

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

October 6, 2008

STUDENT HONORS: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** announced that 14 White Plains High School seniors received recognition in the 2009 National Merit Scholarship Competition. Semifinalists are **Victor Brady, Isabella Fante, Jacob Paul** and **Scott Schwartz**. Commended students are: **Evelyn Berger, Max Chapnick, Rachel Fishkis, Cameron Glass, Benjamin Himmelstein, Emma Lagle, Rebecca Neubardt, Keren Schieber** and **Audrey Silverman**. **Maria Matsushita** is a Semifinalist in the 2009 National Achievement Scholarship. Mr. Connors congratulated the students, their teachers and parents for this national honor of scholastic excellence.

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH: Consultants **Deborah Raizes** and **John Chambers** of **Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates**, reported on the Leadership Profile Assessment resulting from meetings, interviews and questionnaires in recent weeks. Almost 500 people provided input and the consultants said that a consistent message was the entire community's pride in their schools. They reviewed the strengths presented, the challenges perceived and the characteristics desired in the new superintendent. The consultants will now begin to recruit and the Board will interview during the winter. President **Donna McLaughlin** said the Board will follow the same process as in the last search, including inviting some key people in the district and community to participate in final interviews. A copy of the report is available from the District Clerk, 422-2071.

PROGRAM REPORTS: The Board approved Foreign Exchange Trips for the 2008-09 school year. Students will travel to Italy in March and Spain and Costa Rica in April.

Reporting on Advanced Placement Courses, Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Margaret Dwyer** and Guidance Coordinator **Lesley Tompkins** said the district strongly believes in the importance of this rigorous experience and has programs designed for students who want to accept the challenge. The number of students participating has increased far more than statewide increases.

Mr. Connors discussed the State-required Violent and Disruptive Incident Report (VADIR) and noted that the district has improved its reporting process. The numbers include very minor incidents, such as cutting classes, and the district is *not* among those reporting many serious crimes or considered unsafe. In fact, as indicated in the superintendent search consultants' findings, students commented that they feel safe in school and that security is good.

Dr. Lawrence Kilian, Coordinator of Testing, Evaluation and Funded Programs, provided information as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act on the use of funds in the current year. The district will receive \$1.6 million this year, a cut of about about \$182,000. The major portion will be used to provide direct instructional support in literacy. For further information or comments on the proposed use, please contact Mr. Kilian at 5 Homeside Lane.

The Middle School's Highlands campus has a new "ROAR Campaign" – a program to combat bullying and promote respect among students, led by Principal **Diana Knight**.

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

USE OF FIELDS: The decision was made to hold the Thanksgiving Day Football Game at the new Loucks Field at the High School, rather than at Highlands. Mr. Connors reported that everyone involved with the game is in favor of the move.

The Board then approved a new schedule of fees for use of fields by out-of-school groups. Fees had not been increased in 12 years and costs for custodial and technician services have gone up. The City does not currently pay for use of fields, in accordance with the Joint Facilities Agreement.

DONATIONS: **The Foundation for Public Education in White Plains, Inc.** presented a check for \$15,000 for the Artist-in-Residence Program, including the popular “Beyond Ballroom” in the elementary schools. **James Duffy** donated a computer monitor for George Washington School.

PERSONNEL: Tenure was awarded to **Victoria Kolndreu**, ESOL Teacher at Mamaroneck Avenue School. She was described as “an outstanding educator who supports mainstream teachers in a collaborative environment.”

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from **Margo Devenney**, Special Education Teacher at the High School, and **Madhy Oya**, Adult Education Teacher at Rochambeau.

Jennifer Bien-Montgomery was appointed to a probationary position as Districtwide Teacher of the Hearing Impaired.

ENERGY SAVINGS: After a presentation by **George Lawrence**, Technical Services Director of **ECG Engineering, LLC**, the Board authorized the firm to prepare a request for proposals for an Energy Performance Contract. ECG estimates that the district could save at least \$700,000 a year and all costs must come from the savings. There would be no additional cost, obligation or risk to the district for this project, due to supportive legislation for such energy savings. Many of the improvements would have a direct effect on classroom environment.

UPCOMING MEETING: November 3: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld

THANKSGIVING DAY FOOTBALL GAME

vs.

STEPINAC HIGH SCHOOL

will be played at the new

LOUCKS FIELD AT WPHS

Thursday, November 27th, 10:30 AM