

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

February 12, 2007

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of two retired staff members who passed away recently. **Rosemarie Bond** was a Homebound Instructor with the district for 34 years, and **Norman Plitt** was at Eastview Junior High for 30 years, as Physical Education Teacher and Director of Athletics.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNIZED: Mr. Connors congratulated several High School students for recent outstanding achievements. **Mary Lau** and **Rose Liu** were named National Merit Finalists, and **Andrea Clay**, **Arielle Hawkins** and **Akina Young** are National Achievement Finalists. **Samuel Neubardt** was named an Intel Science Talent Search Semifinalist.

Mark Butler, a Rochambeau School student, was selected as an Outstanding Adult Student Award Recipient for 2007, given by the New York Association for Continuing Community Education. **Butler's** teacher is **Janet Hotchkiss** and **Claudia Murphy** is Director of the program.

The Board and Superintendent congratulated both the **Men's and Women's Varsity Basketball Teams** for their excellent performance in very exciting games, reaching the Sectionals once again.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Connors commended High School Social Studies Teacher **Susan Altman**, Coordinator of Foreign Languages **Joan Kass** and Principal **Ivan Toper** for the wonderful reception for the Chinese educators who visited last week to discuss an exchange program. Board members **Michelle Trataros** and **Terry McGuire** remarked on the great attendance, including Congresswoman **Nita Lowey**, Common Council Members and other dignitaries.

Mr. Connors mentioned an upcoming report on the capital projects at the February 26th Board meeting and also noted that Mid-Winter Enrichment Academies began last week. Over 80 students are participating, under the able direction of **Gary Peluso** and **Dr. Margaret Dwyer**.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Mr. Connors thanked the 30 people who participated in the three-day Core Committee session last week, to develop a blueprint for the long-range future of the district. Details will be shared in an upcoming districtwide newsletter and on the website. The community will have an opportunity to provide feedback and to serve on committees which will develop action plans and the processes to evaluate them. The result will be a comprehensive plan to be submitted to the Board for approval in November. Mr. Connors thanked **Teresa Niss** and **Jennifer Gray** for coordinating the effort.

A number of Core Committee members were present at the meeting and expressed great excitement about the session. Some excerpts:

"I was so proud of the student participants, who were remarkably articulate, thoughtful leaders."

"There were many different opinions but everyone worked together for what is best for our kids."

"It was a powerful experience and I applaud the Board for making it happen."

"It made me proud to be part of the White Plains community."

"It was time to give something back to the community and now I feel part of it."

"The community needs to be patient -- we won't have answers tomorrow. Work with us..."

BOARD MEMBERS: **Michelle Trataros, President; William Pollak, Vice President; Peter Bassano; Rosemarie Eller; Terry McGuire; Donna McLaughlin**

NEW 'WELLNESS' POLICY PROMOTES HEALTHY CHOICES: With the leadership of Assistant Superintendent for Business **Fred Seiler** and the work of Coordinator of Health and Physical Education **Jody Cole**, Director of Food Services **Ed Marra** and the Advisory Committee, the district has adopted a new "Wellness" policy, to encourage proper eating habits and provide healthy choices. The policy also addresses nutrition education and physical activity. The district will now develop regulations to implement the policy and phase it in over the coming year.

RETIREMENTS: Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from three administrators: **Amy Kuperblum**, Assistant Principal at Church Street School; **Steven Shell**, Coordinator of Business Education, Family & Consumer Science & Technology Education; and **Michael Vecchiolla**, Assistant Principal at George Washington School.

Sixteen members of the teaching staff are also retiring. **Sandra Altman** and **Nancy Haeberle** at Church Street School; **Elizabeth Rodriguez**, at George Washington School; **Eric Clark** and **Jean Nicastro Eichberg**, Post Road School; **Mary Barrett**, **Monica Henneberry**, **Rita Major-Hallerdin** and **Mary Frances Perkins**, Ridgeway School; **Laveda Ellis**, **Doris Hernacki**, **Gary Kressin**, **Breda Malfesi** and **Roger Siegel**, Middle School-Highlands; **Jerome Gorski**, Community School; and **Victor Paglia**, Districtwide Instructional Specialist.

PERSONNEL: High School Reading Teacher **Jennifer Stein** was awarded tenure. Coordinator of English **Ron Palladino** spoke of Ms. Stein's skills in helping children develop lifetime skills and moving them forward academically.

George Washington School Teaching Assistant **Daria Collins-Nasib** was also awarded tenure and **Patricia Dam** received a probationary appointment as ESOL Teacher in the Adult Education Program.

DONATIONS: The Board accepted the following donations. The **Louis R. Cappelli Foundation** contributed \$6,000 for Project Early Read and \$3,000 for the LAZOS (Ties in English) Program. The **Journal News/Gannett Foundation** gave \$2,500 for Project Early Read. **Mrs. Gloria Rosenberg** donated a piano to the Eastview Middle School. The International Gift Fair Team at **George Little Management, LLC** gave Post Road School \$198 for its Literacy Program. Board members thanked the donors for their generosity.

NEW BUS CONTRACT: The Board approved a five-year contract with White Plains Bus Company to continue transportation services. The district has been very pleased with the company's services and they do have a license to transport the High School students privately, whereas some companies do not.

FINANCIAL AWARDS: Mr. Seiler announced two awards to the district for financial reporting, from the Government Finance Officers Association, for the 21st consecutive year, and from the Association of School Business officials International, for the 19th year. Board members congratulated the Business Department and particularly **Jackie Macken** for this achievement.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: February 26: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
Budget Work Session
March 7: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
Final Meeting of Annual Budget Committee
March 12: Regular Meeting, High School, B-1 Room, 7:30 P.M.
Scholar-Athletes
March 19: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
Public Hearing on the Budget