

Community Relations and Student Life Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors, December 9, 2010

The Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Thursday, December 9, 2010 in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were committee chair Mitch Zimmer; Committee members Bernie Brady and Kelly Jowett; Superintendent Dr. Vincent F. Cotter; Assistant Superintendent Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Karen Berk; Activities Director Charles Forster; CITV Director John Quinn; Community Relations Coordinator/School Board Secretary David M. Sherman; School Board Student Representatives Jessica Knudsen, Michael Ciesielka and Stephen Pepper; Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Principal Heather Nuneviller; PWHS Assistant Principal Dan Balek; students Ross Levin and John Tammany and community member Linda Doll.

There was no public comment on the agenda.

Mr. Quinn shared the latest RISE video featuring Alan Tabachnick and the Girls in Technology Summer Academy. He also stated that he was working with Comcast to correct audio problems that occurred during the live broadcast of the December Board meeting. Mr. Quinn noted that the Verizon feed of the meeting was fine.

Mr. Balek discussed a \$3,000 grant from Ceridian to the PWHS Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. At Mr. Zimmer's request, Mr. Balek explained the AVID program in detail.

Mr. Balek also noted that PWHS has received a \$5,000 major grant from the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation to help fund college visits for students and parents, collectively.

Mr. Balek and Mrs. Nuneviller presented an idea to alter the PWHS Academic Awards ceremony. Stating feedback from students, the recommendation is to make the event more of a celebration and include live entertainment. Considerable discussion ensued. Recommendations from those in attendance included moving the event to the spring and holding it during the school day. The committee was in favor of changing the current format.

Mr. Forster described a proposal for an Athletic Hall of Fame at PWHS. He explained that the Hall would encompass all sports with the criteria for induction based upon high school athletic performance. There was considerable discussion as to whether or not an Athletic Hall of Fame would detract from the Distinguished Graduates Organization (DGO). It was noted that the DGO takes into account accomplishments since graduation while the Hall of Fame would not. The committee directed Mr. Forster to prepare a formal proposal for further review.

Mr. Sherman discussed the Senior Citizen Winter Concert and Luncheon and noted a concern for transporting seniors from the auditorium to cafeteria west during the school day. After some discussion direction was provided not to use golf carts rather than wheel chairs to move the senior citizens.

Committee members were asked their direction regarding the Hop on the Bus program. They asked that the program continue and were not concerned with the cost of providing lunch to attendees.

Mr. Sherman provided information on the cost of several options to communicate the difficult budget situation to the community. Costs ranged from \$500 plus copy costs for an insert in local weekly and monthly papers to \$3,500 to \$4,000 for a one-page self mailer to the entire district. Mr. Sherman's advice was not to publicize the budget situation unless Board members have had adverse feedback from the public. He recommended not spending money to promote the fact that money is tight. Board members in attendance concurred. Mr. Zimmer stated he has only had positive comments from community members regarding the District operation.

Committee members reviewed a summary of the Board's decision not to enact student activity fees. Mr. Zimmer will present a report at a future Board meeting.

The committee reviewed amendments to policy #231.1, Commercial Activities in Schools and new policy #913 Advertising. The Board will review both policies on a first-read basis in January.

Mr. Sherman informed the committee of a Colonial Garden meeting to be held on Friday, December 17 at 8:15 a.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room. He stated that Wednesday, April 13 at 2:30 p.m. is the suggested date and time for the next Board/Student Town Meeting at PWHS. Mr. Sherman also noted that the next CRSL meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 6 at 5:30 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

Mr. Levin distributed his vision statement for the Colonial Garden. Considerable discussion as to the future and sustainability of the garden ensued. Dr. Cotter and Dr. Gorodetzer assured Mr. Levin that they appreciated his efforts with the garden and emphasized that the administration would like to see the garden be maintained and be a viable asset to the District. Dr. Gorodetzer stated that there were a number of logistical and legal issues that need to be addressed. Dr. Cotter stated that there are also serious budget implications to consider.

There being no further business or public comment, Mr. Zimmer adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman
Community Relations Coordinator
School Board Secretary