

Community Relations and Student Life Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors, October 7, 2013

The Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) Committee of the Colonial Board of School Directors met on Monday, October 7, 2013 in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. Present were committee chair Beth Suchsland; committee members Leslie Finegold, Christina Frangiosa and Heather Palmer; Board President Alan Tabachnick; Board Vice President Susan Moore; Board members Mel Brodsky and Kathleen Oxberry; 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 Michael Krone and Lily Hart; PWHS teachers Mickey Engel and Will Blubaugh; Linda Doll and Jane Lewis.

There was no public comment on the agenda.

Mr. Engel, director of the PWHS spring musical, explained and demonstrated a method of communicating with students via text using Twitter. He explained this was a one-way form of communication that did not require students to have a Twitter account or register with Twitter or provide any personal information. Mrs. Frangiosa expressed concerns with the Twitter service. The committee decided to investigate the method further.

Mr. Forster introduced PWHS Latin teacher Will Blubaugh who detailed his request for Latin Club students to embark on a nine-day tour of Italy during the summer of 2014. The trip is open to students who take Latin or are members of the Latin Club. The estimated cost of the trip is \$3,800, which students will fund themselves. Mr. Blubaugh explained that approximately 28 students currently take Latin. He stated that he plans to offer the trip every other year.

Committee members were informed of requests for two additional student trips that are taken on an annual basis. The first is for PWHS Milestone and Town Crier students to attend a journalism workshop at Columbia University in New York City on November 4. The second is for the PWHS Colonial Players to travel to New York City to view the Radio City Christmas Spectacular.

The committee was asked to provide feedback on the start date for the 2014-2015 school year. There was consensus to begin the school year on Tuesday, September 2, the day after Labor Day.

Committee members were asked for input on the theme for the 2014-2015 District Activities Calendar. Mrs. Doll suggested highlighting PTO activities and parent involvement. The committee liked the idea.

The committee was informed that the District's Annual Report is in production and scheduled to be delivered to community residents after the November election. The publication will feature 1990 PWHS graduate Michael Rubin and current student entrepreneurs.

Committee members were informed that the Board will meet with PWHS students at 2:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11.

The committee was notified that Edwards Business Machines had purchased an advertising banner on Colonial Field and Murray Kia is considering purchasing a banner. Mr. Forster suggested contacting Lafayette Auto Care. Mr. Brodsky expressed concern over banners in the Gymnasium. It was noted that any banners sold for display in the gym could be removed during the school day.

Ms. Newell provided a brief update on the District website. She stated that most of the staff had been trained and that she would make a presentation on the site's content at the October Board meeting.

The committee was apprised of initial plans to hold a gala event to highlight the 2014 Annual Fund drive held in conjunction with the Colonial School District Education Foundation. The Great American Pub in Conshohocken is under consideration as a location.

Members were reminded that a Legislative Town Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 30 at 7 p.m. in the District Office General Meeting Room. State Representatives Mary Jo Daley, Kate Harper and Matthew Bradford and State Senator Daylin Leach are confirmed participants. State Senator Vincent Hughes has also been invited. Mr. Sherman was advised to publicize the event widely in order to attract a large audience.

It was announced that the next Parents Council meeting is at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 29 and the next CRSL committee meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 11.

Mrs. Lewis expressed concern over the accountability of coaches at PWHS and asked how their evaluation was handled. Mr. Forster explained that coaches' were reviewed by the Athletic Department staff. Dr. Gorodetzer noted that a more objective evaluation process had been implemented this year. She noted that evaluations are considered personnel issues and are not public. Dr. Gorodetzer explained the processes in place and the chain of command to follow for individuals to provide feedback. Mr. Forster added that coaches are provided training and explained the District's philosophy and expectations for conduct.

There being no further business or comment, Mrs. Suchsland adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David M. Sherman
Community Relations Coordinator
School Board Secretary