

# THE BOARD REPORTS

## Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

November 14, 2006

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Superintendent **Timothy Connors** welcomed staff members from Rochambeau School staff, in their annual attendance at a Board meeting.

In an update on the Capital Project, Mr. Connors said the architects and construction manager will be reporting to the Finance Committee shortly and to the full Board at a Special Meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup>. The project is in the design stage and Assistant Superintendent for Business **Fred Seiler** said that he hopes work on the fields will begin in June. Committees will be formed shortly, comprised of staff and community members, to provide input into the various projects.

Mr. Connors reviewed the Strategic Planning project and said community participation will be elicited on this as well, for meetings beginning in January.

Along with other districts, we are working with legislators regarding changes in the No Child Left Behind policy on testing of English Language Learners. Students in Grades 3-8 will be given the State ELA Test after one year in public schools (as opposed to three, previously), before they are properly prepared. Mr. Connors said the school districts are not opposed to testing, but results of these students should not be used in the determination of schools designated as "needing improvement" until we know what impact this change will have on Adequate Yearly Progress.

**DONATIONS:** **Linda Rodney**, Co-President of the **Foundation for Public Education in White Plains**, presented a check for \$25,000 from the Foundation to continue the Artist-in-Residence Program in all the schools. Mrs. Trataros thanked the Foundation for funding this worthwhile project.

Mr. Connors also thanked other donors for their generosity: **William and Georgia Pollak** - \$750 for musical instruments at the High School and \$250 for Project Early Read; the **White Plains Beautification Foundation** - \$100 for New York Presbyterian Hospital's student planting project; **Dorothy E. Smith** - a flute for Post Road School; **Claude Ribaud** - computer equipment for use districtwide; and **M. L. Condon Lumber Company** - \$600 worth of lumber for the High School Technology Education Department.

**TAX CERTIORARIS:** Upon recommendation of counsel, the Board approved tax certiorari refunds totaling over \$1.9 million. Cases involved settlements with 81 Main Street and Sears/275 Main Street. To date in this fiscal year, the district has authorized more than \$3.7 million in refunds for property tax settlements.

**2007-08 BUDGET:** Board members provided input into the planning process for next year's budget, and would like to see programs reviewed for efficiency and effectiveness. They said staffing and other expenses must be looked at carefully and creatively. Mr. Connors said that formation of the Annual Budget Committee will begin and members will be invited to upcoming planning meetings on the budget. Anyone interested in serving on the committee should contact the District Clerk, at 422-2071.

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

AUDIT REPORT FOR 2005-06: **Les Storch**, of the independent auditing firm, reported that last year's budget was 98% accurate on spending and the yearend variance was \$5.5 million. Tax certioraris are a significant expenditure and the reserve fund for this purpose becomes even more important in the current year. Of the \$5.5 million positive outcome, \$3.2 million will go into the undesignated reserve (maximum allowed by law) and \$2 million went into this year's budget, reducing the burden on the taxpayers.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: November 27: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.  
Update on Capital Project  
December 11: Regular Meeting, High School, 7:30 P.M.  
Scholar-Athletes  
Presentation on "Margaret's Place"

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