

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

October 9, 2007

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Susan Hirsch**, a Kindergarten teacher in the district for 19 years before her retirement in 2002.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Connors and staff members reported on various programs: Teacher **Doug Cronk** provided an overview of the Emerging Scholars Program, which encourages eighth graders to enter Honors programs, through a summer session and follow-up in high school. Mr. Cronk presented encouraging statistics on the students who have been in the program since its inception three years ago.

Safety Training is underway, led by Assistant Superintendents **Anne Lillis** and **Fred Seiler**, and the district continues to work with the Police in a Save Our Schools grant. The Safe Schools Task Force will hold its first meeting later this month.

The first Chinese Exchange Program earlier this month was well received and Board members and Mr. Connors praised Social Studies Teacher **Susan Altman**, Foreign Language Coordinator **Joan Kass**, and all those responsible for this success. The High School also has exchange programs with France and Germany as part of the district's efforts to bring the world a little closer together.

CAPITAL PROJECT WORK: Mr. Connors noted the arrival of the steel for bleachers and the progress being made on the Highlands and High School fields. Both are on time and under budget and the Highlands field is scheduled to be ready for the Thanksgiving Day Football Game.

Preconstruction activity will begin at Post Road School next Monday.

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING: Mr. Connors outlined proposed uses for funds allocated by the State and Federal Governments. Under the new Contract for Excellence adopted last spring, \$1.1 million in State funding will be made available to the district to improve the achievement of students with the greatest academic needs. This money will be used to reduce class size for targeted groups, to provide additional time on task for students-at-risk in grades 3-12, and to expand the Prekindergarten Program to full day for those most in need. Mr. Connors noted that the State has not released Contract for Excellence funding as yet.

The majority of the \$1.8 million allocated under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act will be used to support full-time teachers to provide students with direct instructional support in literacy.

DONATIONS: The Board and Mr. Connors thanked the following donors for their generosity: **Ms. Felicia Fried**, for a Casio Keyboard given to the High School; **Mr. & Mrs. Brian Crawley** for a printer for Post Road School; the **Class of 1947** for a painting for the Highlands Middle School and a set of encyclopedias for the Art Department at the High School, and **Betty Calabro** for a water cooler for the Eastview Middle School.

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

PERSONNEL: The resignation for the purpose of retirement of **Roland Skinner**, Custodial Worker at the High School, was accepted by the Board.

TAX CERTIORARIS: The Board approved additional refunds totaling over \$427,392, for nine separate property owners. The City had already approved settlements on these properties. In the current year, the Board has approved a total of about \$4.8 million in refunds.

To offset these refunds, the Board also approved the transfer of \$5.5 million from the 2006-07 fund balance to the Reserve for Tax Certioraris.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Parent **Verna Billeci** spoke about the need for a proactive Board policy regarding use of information on sex offenders and the related issue of school bus stop locations. Mrs. McLaughlin responded that the Policy Committee had met earlier this evening and will bring a draft policy to the Board at its next meeting which does, in fact, address these concerns.

Reiner Kraft, a new resident of Havilands Lane, asked for some clarity on the tree situation and the district's plans to resolve this. Mr. Connors replied that the engineer's report is expected to be available shortly and residents will be invited to a meeting on October 22nd to hear the findings.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: October 22: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
Engineer's Report of on property adjacent to High School
October 29: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
November 5: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

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