

January 9, 2006

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Albert Rost**, an administrator in the district for 24 years until his retirement in 1976.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: In an update on testing, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction **Margaret Dwyer** reported that the new testing required by the No Child Left Behind Act begins this week with English Language Arts exams for Grades 3-5. Next week Middle School students will take the ELA exams. Dr. Dwyer said that efforts have been made to prepare both students and parents for these new assessments.

Mr. Connors thanked the **Louis R. Cappelli Foundation** for its grant of \$7,000 for Project Early Read and Dr. Dwyer commended her Administrative Assistant **Nancy Hodder**, who has been preparing grant applications. The district partners with the **White Plains Housing Authority** and the **Youth Bureau** on this program, and receives support from **Coca Cola** as well as funding through State Senator **Suzi Oppenheimer**.

Mr. Connors noted that due to an increase in incidents related to food allergies, the district is following guidelines offered by the State. Assistant Superintendent for Business **Terry Schruers** has been working with Food & Nutrition Program Manager **Ed Marra** and Nurse Coordinator **Brenda Madera** on this issue. Mr. Schruers noted that this is being coordinated with the district's Wellness Policy, which the Board must adopt by next year, and he has been working with the Food Service Advisory Committee and Health & Physical Education Coordinator **Jody Cole**. A comprehensive recommendation will be brought to the Board in the spring.

EMERGING SCHOLARS PROGRAM: **Narcita Medina**, Assistant Principal for Special Services at the High School, and **Gary Peluso**, Director of Supplemental Programs, presented a report on the program instituted this past year, to open Honors level courses to more students and to provide support for them. The program began with a Summer School Enrichment Institute last year, resulting in participation by 22 students. Students are monitored and supported by mentor teachers and guidance counselors. Parent involvement is key to their success. Pending an evaluation of data and a final report on students' progress, the district hopes to expand the program next year.

DONATIONS: In addition to the grant from the **Louis R. Cappelli Foundation** for Project Early Read, a collection of National Geographic Magazines was donated to the Media Center at the Highlands Middle School by **Mrs. Roger Scholle**. Mr. Connors thanked both donors for their generosity.

TENURE GRANTED: High School English Teacher **Sarah Werner** was awarded tenure after recommendation by English Coordinator **Ronald Palladino**. Mr. Palladino described Ms. Werner as a vital member of the ELA Department and said she has made a significant contribution to students and staff. Ms. Werner said she finds White Plains students exciting and inspiring.

2006-07 BUDGET: Mr. Schruers presented very early figures for expenditures in a base budget which includes no new programs or additional staffing. He reviewed major changes and said the largest increases come from the Teachers' Retirement contribution, Utilities, and Debt Service, which is greatly affected by a large increase in tax certiorari refunds. More information will be presented at the end of the month.

TAX CERTIORARI REFUND: In the largest refund ever required of the district by the courts, \$4.5 million will be paid to Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. and White Plains Plaza Realty, LLC, for their properties at 1 North Broadway and 445 North Broadway. District counsel participated in the negotiations of this settlement, which covers three years. Funding will come from bonds authorized for this purpose.

FACILITIES AGREEMENT WITH CITY: The Board renewed its Joint Facilities Agreement with the City of White Plains for three years, to continue the cooperation between the two agencies for shared use and development of facilities and services. A committee, including the Mayor and the Superintendent of Schools, meets monthly to discuss this exchange of services.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

January 17:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Capital Improvement Planning
January 30:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Budget Trends
February 6:	Regular Meeting, Education House, 8 P.M. (Executive Session, 7:30 P.M.)
February 8:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. First Meeting of Annual Budget Committee
February 15:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Second Meeting of Annual Budget Committee

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