

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

May 7, 2007

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Edward McSweeney** who taught Spanish at the High School for 26 years until his retirement in 1991.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2007-08 BUDGET: Mr. Connors said the Board, Annual Budget Committee and administration worked hard to bring the budget in at an increase of only 4.4% -- the smallest budget-to-budget percentage increase in almost 10 years. The \$174,070,116 budget will result in a tax increase of 6.95%, compared with last year's 8.12%. Most property owners will see this increase offset by the STAR Rebate Program. Assistant Superintendent for Business **Fred Seiler** reviewed the summaries of expenditures and revenues.

One member of the public praised the district for holding the budget to a number which the community can support. Another expressed concern about the yearly increases in taxes.

STUDENT RECOGNITION: Mr. Connors read a list of some of the colleges to which High School seniors have been accepted. These include Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Duke, Georgetown, Harvard, Princeton, Spelman, Tufts, Wesleyan and Yale.

White Plains High School's 16th National Intel Science Semifinalist, **Sam Neubardt**, made a presentation on his research and seniors in the Science Research Program were introduced. Teacher **Timothy Selg** said the program has over 86 new students this year -- bringing the total to 109 students, the largest such program in the state. He thanked Principal **Ivan Toper** and Science Coordinator **Margaret Doty** for their support.

CHINA EXCHANGE PROGRAM: In his Superintendent's Report, Mr. Connors called upon Social Studies Teacher **Susan Altman** to provide an update on the proposal. Tentative plans call for 10 students from Suzhou High School to visit this fall and White Plains High School students to travel to China next spring. The process would need to begin shortly to recruit students, develop criteria for selection, identify host families, examine ways to introduce the Chinese language, and a number of other issues. Resulting from Principal Ivan Toper's suggestion, the China Institute is proposing that White Plains High School become a regional center for their educational outreach program.

Board members expressed enthusiasm for the proposal and the administration will work with Ms. Altman and Coordinator of Foreign Languages **Joan Kass** to develop final plans for the Board's approval.

DONATIONS: The Board accepted a 65" TV monitor and DVD system from **Illya and Lauren Shell** for the High School Media Center, a piano from **Mrs. Gloria Rosenberg** for the Eastview Auditorium, a flute from **Mr. and Mrs. Ricardo Cruz** for the Ridgeway band program, and a guitar from **Jody Cole** for the High School music program. Mr. Connors expressed appreciation for these generous gifts.

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

RETIREMENTS: Three staff members at the High School submitted their resignations for the purpose of retirement this month: **Gerald Holman**, Head Custodian; **Catherine Rago**, Office Assistant; and **Sidney Crispell**, Mathematics Teacher.

TEACHING APPOINTMENTS: Ten new teachers were appointed for the next school year. At the High School, **Shanna Chakides** will teach Mathematics; **David Pallant**, Spanish; and **Anita Nordal**, Social Studies. At the Eastview Campus of the Middle School, **Noah Lethbridge** will teach Music and **Danielle Ciuffetelli**, Science. At the Highlands Middle School, **Nikki Lee** will teach Health and **Jennifer Smith**, Mathematics. **Crystal Rodrigues** will be a Kindergarten Teacher at Post Road Road School, and **Megan Acosta** will be an Elementary Education Teacher at Ridgeway. **Yahaira Mendez** will be a Speech Teacher, Districtwide.

STATE REPORT CARD: As required by the State, the Superintendent presented the New York State School Report Card to the Board of Education. **Dr. Larry Kilian**, Coordinator of Testing, reviewed the information, noting a new format which includes graduation rates and information on the achievement gap. Results for graduation in White Plains were better than a number of districts with whom we are usually compared. It was pointed out that we missed the target for Students with Disabilities at the High School, where we did not meet annual yearly progress requirements. Board members expressed greater interest in seeing comparisons of schools, individual classes or students, from year to year, to help determine best practices and progress in achievement.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

May 15:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Executive Session
May 16:	Special Meeting, High School Media Center, 7:30 P.M. Canvass of Election and Appointments to Tenure
June 11:	Regular Meeting, High School Media Center, 8 P.M. Reception for Retirees & 25-Year Staff, 7:30 P.M.

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