

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
GENERAL SESSION MINUTES, AUGUST 20, 2009

President Johnson convened the general session of the Colonial Board of School Directors at 7:02 p.m. in the Colonial Instructional Television (CITV) studios in Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) on August 20, 2009.

Board Members Present: Tom Davis, Gary Johnson, Kelly Jowett, Steven Slutsky and Mitch Zimmer.

Board Members Absent: Lenore Bruno, Hope Luken, Susan Moore and Dr. William Ryan,.

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Jeffrey T. Sultanik, Solicitor; Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services; Andrew Boegly, Chief Information Officer; Terry Yemm, Director of Operations; Richard Hartz, Director of Human Resources; John Quinn, Director of CITV; Kim Newell, Assistant Director of CITV; David M. Sherman, Community Relations Coordinator/Board Secretary; Tom Sigafos and Kathleen Oxberry.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that the Board had met in executive session on August 13 and August 17 to discuss legal and personnel issues.

Minutes: Mr. Johnson sought Board approval of the minutes of the General Meeting of July 16; the Facilities Management and Transportation Committee of July 29; the Human Resources Committee of August 6 and the Curriculum and Program Committee of August 17. See enclosures #1 through #3 and #31.

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

Financial Reports: Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider the financial reports on the list for approval. They 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 July 31 as shown in enclosures #4 through #14.

Mr. Slutsky moved and Mrs. Jowett 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: None.

Staff Report: Dr. Cotter reported that the District Goals for the 2009-2010 school year focused on three major areas, Student Achievement, Systemic Reform and Fiscal Responsibility. In the area of Student Achievement, Dr. Cotter noted that special emphasis will be placed on methodology, best practices, differentiated instruction, 21st century skills and secondary special education. He stated that the reform component will build upon the PW PrEP initiative and focus on secondary counseling and continued technology integration. Dr. Cotter said that fiscal responsibility is imperative for the District this year as administrators are faced with an accelerated budget process and dwindling financial resources.

Old Business: Mr. Johnson directed the Board to act on Family Medical Leave policies for Professional Employees (#441) and Classified Employees (#541) on a second-read basis. See enclosure #16.

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

Correspondence: Mr. Johnson sought Board action on a request by Conshohocken Borough Manager Frank J. Marabella to increase the salary for crossing guards from \$10 to \$12 per hour. See enclosure #17.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the salary increase. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Johnson asked Board members to consider PWHS Principal Dr. Monica Sullivan's request that the Board accept a scholarship donation in the amount of \$260,000. Mr. Sultanik stated that the motion should include wording to clarify that the donation is accepted pending final solicitor approval of the release agreement.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to accept the donation pending final solicitor approval of the release agreement. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Cotter summarized his report that included the Personnel Report and Substitute List, the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List, a list of Fall Adult Evening School classes and teachers, and the enrollment report. See enclosures #18 through #21. He stated that the Personnel Report and Substitute List contained 13 additions in yellow pages from Monday's report. He added that Board members had a blue page before them with two additional instructional aides listed. Dr. Cotter stated that the Extra Duty/Extra Pay List included a summary of positions for the fall. He noted that there was a yellow page updating the Adult Evening School class listing. Dr. Cotter added that the classes are self sustaining. He reported that the Enrollment Report for CSD students shows average class sizes of 16-19 in kindergarten, 19-22 in the first through third grades, 22-23 in Colonial Elementary School, and 18-22 in English classes at Colonial Middle School. He also noted that the average class size at PWHS varies depending on the course being taught. Mr. Davis asked Dr. Cotter how Colonial's class sizes compared with other school districts in the area. Dr. Cotter stated that he felt Colonial's class sizes were favorable. He noted that Conshohocken Elementary School (CE) has very small class sizes and exceptional support in those classes. He referred to CE as the District's best kept secret. Responding to another question from Mr. Davis, Dr. Cotter stated that he would need to research class sizes at neighboring districts.

Board Student Representatives Report: No report.

New Business: Mr. Johnson sought Board action on the appointment of the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Pupil Services and Special Education as privacy officers in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA). See enclosure #22.

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

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider a transportation contract with St. Joseph's Preparatory School for 22 students at the rate of \$7.03 per student per day. See enclosure #23. Mr. Johnson noted that the rate is unchanged from last year.

Mr. Slutsky moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the transportation contract. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Johnson directed the Board to act on a request to approve costs resulting from a collective bidding process for food products including milk, dairy, juice and ice cream. See enclosure #24.

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

Mr. Johnson asked the Board to consider several special education service agreements in one motion. The first is with The Mill Creek School at a yearly cost of \$35,280. The second is with the Vanguard School at an annual rate of \$42,000. The third is with Preparing Adolescents for Adult Life for one student at an annual rate of \$75,800 and a second student, including a one-on-one aide, at a yearly cost of \$90,560. The fourth is with Talk, Inc. at a cost of \$48,665 per year. Responding to a question from Mr. Johnson, Dr. Cotter explained that Talk, Inc. is a privately licensed academic school for children with communication disorders located in Newtown Square, Pa. He further added that the school has been previously used by the District.

Mrs. Jowett moved and Mr. Slutsky seconded a motion to approve the special education service agreements. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Johnson directed the Board to take action on a request from Dr. Sullivan to approve admittance of an exchange student from Ecuador to attend PWHS for the 2009-2010 school year. Mr. Johnson noted that the issue was reviewed in executive session. Mr. Sultanik stated that a motion should note that a decision to approve the admittance is subject to solicitor verification of the student's credentials.

Mr. Zimmer moved and Mr. Davis seconded a motion to admit the exchange student subject to the solicitor's verification of the student's credentials. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Davis asked Board members to act on a list of administrative conference requests for the 2009-2010 school year per the Colonial Administrators and Supervisors Association (CASEA) compensation plan and meet and discuss memorandum. See enclosure #25.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the administrative conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Davis sought Board action on two professional conference requests for PWHS teachers. The first is for the National Association for College Admission Counseling Conference in Baltimore, Md. from September 24-26. See enclosure #26. The second is for the American Association of School Librarians in Charlotte, North Carolina from November 4-8. See enclosure #27.

Mr. Davis moved and Mrs. Jowett seconded a motion to approve the professional conference requests. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Mr. Zimmer asked the Board to consider a student field trip request for PWHS Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students to visit colleges and historic sites in Washington, D.C. on September 17. He noted that funding for the trip was budgeted by the building.

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

Solicitor's Report: None.

Committee Reports: Intermediate Unit: No Report

CMTHS: No Report

Human Resources: No Report

Finance: Mr. Slutsky stated that the committee will meet on August 26 to discuss the early budget process. He reiterated Dr. Cotter's earlier comments about the difficult financial landscape with which the District is faced. Mr. Slutsky added that the committee will continue to work diligently to be good stewards of the public's tax dollars.

Curriculum and Program: Dr. Gorodetzer reported on the success of the summer programs including the high school's summer Bridge Program. She discussed the school improvement awards that were allocated as part of the District's Pathways to Excellence Program. She stated that the induction program for new teachers was held this week and that a Board reception for new teachers will be held on September 17. Mr. Davis reported on the CASEA conference requests and noted that the administrators had agreed to a 50 percent reduction in costs with some minor adjustments made. He added that a Pupil Services Review Committee will be formed similar to the current Technology Review Committee that meets three times per school year. Mr. Davis then showed a PowerPoint that highlighted Colonial's success on the 2009 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Davis noted that all seven Colonial Schools met or exceeded all of their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets as established by the No Child Left Behind Act. He presented a PowerPoint that showed double-digit increases in the fifth, eighth and 11th Grade PSSA math and reading scores from 2004 through 2009.

Facilities Management and Transportation: Mr. Davis noted that the previously approved disposal of obsolete equipment on E-Bay was not successful. He asked the Board to consider donating and delivering the equipment to Team Children located in Audubon, Pa.

Mr. Davis moved and Mr. Zimmer seconded a motion to donate the obsolete equipment to Team Children. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. The motion was carried, 5-0.

Director of Operations Terry Yemm presented a PowerPoint on the Victory Fields retention basin. He reported that during a recent major storm, the retention basin held nearly 2 million gallons of water and was capable of holding more than 2.6 million more gallons. Mr. Yemm confirmed for Mrs. Jowett that the water retained in the Victory Fields basin did not flood the neighborhoods below the complex.

Community Relations and Student Life: Mrs. Jowett reported that the 2009-2010 District Activities Calendar is in the mail to District families and that calendars are also available at each of the District's seven schools and the District Office. She stated that a calendar flyer of key events and concert dates is also being mailed to the larger District population. Mrs. Jowett noted that the District will have an early dismissal for students on Friday, September 4. This early dismissal does not appear on the activities calendar. She added that the Fall 2009 Adult Evening School course offerings will be in the mail next week and the class listing and a registration form will be online tomorrow.

Safety and Wellness: No report

Legislative: No report.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David M. Sherman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "S".

David M. Sherman
Board Secretary