

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

January 14, 2008

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of three former staff members: **Charlotte Pucher** was an office worker at Rochambeau School for 46 years, **Angelo Riviezzo** was Head Custodian at the High School and with the district for 29 years, and **Karen McCarthy** was an Evaluation Specialist in Research & Testing in the 1970's.

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES: Mr. Connors congratulated seniors who have already received acceptances to colleges, which include **Columbia, Cornell, NYU, Syracuse, Wesleyan and Yale**, among many others.

STATE AUDIT: The District Clerk announced receipt of the report from the Office of the State Comptroller. As required, it has been filed in her office and a public notice has been printed in the newspaper. Mr. Connors commented that the public can be very proud of the financial operations of the district. The State indicated that we had a good audit and made several recommendations for improvement. The district has already implemented some of these.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Connors asked **Dr. Lenora Boehlert**, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, for an update on the Committee on Undoing Racism. She provided the background and history and then described some recent activities, including Cultural Competence Training, development of a newsletter and raising awareness. Dr. Boehlert outlined goals and said these involve the ability to recognize the issues and their impact. They align very well with the Mission and Objectives of the Strategic Plan. She thanked the Committee members for their total commitment to the effort and for their excellent work. Several were present to contribute to the presentation. Board Vice President **Terry McGuire** thanked the committee members for their involvement in this project

Consideration of options to implement the Strategic Plan: Mr. Connors said the next step in the Strategic Planning process is for the Board to consider recommendations for options to carry out the plan adopted in December. After consultation with the Cabinet, he is suggesting that the Board consider the first specific result developed for each of the five strategies. Board members were asked to communicate their thoughts to him and decisions will be made at the February 11th meeting. At that time Mr. Connors will also share his suggestions for personnel to head these efforts as well as costs.

Mr. Connors asked **Fred Seiler**, Assistant Superintendent for Business, for an update on Capital Projects. The bid opening for the Mamaroneck Avenue School addition is scheduled for January 25th and, following approval by the Board, work should begin in March. On the Post Road construction, State approval is expected shortly and plans will probably go out to bid in late February. Work should begin in late March or early April. In response to a question, Mr. Seiler said this is consistent with the original timeframe, however it will be a challenge to complete the project by fall of 2009.

BOARD MEMBERS: **Donna McLaughlin, President; Terry McGuire, Vice President; Peter Bassano; Sheryl Brady, Rosemarie Eller; Charlie Norris, William Pollak**

DONATIONS: The Board accepted the following donations: \$750 for the High School Music Program and \$250 for Project Early Read from **William and Georgia Pollak**; and a bench from **Paul Bronzo**, for Mamaroneck Avenue School's playground, in honor of **Paul and Elise Bronzo**.

BUDGET: Cautioning that this is a very preliminary budget, Mr. Seiler reviewed major issues that will affect next year's budget and also major changes from last year's budget. Revenues are not known at this early stage and the Board will be discussing and reviewing the budget over the next several months. Meetings with the Annual Budget Committee will begin on February 6th. Board member **Bill Pollak** commented that if we follow last year's example, preliminary figures are much higher than the resulting budget.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: **Barbara Holland** commended the district for the presentation last week by the Committee on Undoing Racism. She also questioned the Chess Consultant on the agenda and expressed the hope that the district might open this program as well as chess instruction to as many children as possible. She cited evidence in predominantly minority districts that chess has been shown to be a very positive motivator.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: February 6: First Meeting with Annual Budget Committee, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
February 11: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
February 13: Second Meeting with Annual Budget Committee, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
February 25: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
Work Session on Budget

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