note that there was a \$23 million difference between the payments and the assessed value of the properties listed. Mr. Orlow indicated that when taking into account the District's millage rate, the amount equaled to about \$300,000 annually.

**Committee Reports:** CMCAVTS: Mr. Zimmer stated that the IU hosted its Annual Child Accounting Meeting for all county and Philadelphia sSchools. Discussion topics included student reporting and ways to account for proof of residency. He noted that the IU Board heard a report on transportation of alternative education students that was given at the state conference, the MCIU safe schools grant and discipline on buses.

Human Resources: Mrs. Luken stated that the committee met on August 2 and heard a report from Mr. Berger on the District enrollment. She noted that the enrollment at Whitemarsh Elementary School was at an all-time high and the committee approved a sixth kindergarten class for the building. She echoed Mr. Berger's earlier report that all teaching positions are presently filled.

Finance: No Report

Curriculum and Instruction: Mr. Davis noted that the committee met on August 13 and heard a report on the District's Summer Program from Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer. He stated that Liz McKeaney, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, reported on Adequate Yearly Progress, which overall was good except for the Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged groups in the high school. Mr. Davis also stated that PWHS science teacher Jim Muscarella made a presentation on the proposed curriculum for the Fundamentals of Engineering course he will pilot this year.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mr. Yemm stated that the FMT Committee met on August 2 and reviewed the preliminary layout of a baseball field proposed for the rear of Colonial Elementary School (CES). He stated that pending the receipt of various government permits, construction may begin this fall. Mr. Yemm noted that the committee examined details and pictures of a new type of road lane marking material and traffic marking material to be used

on the PWHS/CES and Colonial Middle School (CMS) campuses. He reported that Victory Fields #1 was completed and being used by Chestnut Hill College. Mr. Yemm stated that PWHS Field Hockey Coach Marianne Paparone also commented on the safety of the field. He stated that a third lunchroom at CMS was installed and that the roof trusses for the CES courtyard have been put in place.

Community Relations: Mr. Sherman noted that the CRSL Committee met on August 2. He stated that the District Events Calendar was mailed and some community residents expressed displeasure that it was mailed to the entire District. He provided an overview of the calendar cost. He noted that Tonia Kaufman reported on a proposal to split the CMS Marching Band into a wind ensemble and an indoor guard. Mr. Sherman also noted that Simon's Fund will provide free heart screenings to all PWHS fall sports athletes on Aug. 25 as a precursor to providing free heart screenings for all children in the District during the third weekend in October.

Safety and Wellness: Mr. Zimmer noted that the committee met on August 2 and received updates on the Girls on the Run program, the Countywide Law Enforcement Alerting and Safety System (CLASS) and the Video Badge and ID Management Software system proposed for use to record and identify visitor's to schools. Mr. Zimmer stated that the ID system could scan and record information from a visitor's photo driver's license. He also noted that the committee reviewed the Colonial Cares Coalition Plan presented earlier in the evening as well as the DA's Safe School Recommendations. He reported that many of those recommendations were already implemented in CSD. Dr. Ryan questioned if the Board will be hearing more about the ID system. Mr. Zimmer and Dr. Cotter stated that more information will be forthcoming. Dr. Cotter noted that more review of the system needs to take place before implementation. He stated that the District would also sensitize the public to any system prior to its implementation.

Legislation: Dr. Ryan reported that the Independent Regulatory Review Committee was finalizing teacher certification regulations for teacher preparation. New regulations will require dual certification for all special education teachers in about six years. Additionally, a new elementary level certification is under consideration. The House Finance Committee was holding hearings on new tax plans, which includes the potential increase of the state sales tax by 0.5 percent and a 0.22 percent increase in the state income tax. New monies would go to property tax reductions. He added that the Cyber Charter Reform Resolution requested by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association was gaining support throughout the state. The resolution places all cyber and charter school funding under the direct supervision of the State Department of Education. Presently there is no oversight over funding for those schools.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary