

# THE BOARD REPORTS

## Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

June 11, 2007

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of three retired staff members. **Yvonne Brown** was a Teaching Assistant at the Middle School-Highlands for 11 years; **Leslie Fernandez** was Director of Educage for 14 years, and **Mary Stearns** taught English at the High School for 13 years.

RECOGNITION: Board Vice President **Bill Pollak** thanked President **Michelle Trataros** for seven years of service to the Board and many more as a PTA President and active parent. Her term expires at the end of the month. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Pollak presented her with an engraved school bell as a token of appreciation. Other Board members added their thanks and Natalie Arone of the CSEA, Jerry Gorski of the Teachers Association, and Teresa Niss, of the Administrators, expressed appreciation to Mrs. Trataros and announced contributions to Ridgeway School's Library in her honor.

Twenty-five year and retiring staff members were recognized for their dedication and service to the schools. Mr. Connors and Mrs. Trataros presented certificates to the following:

Twenty-five year staff members: **Janet Aiello, Mary Barrett, Mary Brennan, John Burch, Marcia Denais, Dothlyn Dennis, Joseph Fontane, Lois Gordon, Nancy Haerberle, Yvonne Harrison, Jacqueline Hemberger, Jonathan Hotchkiss, Ann Isberg, Odessa McGill, Elaine Norelli, High School, Suzanne Peduzzi, Mary Perri, Elia Presto, Michele Schoenfeld and Marian Steinberg.**

Retirees: **Bonnie Ackerman, Janet Aiello, Sandra Altman, Mary Barrett, Sandra Burno-DeBerry, Eric Clark, Sidney Crispell, Jean Eichberg (Nicastro), Laveda Ellis, Jerry Gorski, Nancy Haerberle, Monica Henneberry, Doris Hernacki, Nancy Hodder, Gerald Holman, Angela Karaffa, Gary Kressin, Amy Kuperblum, Rita Major-Hallerdin, Breda Malfesi, Harvey Mason, Victor Paglia, Mary Frances Perkins, Catherine Rago, Elizabeth Rodriguez, Steven Shell, Roger Siegel, Gary Steinel, Michael Vecchiolla and Laury Yates.**

Mr. Pollak commented on the recent High School Senior Awards Ceremony and said this was an exceptional class, with acceptances to every Ivy League school.

At a Special Meeting on May 31<sup>st</sup>, the Board recognized 81 Scholar-Athletes from five Spring Varsity Teams.

APPOINTMENTS TO TENURE: The Board granted tenure to four administrators at this meeting. Presenting **Ivan Toper**, High School Principal, Mr. Connors said that Mr. Toper has had an impact on improving student achievement and the graduation rate.

Middle School Principal **Diana Knight** introduced Highlands Assistant Principal **Brent Brown**, describing him as an exceptional instructional leader and wonderful role model for students.

**Robert Janowitz**, Mamaroneck Avenue School Assistant Principal, was presented by Principal **Gail Epstein**, who spoke about his responsiveness to students, staff and parents.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction **Margaret Dwyer** presented **Ronald Palladino**, Coordinator of English, and said he has made a strong contribution to the district in the areas of curriculum mapping, use of data, differentiated instruction and professional development.

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

CONTRACTS AWARDED FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS: The Board awarded contracts totaling \$6.1 million for the Loucks and Parker Stadium Athletic Fields. Architect **Russ Davidson** said the bids came in below budget, allowing an upgrade to a state-of-the-art Mondo surface for the High School track. Parker Stadium is expected to be completed in time for the Thanksgiving Football Game. Contracts were also awarded for the High School roof, totaling \$1.6 million. These are part of the capital projects approved by the voters last October.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Mr. Connors said he is proud to announce that March test results show substantial gains and he congratulated everyone responsible for this.

**Dorothy Schere**, President of the White Plains Beautification Foundation, spoke about the organization's contribution of over \$1,000 this year, for various activities in the schools.

Mr. Connors provided an update on Strategic Planning, noting that the Core group has responded to reports from the Action Teams and meetings will convene again in September, to finalize a plan for Board approval in December.

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources **Lenora Boehlert** reported that about eight of the 70 open positions remain to be filled. She thanked everyone who is working hard to complete staffing.

**Anne Lillis**, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services, informed the Board of some changes in the IDEA law regarding special services. The most important of these is that the school district where a child is being educated is now responsible, rather than the sending district. Financial implications of this have not been made clear yet by the State.

DONATIONS: The Board accepted the following donations: \$4,000 from **Coca Cola Bottling Company** for Project Early Read; \$2,000 in a **State Legislative Grant** for Project Early Read; furniture from **Jeremy and Jessica Shell** for the Staff Development Center; and silicone casting rubber, instructional DVDs and sample products from **Smooth-On Chemical Company** for the High School architectural and engineering programs

PERSONNEL: The Board accepted a resignation for the purpose of retirement from Mary A. Okvat, ESL Teacher in the Adult and Continuing Education Program.

Twelve teachers were appointed to Probationary positions for the fall. **Kristen DiPierro** and **Eric Pineda** will be Elementary Education Teachers at Ridgeway School and **David Acevedo** will teach Special Education there. At George Washington School, **Shantel Johnson**, **Lauren Bernstein** and **Jamie Burnett** will be Elementary Education Teachers and **Victoria Karell** will teach Special Education. **Valentina Ruggiero** will teach Elementary Education at Church Street School. At the Highlands Middle School **Andreanna Walling** will teach Special Education. Math Teacher **Gretchen Meyer** and Foreign Language Teacher **Brittany Nudge** will join the Eastview Middle School staff and **Michelle Phillips** will teach Math at the High School.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: June 25: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.  
July 9: Reorganization & Regular Meetings, Education House,  
7:30 P.M.

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