

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

June 13, 2011

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Christopher Clouet** asked for a moment of silence in memory of three former staff members.

Doris Brown was a School Psychologist at various schools in the district for 35 years until her retirement in 1996.

Mary Burke began her 41-year career in the school district in 1955 as a first grade teacher. After Assistant Principalships at Highlands and George Washington School, she spent 29 years as Principal of George Washington School (except for three years at Battle Hill School), until her retirement in 1996. Miss Burke touched the lives of thousands of students, families and staff members.

Paulette Desjardins worked for the district for 24 years until her retirement in 1994. She managed the Duplicating Office and Mail Room and was also President of the Civil Service Employees Association.

RECOGNITION: Board President **Rosemarie Eller** and Dr. Clouet thanked 24 retirees and 15 twenty-five-year staff members for their commitment and dedication to the district. One substitute teacher was recognized for 15 years of service. The PTA was thanked for hosting a reception for the honorees prior to the meeting.

Students from George Washington, Ridgeway and Eastview Schools were recognized for raising \$2,900 to benefit emergency relief funds in Japan. A check was presented to **Yoko Battista**, representing Niji No Kai, a Japanese organization which will direct the money toward school materials for students in Japan.

Dominic Boyce, of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, presented Dr. Clouet with President Obama's Volunteer Service Award and pin for his leadership in the Fatherhood & Mentoring Initiative.

Dr. Clouet congratulated the High School's Academic Team at the High School which was a semifinalist – top four in the country – in the national finals in Chicago last weekend and then came home to win the Tri-State Competition on MSGVarsity. Members of the A-Team were **Aneesh Bhattacharya, Adam Jaffe, Alex Johnsson, Jens Sannerud and Eric Smiley**. Their coach is **Les Roby**. Each member of the team received a New York State Assembly Citation from **Assemblyman Robert Castelli**.

DONATIONS: Dr. Clouet thanked the following donors for their generosity: **John & Barbara Forsythe** for \$100 for George Washington School, in memory of Mary Burke; **Lorraine Trovato-Cantori** for a television set for the Community School; the **White Plains Beautification Foundation** for \$100 gifts to both Church Street and Ridgeway Schools; **Lucy Roman** for five MP3 players for use in connection with Project Summer Read in the elementary schools; and **George Rehl** for art supplies for the Community School.

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

PERSONNEL: **Suzanne Lasser**, Director of ELL Programming K-12, was appointed to tenure by the Board. Ms. Lasser currently oversees ESOL programs, the Newcomer Center and the Dual Language Program. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction **Jessica O'Donovan** said Ms. Lasser serves each position with dedication, commitment and professionalism.

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from **Chris Binns**, Districtwide Crew Leader; **Sandra Barker-Boyd**, Special Education Teacher at Ridgeway; **Patricia Dam** and **Patricia Ricci**, both at the Adult & Continuing Education Program at Rochambeau; and **Judith Gewitz**, Guidance Counselor in the Alternative & Supplemental Programs.

The Board made three probationary appointments at Post Road School: Elementary Teachers **Joanne Schmidt** and **Vanessa Salazar**, and Special Education teacher **Lisa Cordone**.

As a result of the financial considerations and restraints in the recently-adopted budget for 2011-12, the Board abolished 13 Civil Service positions and 17 teaching and administrative positions.

The Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement with the Civil Service Employees Association for a three-year contract, effective through June 30, 2014.

OTHER BUSINESS: The Board approved trips abroad for the 2011-12 school year, to France, Germany and China. In addition, the district will establish a collaboration with the World Exchange Organization to host students from France in White Plains.

The district increased the school lunch price from \$2.00 to \$2.25, which is more in line with neighboring districts and the Federal reimbursement figure.

One tax certiorari refund was approved, for over \$750,000, bringing the total payout for the year to over \$8 million.

In another cost-savings measure, the district has abolished the Adult and Continuing Education Program at Rochambeau School. Those interested in pursuing courses should contact Southern Westchester BOCES or Westchester Community College which have similar programs.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: June 27: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
July 5: Organization & Regular Meetings, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

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