

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

December 14, 2009

RECOGNITION: Members of the White Plains High School Choir, under the direction of **Penelope Cruz**, were welcomed to the meeting and sang the National Anthem along with another song, "Peace Like a River," which they sang at the recent New York State School Boards Association Annual Convention in New York City.

Superintendent of Schools **Christopher Clouet** presented certificates of appreciation to two staff members who were honored by the community recently. **Robert LeFevre**, Head Custodian at the Highlands Middle School, received the 2009 Rosemarie Siragusa Memorial Youth Service Award from the Westchester County Youth Bureau and Youth Board. Principal **Diana Knight** said Mr. LeFevre is well known for mentoring students and for the positive effect he has had on many children. **Fred Singleton** received the White Plains Exchange Club's Teacher of the Year Award. He has taught at the Community School for more than 30 years and also coaches the Track Team.

Athletic Director **Chip Salvestrini** presented coaches of seven Fall Varsity Teams who introduced their 91 Scholar-Athletes. Men's and Women's Cross Country, Football, Field Hockey, Women's Soccer, Women's Field Hockey, Women's Swimming & Diving, and Women's Tennis were represented. Mr. Salvestrini also mentioned three athletes with 90+ averages from teams which were not recognized by the State for this honor. Students were congratulated, along with their parents and teachers, who helped them achieve this status.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Clouet asked Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum **Dr. Margaret Dwyer** to speak about the Advanced College Experience Program (ACE), a partnership with Westchester Community College to offer college credit at a reduced rate. Teachers are approved by WCC and students may enroll, regardless of whether they participate in ACE, and gain the benefit of experiencing rigorous college level courses. Next year the program will be expanded from this year's pilot of three classes. The long-term goal is to enable many students to leave White Plains High School with at least a semester of SUNY credits. Dr. Dwyer thanked Principal **Ivan Toper**, Director of Guidance **Lesley Tompkins**, and the Curriculum Coordinators for their leadership.

Dr. Clouet reported on his day at the High School today, following a student and seeing the school experience through a student's eyes. He said it was a very special, very informative day.

Providing advance notice, Dr. Clouet said that at the January meeting the Board will be asked to approve the proposed trip this spring by 15 High School students to our sister school in Suzhou, China. Plans are being developed now.

The Community Gardens project will also begin in the spring at several schools. There is strong interest in this inexpensive program which is being led by a group of teachers and administrators in partnership with community members.

BOARD MEMBERS: Donna McLaughlin, President; Rosemarie Eller, Vice President; Peter Bassano, Sheryl Brady, James Hricay, Charlie Norris, Randy Stein

DONATIONS: Dr. Clouet thanked three donors for their generosity. **William and Georgia Pollak**, for a donation of \$750 for musical instruments at the High School; **David Gravitz**, for National Geographic magazines for Church Street, Mamaroneck Avenue, Rochambeau and the High School; and **Catherine Traver Ruff** for a cello for the districtwide music program.

PERSONNEL: **Michael Lynch**, Director of Facilities and Operations, and **Constance Nichols**, Social Studies teacher at the High School, submitted their resignations for the purpose of retirement.

Eastview Middle School Science Teacher **Danielle Orellana** was appointed to tenure and Science Coordinator **Margaret Doty** described her an effective and engaging teacher who is a leader in the Science Department.

OTHER BUSINESS: Tax certioraris were approved for four properties, totaling over \$500,000 in refunds, bringing the year-to-date Board approvals to a payout of almost \$3 million.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:
January 4: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
January 11: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
January 13: First Budget Forum, High School B-1 Room, 7:30 P.M.
January 20: Second Budget Forum, High School B-1 Room, 7:30 P.M.
January 25: Special Board Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld