

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

May 8, 2006

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** requested a moment of silence in memory of Sandra Schaff who taught Music at Battle Hill and Ridgeway Schools for 25 years, prior to her retirement in 1991.

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2006-07 BUDGET: Mr. Connors presented a summary of the budget which totals \$165,841,434, and represents a 7.16% increase in expenditures and an 8.12% tax increase. He said this figure maintains favorable class sizes and adds no new staffing or programs. The budget does not include any funding of Capital Improvement projects, which had been discussed during the last several months by the Board. These will be studied by a community committee and will be considered for a referendum in the fall.

Major increases in the budget include mandated increases in Teachers Retirement funding and Debt Service, as a result of refunds to commercial property owners. Board President **Donna McLaughlin** noted that without these two major expenditures, the budget increase would have been less than 5%.

Mr. Connors urged everyone to vote on May 16th on the budget and on the election of Board Members. The three incumbents are running unopposed.

Several members of the public expressed concern about the tax increase and one taxpayer and parent commended the Board and Annual Budget Committee for their work on this budget.

ACCOLADES: Board Members attended various school events during the past few weeks and praised recent Kindergarten Round-ups, Ridgeway's Read Aloud, the Eastview sixth grade concert, Post Road's Author-Illustrator Night, and the Middle School play.

Mr. Connors read a list of some of the colleges to which high school seniors have been accepted. These include Brown, Cornell, Duke, Georgetown, Harvard, Howard, Johns Hopkins, Notre Dame, Spelman, Tufts, Wesleyan, Williams and Yale, among many others. He congratulated the students, their parents and teachers.

DONATIONS: The Board gratefully accepted donations from the following: \$4,000 from the **Coca-Cola Bottling Company** for Project Early Read; \$375 from **Joanna Reis-Gressel**, to be used for videoconferencing at Mamaroneck Avenue School; \$100 from the **Beautification Foundation** for the Newcomer Center garden; and \$500 from the **Hanna Andersson Children's Foundation** for Post Road School. Mr. Connors thanked all the donors for their generous support of our schools and expressed the appreciation of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction **Dr. Margaret Dwyer** to Coca-Cola for its support of Project Early Read over the past several years.

BOARD MEMBERS: Donna McLaughlin, President; Michelle Trataros, Vice President; Peter Bassano; Rosemarie Eller; Terry McGuire; William M. Pollak; Rick Tompkins

STUDENT CONDUCT PLEDGE: Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services **Dr. Joseph Casbarro** reviewed the status of the Athletic & Co-Curricular Pledge and explained that the draft is being reviewed and feedback is being collected from students, parents and coaches. Middle and High School parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss this on May 23rd at 7 P.M. at the High School.

CONTRACT WITH SUBSTITUTES: The Board voted to approve a four year agreement with the Teachers' Substitute Union. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Dr. Lenora Boehlert** reviewed the terms and said the average cost increase per year is 3.5%. Mrs. McLaughlin noted the importance of substitute teachers in the schools and thanked them for their hard work.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

May 10:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7 P.M.
May 17:	Special Meeting, High School, 7:30 P.M. Teacher Tenure
May 23:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Lonnie Edwards Report on Racism (Executive Session at 7 P.M.)
May 30:	Special Meeting, High School, B-1 Room, 7:30 P.M. Scholar-Athletes
June 12:	Regular Meeting, Education House, 8 P.M. (following reception for 25-year and retiring staff)

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld