

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

May 11, 2009

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of the following retired staff members: **Alice Archambault** was a Nurse-Teacher and Elementary Teacher at Mamaroneck Avenue School for 18 years; **Dora Marconi**, Food Service Employee at Highlands, 6 years; **Alyce Schwartz**, Elementary Teacher, Mamaroneck Avenue School, 20 years; **Beatrice Silverberg**, Highlands Teacher, 22 years; **Esther Spain**, Secretary at the Central Office, 13 years; **George Washington**, Supply Clerk, 31 years; and **Helen Zacconi**, Reading Laboratory Aide at Rochambeau School, 25 years.

PUBLIC HEARING/PRESENTATION ON THE 2009-2010 BUDGET: Assistant Superintendent **Fred Seiler** reviewed the \$185,778,149 budget proposed for a public vote on May 19th. He provided information on staffing reductions, new program initiatives and summaries of expenditures and revenues. This is the lowest budget increase in the history of the district and the lowest tax levy in at least 25 years, with a tax rate increase of 2.41%. Comments from the public concerned non-resident students in school here, suggestions to reconsider the decision to combine the positions of Coordinator of Health and Physical Education and Athletic Director; the use of consultants; the need to hold the line on teachers' salaries, and appreciation for focusing on the Strategic Plan and for dealing well with difficult decisions.

RECOGNITION: Mr. Connors congratulated Bill Gates Millennium Scholarship winners **Anshu Hemrajami** and **Minuse Thelusma**, and Jandon Foundation Scholars **Jeanie Chen** and **Carolina Montenegro**. He also recognized 14 students who received Scholarships for Academic Excellence from the New York State Education Department: **Thomas Bastone, Evelyn Berger, Jeanie Chen, Caroline Couzens, Michael Dapice, Laura Demarte, Isabella Fante, Cameron Glass, Julia Maguire, Celina Mariano, Rebecca Neubardt, Benjamin Oppenheim, Keren Schieber** and **Zachary Schwartz**.

The district was presented with a 20th Anniversary Plaque from the New York State Insurance Reciprocal for being a founding member of this insurance consortium.

Board members commended students and staff for many recent activities, including New York State Music Association events, the Post Road School Open House, Portfolio Day at the High School, the Middle School's production of "Wizard of Oz," the ballroom dancing performance at Post Road School, the National Honor Society Induction, and the Loucks Meet, among others.

Since this is National Nurse Appreciation Week, School Nurses were recognized for the outstanding work they do with our students.

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

DONATIONS: The Board accepted several donations with sincere appreciation: \$1,000 for the High School Athletic Department and \$1,000 for the Swim Team from **Dana and Sunny Jo Comfort**; \$500 from **Fred's Restaurant**, in honor of **Dr. Heidi McCarthy**, for the Special Education Program; grocery bags from **Stop & Shop** for Mamaroneck Avenue School's Earth Day Project; and a tree from **SAVATREE** for the Arbor Day celebration at Mamaroneck Ave. School.

Mr. Connors also thanked **Junior Achievement of the Hudson Valley** for their 30 volunteers who presented a program based on the Social Studies curriculum in each grade level at Mamaroneck Avenue School.

PERSONNEL: The Board approved a retirement incentive for Managerial and Confidential employees who retire on or about July 1st of this year, similar to those offered to the Administrators and Supervisors and the Civil Service Employees Associations.

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from **Jody Cole**, Coordinator of Health & Physical Education; **Ronald Palladino**, Coordinator of English; and **Lawrence Kilian**, Coordinator of Testing, Evaluation and Funded Programs.

Teresa Niss received an interim appointment as Elementary Assistant Principal at Post Road School, effective until June 30th. Ms. Niss had been Coordinator of Art and Music and Mr. Connors said he has confidence in her administrative experience and familiarity with the Post Road staff.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction **Dr. Margaret Dwyer** spoke about the new Advanced College Experience Program. She said the program reinforces the district's Strategic Plan in that it allows students to pursue their aspirations. Six classes, to be piloted next year at no cost to the district, will provide college-level classes in which students can earn SUNY credits. Dr. Dwyer introduced teacher **Alberto Minotta**, who has already been conducting such a class and who presented three of his students to explain the experience afforded to them.

Commenting on the New York State District Report Card, Mr. Connors said our schools are doing well, with progress across grades 3 through 8. He thanked Dr. Dwyer for her leadership, the Coordinators and the staff, and said we are headed in the right direction.

<u>UPCOMING MEETINGS:</u>	May 20:	Special Meeting, High School, 7:30 P.M. Canvass of Election & Teacher Tenure Appointments
	May 28:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
	June 8:	Regular Meeting, High School, 7:30 P.M. Recognition of 25-Year and Retiring Staff Members

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld