

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

December 11, 2006

STUDENT RECOGNITION: Eighty-eight students from six Fall Varsity Teams which averaged grades of 90 or better were recognized as Scholar-Athletes. Members of the Men's and Women's Cross Country, Field Hockey, Women's Soccer, Women's Swimming & Diving and Women's Tennis teams were introduced by coaches. In addition, three members of the Cheerleading Squad were recognized, along with six students with 90+ averages from teams which did not qualify. Athletic Director **Nick Panaro** congratulated the students, their coaches and their parents.

Coordinator of Foreign Languages **Joan Kass** introduced scholarship winners in the Community Ambassador Program, through the Experiment in International Living. Four students spoke about their meaningful experiences in different countries: **Molly Kellogg** and **Warne Goodman** in China, **Julia Rose** in Ecuador and **Naomi Shakerdge** in Australia. Other scholarship winners were **Marcus Brown**, **Catherine Eichberg**, **Seth Kreielsheimer**, **Rose Liu**, **Ben Pasternack**, **Alyce Regan**, **Hannah Reiss**, **Abigail Rudow** and **Elsy Santizo-deLeon**. Mrs. Kass thanked **Stephen** and **Nita Lowey** who sponsor this program privately.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Superintendent **Timothy Connors** introduced several reports to the Board and community:

Vicki Hertlein provided an overview of the Margaret's Place program in which she serves as Counselor. Funded by the Joe Torre Safe at Home Foundation, it provides students with a non-threatening setting in which to discuss issues concerning violence in the home and community. **Megan Flynn** represented Westchester Jewish Community Services, which partners with the Foundation to implement the program.

High School Principal **Ivan Toper** presented a report he gave before the Rotary Club recently, on initiatives for instructional improvement and results over the past three years. Trends are positive, in terms of both test scores and in closing the achievement gap.

Teacher **Susan Altman** updated the Board on visitors from the Suzhou High School in China. She and Mrs. Kass had been welcomed there and will now reciprocate with five Chinese educators who are expected here on February 4th. They will discuss a sister relationship with the school and introduce them to the White Plains community in an effort to further cultural understanding.

Finally, on Strategic Planning, Mr. Connors said the Board will meet on January 8th with **Stephen Barone**, who is facilitating this process, and there will be a public forum on January 24th, called a "World Caf ," to discuss future directions for the school district.

TENURE: Two teachers were awarded tenure: **Patricia Wahl**, Foreign Language Teacher at the Eastview Middle School, was described by Mrs. Kass as a dedicated, energetic, creative teacher who is bilingual and bicultural. **Tara Walsh**, an Elementary Education Teacher at the Highlands Middle School, was presented by Social Studies Coordinator **Lois Gordon**, who said Ms. Walsh has a genuine love of children and her classroom is filled with eager and committed students.

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

NEW PROGRAM: The Board approved a Dual Language pilot program at George Washington School for next year. This is a kindergarten program in which two teachers work collaboratively, with half the day's instruction in English and half in Spanish. K-5 ESOL Coordinator and New-comer Center Director **Suzanne Lasser** gave a presentation on this research-based program, explaining its benefits for all students and noting its success in other districts. Board Curriculum Committee member **Peter Bassano** added that the committee supports the program because it is a data-driven plan to address the issue of achievement, a top priority of the Board's.

DONATIONS: The Board accepted the following donations: \$10,000 from the **White Plains High School Alumni Association** for band uniforms; chairs and desks from **Congregation Kol Ami** for George Washington School; a Mexican poncho from the **Westchester Audubon Society** for the Spanish Program at Eastview Middle School; computer equipment, books, artifacts and file cabinets from **Barbara Schwarz** for George Washington School; and musical equipment from **Mort Silver** for the Middle School bands. Mr. Connors thanked these donors for their generosity.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

January 8:	Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Overview of Strategic Planning
January 17	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Executive Session -- Collective Bargaining
January 24:	World Café, White Plains High School, 7:30 P.M. Strategic Planning
January 29:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. 2007-08 Budget Planning
February 12:	Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

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