

**Colonial School District**  
**District Operations**  
**Safety and Wellness Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**1/19/11**

Committee Chair Ms. Beth Suchsland called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Other Committee Members Present: Alan Tabachnick,

Other Board Members Present: Kelly Jowett, Mel Brodsky, Gary Johnson

Also Attending: Dr. Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; Dr. Maryellen Gorodetzer, Assistant Superintendent; Terry R. Yemm, Director of Operations; Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services; Lori McCoy, Director of Food Services; Tom Traister, District Safety Officer; Heather Nuneviller, Principal, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School; Lieutenant Mike Beaty, Whitemarsh Township Police Department; Sergeant Fran Wheatley, Whitemarsh Township Police Department; Lieutenant Karen Mabry, Plymouth township Police Department; Detective Shane Murray, Conshohocken Police Department; Eileen Lafferty, Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coordinator, Montgomery County Office of Drug and Alcohol

Public Comment on the Agenda: None.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the hosting of large scale events on the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School/Colonial Elementary School campus. Of specific interest was the playoff football game held at the Colonial Stadium in early December. Mr. Yemm provided details of the planning involved with this event. The Operations Department was provided with approximately one week's notice of the decision to host the event. Upon notification of the decision the District Safety Officer immediately contacted the Whitemarsh Township Police Department (WPD) and scheduled a meeting to begin planning for traffic and parking control for the event. Two additional meetings were held during that week with the WPD to finalize the plans for the event. The District provided six (6) staff members and the WPD provided six (6) police officers for the event. While there was a tremendous spectator turnout for the event, all agreed that the traffic flow and parking on campus was handled extremely well for the size of the event and some felt that this type of event is good for the community as well. Lieutenant Beaty provided several suggestions for consideration for improvement for future large scale events. Included was the issuance of placards to identify any participants of any other small events held elsewhere on campus. This would assist in providing the proper location for parking reserved for any other events. Additionally, the use of the gate at the north east corner of the stadium and a temporary ticket booth at that same location was suggested. This would allow spectators parking in the parking lots at the Colonial Elementary School to use this entrance lessening the amount of spectators using the main entrance of the stadium. This location would also assist with spectators exiting the

stadium at the conclusion of the event. Both suggestions will be considered for future events.

Sergeant Wheatley provided information on a grant sponsored by the State Farm Insurance Company. The grant, Project Ignition, in the amount of \$2,000, has been awarded to the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School. The proceeds of the grant will be used to promote a campaign titled “DNT TXT N DRV,” the intent of which is to have students, parents and faculty pledge to not text while driving. Additionally, the development of a “DNT TXT N DRV” public service announcement to be utilized in Drivers Education classes and an assembly program utilizing a texting while driving simulator are part of the grant. The Committee provided support in taking the necessary steps to provide a recommendation to the School Board for acceptance of the grant at a future School Board meeting.

Mr. Traister provided information regarding a suggestion to add an emergency panic button in the District’s Administration area and/or General Meeting Room. This button would be in addition to the existing buttons currently installed in the main offices of each of our schools and is part of the CLASS. (Countywide Law Enforcement Alerting and Safety System) The suggestion was made by the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety in consideration of the tragic school board event in Florida last month. The Committee provided support to move forward with investigating the steps to have the button installed.

The Committee reviewed a request from the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) to finalize an agreement to use the PW/CES campus as a Point of Dispensing (POD) site. The terms of this agreement were established and agreed upon last year with one final step remaining to finalize the agreement. That step was a safety assessment of the campus by the MCHD. The assessment was successfully completed in the fall and notification was provided to the District regarding same. The Committee agreed to move forward with utilizing the site as requested.

Mr. Traister provided an update on the installation of some traffic control signs installed at the intersection of Colonial Drive and Germantown Pike. The installation of the signs was the result of an investigation of concerns with traffic patterns at the intersection. Specifically, drivers were turning left from the right hand lane and vice versa. Drivers entering the bus lane from the east café parking had no notification that they could not turn left on to Germantown Pike. The new signs provide ample notification to all drivers regarding the requirement for safely turning left or right when exiting the campus.

Karen Berk, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, provided a summary of the results of the PA Youth Survey (PAYS). PAYS is a survey of secondary school students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 on their behavior, attitudes and knowledge concerning alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and violence. The purpose of the survey is to identify the risk and protective factors most in need of attention in the community. A total of 1,045 CSD students participated in the survey in the winter of 2010. The information revealed

by the PAYS will be used to guide prevention efforts, to help address existing problems, and to promote healthy and positive youth development.

**Risk factors** are characteristics in the community, family, and school that are known to **increase the likelihood** that a young person will engage in one or more problem behaviors. The lower scores reported by students in these areas represents strengths of the Colonial School District. The lowest risk factors reported by CSD students are Poor Academic Performance, Early Initiation of Drug Use, and Low Neighborhood Attachment. Conversely, students in the CSD reported the highest risk factors in Community Disorganization, Parental Attitudes Favorable toward Antisocial Behavior, and Family Conflict.

**Protective factors**, or assets, are characteristics in the community, family, and school that are known to **decrease the likelihood** that a young person will engage in problem behaviors. The higher scores reported by students in these areas represent strengths that CSD can build on. Students in the CSD reported the highest overall scores in School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement, School Rewards for Prosocial Involvement, and Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement. In fact, according to Eileen Lafferty of the Montgomery County Office of Drug and Alcohol, students in the CSD scored the highest of all schools in Montgomery County in the school domain protective factors. Conversely, students in CSD reported the lowest protective factors in Community Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement, Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement, and Community Rewards for Prosocial Involvement.

Ms. Lori McCoy provided information to the Committee about three (3) programs. The information is as follows;

**Partnership for a Healthier America:**

This is a non-profit organization that supports the Chefs Move to Schools Program. They would like to recognize our efforts in trying to reduce childhood obesity by awarding us with \$2000 worth of new cookware. Our schools could really benefit from the new cookware. Included are induction burners and other pieces to be utilized for demonstration cooking, to teach students and others about healthy cooking. The Committee agreed to recommend acceptance of the cookware. Accordingly, a recommendation to accept the donation of the cookware will be provided to the School Board for consideration at a later date.

**Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act:**

This act was signed into law by President Obama in December. This act will have a large impact on our operations. New nutritional guidelines will be in place for schools to follow when menu planning. We anticipate an increase in cost for the healthier items; however, we will be reimbursed an additional six (6) cents per meal to compensate. The act will be implemented in phases, with the first changes expected to begin in the 2012-2013 school year.

**Chefs Move to Schools Program:**

We worked with students in Dr. Duncan's Family and Consumer Science Class and have submitted a recipe to the "Healthy Recipe Kids Challenge" sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture. Our recipe was "spicy Asian turkey burgers with fresh cut sweet potato fries." Winners may have a chance to prepare their meal at the White House. Also, the introduction to the cooking show has been taped. The first full episode will be taped on February 10th and will air shortly afterwards on CITV.

There being no further business before the committee, Ms. Suchsland adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:21 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry R. Yemm  
Director of Operations