

Community Relations and Student Life Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors, May 5, 2010

The Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Thursday, May 5, 2010 in the District Office General Meeting Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. Present were committee chair Mitch Zimmer, committee members Hope Luken and Kathleen Oxberry, Board President Gary Johnson, Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Dr. Monica Sullivan, Charles Forster, Kim Newell, David M. Sherman, Linda Doll, Lauren Stern, members of the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) robotics team, their advisors and several parents.

There was no public comment on the agenda.

Ms. Newell noted that the spring sports season was wrapping up and several teams may have playoff games which would be covered on CITV. She stated that new programming included some concerts and a new episode of "School of the Week." Ms. Newell shared a video highlighting kindergarten in the Colonial School District.

Dr. Sullivan shared a proposed update to the PWHS Handbook regarding students' use of electronic devices in school. Currently students may bring these devices to school but may not use them during the school day. The proposed change is to allow students to use the devices during lunch time and change of classes. The use of electronic devices during class time and I-Block is strictly prohibited. Dr. Sullivan stated that the PWHS staff and the PTSO endorse the change. There was considerable discussion regarding possible distractions in the classroom and hallways and the opportunity to cheat. However, none of those issues were deemed to be a major obstruction to the change.

PWHS teachers Mr. Jeff Yeagle and Mr. Kirk Kumfert presented the PWHS robotics team. Members of the team described the process of collaborating to build a robot for the F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Competition. They noted that the event was more about learning to work together and learning the engineering process than just competing against other schools. They also noted the difficulty of building the robot with limited resources. This year's challenge involved creating a robot that could kick a ball (like a soccer ball) and navigate an obstacle course. Students gave a demonstration of their robot. Mrs. Luken stated that she thought it would be a good idea for the team to show off their robot at halftime of a basketball game. Mr. Yeagle noted that the robotics team has received a grant from Lockheed Martin, but they continue to seek additional outside funding.

Dr. Cotter reviewed a suggested change in wording to part of the Behavior Support Policy as it applies to the use of student restraints. He noted that the independent special education audit conducted last fall recommended that wording change. The updated policy will be reviewed by the Board on a first-read basis at the May meeting.

The committee reviewed three grants/scholarships. The first was a Pennsylvania Department of Education Community and Economic Development Grant in the amount of \$5,000 to Conshohocken Elementary School. The second was a \$250 community service scholarship presented by World Class Vacations. The third was the selection criteria for the previously approved Denise Cotteta Scholarship. There was considerable discussion as to how the World Class Vacation Scholarship should be awarded. The committee consensus was for the money to be awarded through an application process similar to how other scholarships are awarded.

The committee reviewed class trip requests for the attendance of a PWHS student at the Best Buddies annual conference in June and two cheerleading competitions during the 2010-2011 school year.

Mr. Forster shared a form to be signed for participation in athletic fundraisers. The form is intended to give parents and students the option of taking part in the fundraiser, simply writing a check for a designated amount of profit or opting out all together. After considerable discussion, recommended changes were suggested to better convey the intent of the form. Mr. Forster will resubmit the form at the next meeting.

Mr. Sherman provided an update of the communication plan and sought direction for the 2010-2011 plan.

After considerable discussion, the committee decided to meet next on Thursday, June 3 at 4:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

There being no further business or public comment, Mr. Zimmer adjourned the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman
Community Relations Coordinator
School Board Secretary