

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462**  
**MINUTES, OCTOBER 16, 2008**

President Orlow convened the business meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:04 p.m. in the Colonial Instructional Television (CITV) studios in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) on October 16, 2008.

**Board Members Present:** Tom Davis, Gary Johnson, Susan Moore, Marc Orlow, Hope Luken, and Mitch Zimmer.

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

**Also Attending:** Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer; Cassandra DeLong, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Kim Newell, Assistant Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Mark Fitzgerald, Solicitor; Allan Hong and Jessica Piergiovanni, Board Student Representatives; Frank Whitehead; Matt Bretzius; Geoffrey Bram; Michele Yavorski; Nancy Piccolo; Chad Murray; Jennifer Klarman; William Ryan; Ben Miller; Sandra F. Connelly; Amy Spooner; Becky Richmond; Jill Forster; Brian Weiner and Liz McKeaney.

Mr. Orlow led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on September 24, October 8 and October 13.

**Minutes:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on the minutes of the Board Work Session of September 15; the General Meeting of September 18; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of September 29; the Community Relations and Student Life Committee of October 2; the Human Resources Committee of October 7 and the Curriculum Committee of October 13. See enclosures #1 through 4, #44 and #45.

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

**Financial Reports:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action on the financial reports on the list for approval. They 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 September 30, as shown in enclosures #5 through #16.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Moore seconded a motion to approve the financial reports. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

**Public Comments on the Agenda:** None

Mr. Orlow stated that he would like the Board to consider an item out of order. He referred to two amendments to the Hill at Whitmarsh Tax Increment Finance (TIF) plan. He stated that the Board needed to act at this time since the County was also meeting and needed to know the result of the Board vote. Mr. Orlow referenced enclosure #51 which is listed as part of the Solicitor's Report. The first amendment is to the project plan and the second amendment is to the tax payment plan. He noted that the Board has been working on this project for several years and that the agreement ensures the perpetuity of open space in the District and allows for use of the some of the space by the

District for educational purposes.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the TIF amendments. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

**Staff Report:** None

**Old Business:** Mr. Orlow sought Board action on an agreement with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit to provide Internet service with additional bandwidth capability. See enclosure #17.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve the agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Note: Mr. Zimmer left the meeting at 7:15 p.m. to take a phone call.

**Correspondence:** Mr. Orlow asked Board members to act on a series of donations as one item. The first is a Verizon Foundation gift of \$750 to Plymouth Elementary School. See enclosure #18. The second is a Target Company donation of \$1,158.73 to PWHS. See enclosure #19. The third is a \$1,000 matching grant from the Raytheon Company to PWHS. See enclosure #20. The final donation is a \$500 individual gift to the PWHS wrestling program. See enclosure #21.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mrs. Luken seconded a motion to accept the donations. On a roll call vote, all but Mr. Zimmer voted in favor. Mr. Zimmer was absent. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Note: Mr. Zimmer returned to the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

**Superintendent's Report:** Dr. Cotter stated that his report includes the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List and a Termination Resolution. See enclosures #22 through #24. He stated that there were two changes to the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List from Monday evening and that the Termination Resolution stated a list of charges and Board acceptance of those charges.

Responding to a question from Mr. Orlow, Dr. Cotter stated that the current enrollment report has been reviewed with building principals and the administration is satisfied with current class sizes and staffing levels.

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

**Board Student Representatives Report:** Mr. Hong stated that the Art Club held its fundraising concert on September 23 with all proceeds going to provide scholarships. He noted that the Marching Colonials hosted a successful band cavalcade last weekend and that the high school recently held a code red drill without incident. He stated that the school is currently hosting an admissions open house for non-public school students. Ms. Piergiovanni stated that the Marching Colonials traveled to Maryland for a competition last weekend. She stated that class ring orders are ongoing and detailed homecoming week activities scheduled for next week, including a costumed themed homecoming dance on Oct. 25. She noted that more seniors than ever, 243, had signed up for the senior class trip.

**New Business:** Mr. Orlow stated that there were a series of 2009-2010 calendar outline drafts for Board consideration. See enclosure #25. He stated that the Board will establish the first day of school at their November meeting. Mr. Orlow noted that Labor Day falls later than usual in 2009 which

poses a dilemma regarding the first day of the 2009-2010 school year. He stated that if the District begins school after Labor Day, school would not end until the third week in June. Mr. Davis asked for input from the student representatives. Ms. Piergiovanni was in favor of beginning school prior to Labor Day, while Mr. Hong preferred beginning the year after the holiday.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to consider three new policies on a first read basis. The first is Classroom Visitation #122. See enclosure #26. The second is Bullying Prevention #221. See enclosure #27. The third is Public Records #801. See enclosure #28.

Mrs. DeLong stated that the purpose of the Classroom Visitation policy was to ensure access. She added that the policy is required per Chapter 14.

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

Mr. Orlow asked members to act on the other two policies in one motion.

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

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on a resolution to hold the 2009-2010 Budget under the established Pennsylvania Department of Education Index. See enclosure #46. Responding to a question from Mr. Orlow, Mr. Bickleman stated that the index for the 2009-2010 school year is 4.1 percent, down from 4.4 percent for the current year. Mr. Orlow noted that the Board passed a similar resolution last year.

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

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to consider a request to approve the renewal of the PA.Educator.net contract for the 2008-2009 school year. See enclosure #47. He stated that the service provides a clearinghouse for teacher and administrative applicants. Dr. Cotter stated that the District does receive some paper applications.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to renew the contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow asked for Board action on a resolution recommending approval of a 403(b) and related adoption agreement. See enclosure #48. Mr. Orlow noted that the Board and District Administration have been working on this project for some time. State legislation requires that District have a plan in effect before January 2009.

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

Mr. Orlow requested that Board members contemplate District participation in a transportation study in collaboration with the Bucks and Montgomery County Intermediate Units. See enclosure #49. The study is being conducted by Management Partnership Services, Inc. Mr. Orlow explained that all school districts must bus students to private schools within a 10-mile radius of their district borders. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mr. Orlow that the Colonial School District buses students to 120 locations daily. He added that the survey could recommend a more efficient and cost effective way to transport students. He added that the project will be conducted in two phases and requested a timeline of the same.

Mrs. Moore moved and Mr. Johnson seconded a motion to approve District participation in the study. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was approved, 6-0.

Mr. Orlow asked the Board to act on a request to change the list of authorized signers necessitated by staff changes at PWHS and Colonial Middle School (CMS). See enclosure #50.

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

Mr. Orlow sought Board action on two special education settlement agreements. He stated that one is a renewal agreement and one is a new agreement. He stated that both agreements have been reviewed in executive session.

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

Mr. Orlow asked Board members to consider three professional conference requests as one item. The first is for a Ridge Park Elementary School teacher to attend a music workshop in Charlotte, N.C. from December 14-18. See enclosure # 29. Mr. Orlow noted that the teacher who will attend is a Master Teacher. The second request is for 12 staff members from PWHS and CMS to attend an AVID educator training workshop in Pemberton, N.J. from November 17-18. See enclosure #30. The third request is for PWHS College Counselor Pat Tamborello to participate in a tour of New England Colleges from November 16-18. See enclosure #31.

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

Mr. Orlow asked that the Board act collectively on a series of student trip requests. The first is for CMS students to attend to the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ on December 23. See enclosure #32. The second is for 20 PWHS yearbook and newspaper students to attend the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Fall Conference at Columbia University on November 3. See enclosure #34. The third is for 45 PWHS AP Studio and Advanced Photography students to visit the Museum of Modern Art in New York city on Wednesday, November 5. See enclosure #35. The fourth is for the PWHS cheerleaders to participate in a national competition in Williamsburg, Va. from March 13-15, 2009. See enclosure #36. The fifth is for PWHS Ski Club trips to Okemo and Stratton Mountain in Vermont from January 9-11, 2009 and to Killington and Okemo in Vermont from February 20-22, 2009. See enclosure #37.

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, 6-0.

Mr. Yemm explained that there is no bid for the Board to act on this evening. He noted that the PWHS Burner project received only one bid and therefore the project would be re-bid next month. In a response to Mr. Orlow, Mr. Yemm stated that five bid packets have been picked up by potential vendors.

**Solicitor's Report:** Mr. Fitzgerald provided Disciplinary Stipulation #95182 for Board action. Mr. Orlow stated that the stipulation had been reviewed in executive session.

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

**Committee Reports:** Intermediate Unit: Mr. Zimmer reported that there were two new changes to the MCIU cabinet and that the goals for the year were approved. He stated that the spotlight for the month centered upon curriculum, instruction and professional development.

CMTHS: No report

Human Resources: Mrs. Luken noted that the committee received a staffing update and reviewed administrative requests for additional special education instructional aide positions. She also moved that the list of District salaries and wages for the 2008-2009 school year be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davis. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 6-0. Mrs. Luken that the complete list of salaries was available for public inspection in the District Office.

Finance: No report

Curriculum and Program: Mr. Davis reported that Chestnut Hill College has proposed the establishment of a partnership in which the college will place a few junior and senior special education majors at Ridge Park and Whitmarsh elementary schools. Principals Jason Bacani and Donna Drizin support the proposal. Dr. Gorodetzer reported on several discussion items including a math and language arts curriculum review to examine rigor, relevance and methodology in the departments, a new electronic observation format to promote greater consistency and efficiency across all buildings, the possible formation of a committee to develop a differentiated supervision model for District teachers and a departure from the current five-year cycle of reviewing curriculum materials to a system that will review materials on an as needed basis.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mrs. Moore reported that phase one of the CES renovation should be completed within two weeks. Mr. Yemm reported that there have been no problems with construction interfering with students or the instruction process. Responding to a question from Mr. Orlow, Mr. Yemm reported that phase one included eight classrooms and phase two will include five classrooms. Mr. Yemm also confirmed for Mr. Orlow that he has received positive feedback from Conshohocken Elementary School regarding the installation of sod on the playground.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mr. Orlow reported that a list of fundraising budgets for all school-related activities was included for informational purposes. See enclosure #38.

Safety and Wellness: No report.

Legislative: No report.

**Public Comment:** None.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Sherman  
Board Secretary