

Community Relations and Student Life Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors, February 11, 2013

The Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, February 11, 2013 in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. Present were committee chair Beth Suchsland; committee members Leslie Finegold, Christina Frangiosa and Heather Palmer; Board President Alan Tabachnick; Board members Bernie Brady and Mel Brodsky; Superintendent Dr. MaryEllen Gorodetzer; Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Karen Berk; Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Activities Director Charles Forster; Assistant Public Relations Director Kim Newell; Community Relations Coordinator/School Board Secretary David M. Sherman; Board Student Representatives Tom Elvins and Devica Bhutani; and Linda Doll.

There was no public comment on the agenda.

The committee reviewed trip requests for the PWHS Ski Club to travel to Killington, Vermont from February 22-24, PWHS DECA students to participate in the state conference in Hershey, Pa., from February 27 through March 1, PWHS Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Club students to attend the state conference in Hershey from April 15-17, PWHS and Colonial Middle School (CMS) Technology Student Association (TSA) students to take part in their state conference in Champion, Pa., from April 17-20, and the CMS Art Club to travel to the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, N.J., on May 21. Mr. Sherman noted that a listed competition for the PWHS cheerleaders had been cancelled. He also noted that the DECA, FBLA and TSA trips were part of the value-added programs that the District has highlighted recently. Mrs. Suchsland asked how much money was budgeted for those value-added clubs. Mr. Forster explained that it was \$5,000 per club for the 2011-2012 budget and \$3,000 per club for the 2012-2013 budget. Responding to a question from Mr. Tabachnick, Mr. Forster stated that the budgeted funds are from the activities budget line and mainly covered transportation costs.

Mr. Forster provided committee members with an update on concussion testing for students participating in athletics and certain activities. He clarified the process of follow through on reported concussions. He noted that students had a baseline concussion test at the beginning of the year and that athletic trainers or first responders conduct a cognitive test when a concussion is suspected. He stated that parents were required to have a certified, licensed physician sign off on a follow up concussion test before a student was allowed to resume participation in a sport or activity. Mr. Forster noted that the high school has had 34 reported concussion cases since the beginning of the school year. Responding to a question from Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Forster reported that the District was following protocol when an incident occurs and taking appropriate action to follow up.

The committee agreed that the theme for the 2013-2014 District Activities Calendar would be "Colonial in the Community," featuring how Colonial students give back to the community and interact with community members on various projects.

Committee members were informed that a legislative forum was tentatively scheduled for February 26, but that a decision was made to postpone the event until the spring when budget issues come to the forefront.

The Committee agreed to allow the United States Marine Corps to have a tent at an invitational track meet in March in exchange for a donation.

Mr. Sherman stated that Business Administrator Trevor Jackson, Director of Operations Terry Yemm and he had interviewed four companies that proposed to evaluate the District's advertising potential and solicit ads on behalf of the District. He noted that Whitmarsh Media Group was the recommended vendor based upon cost, professionalism and local knowledge. Committee members commented on a contract that was distributed to Board members prior to the meeting. They suggested a cap be placed on the vendor's proposed fee.

Committee members were provided with an update on the District's three community outreach and development committees. The Fundraising Committee expects to launch an annual fund drive before the end of the month. The Partnership Committee is developing an interest survey to be distributed to parents and community members. The Advocacy Committee is scheduled to meet immediately following the CRSL meeting and will focus on advocating for mental health supports.

Ms. Newell reported that the website development process continues. She noted most of the current work is being done behind the scenes in creating a site map and organizing content. There was considerable discussion on athletic pages and who would be charged with keeping them current.

Mr. Sherman noted that the Senior Citizen luncheon and matinee are scheduled for Saturday March 16. Presently 520 tickets have been reserved.

The committee engaged in considerable discussion regarding the distribution of Friday Folder information. Some community groups are discouraged that hard copies of information is no longer distributed and participation is down. Committee members commented that information is made available electronically and can be obtained by those who wish to have it. The administration will gain feedback from building principals regarding the District's efforts to "Go Green" and not distribute as much paper.

Board members were reminded of upcoming meetings with Conshohocken Elementary School staff on February 22 and Colonial Elementary School staff on March 6.

Committee members were reminded of the Ecofest, hosted by the District in conjunction with Plymouth Township, Whitmarsh Township and the Plymouth Meeting Whole Foods Market, on Thursday, February 28 in PWHS Cafeteria West.

It was announced that the next CRSL Committee meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 11, 2013.

There being no further business or public comment, Mrs. Suchsland adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman
Community Relations Coordinator
School Board Secretary