

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

September 8, 2008

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Superintendent of Schools **Timothy Connors** asked for a moment of silence in memory of **Lou Maenza**, a Food Service Worker for 23 years, retiring in 1982.

SCHOOL OPENING: Mr. Connors said school got off to a great start, with help from a very seasoned group of principals. He thanked the grounds crew, custodial staff, Transportation Department, school office staffs and others for their hard work preparing for the new year.

As required, Mr. Connors mentioned the new regulations prohibiting bus idling and said they are posted in all the schools and on the website.

The first game on the new Loucks Field was played on Saturday, with the Tigers winning in double overtime. The first night game will take place this Friday under the new lights. The district expects the new scoreboard to arrive shortly.

THE YEAR AHEAD: Mr. Connors spoke about the five Strategic Objectives to be implemented as part of the Strategic Plan which was approved by the Board last December. This will be a major focus for the district this year and the Mission Statement has been posted in each building.

Board President **Donna McLaughlin** said another major focus for the year will be the search for a new Superintendent of Schools. Public meetings with the consultants are scheduled during September and the Board hopes that attendance will be good. The community contributed greatly to the success of the last search, conducted by the same consultants.

HALL OF FAME: High School Principal **Ivan Toper** announced the selection of four alumni to be inducted into the Hall of Fame on October 28th. They are: **Dr. William Homan**, '65 (post-humously), surgeon and founder of the New York Bariatrics Center; **Susan R. Katz**, '65, Founder and Executive Director of the non-profit professional theatre company, Westco Productions; **Philip Kent**, '72, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Turner Broadcasting System, Inc.; and **Lawrence Otis Graham**, '79, bestselling author, nationally-known attorney and commentator on race, politics and class.

FINANCIAL REPORTING AWARDS: Once again, the Business Office of the district received Certificates for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association and the Association of School Business Officials International. Assistant Superintendent for Business **Fred Seiler** and Business Manager **Jackie Macken** accepted the awards.

PERSONNEL: Tenure was awarded to **Susan Anastacio**, Elementary Education Teacher at the Eastview Campus of the Middle School, who was described as a "talented professional."

Three people were appointed to probationary positions: **Tanya Doyle**, Elementary Education at George Washington School; **Cynthia Otero-Soriano**, School Psychologist at the High School; and **Marina Yoegel**, Committee on Special Education Chairperson, Districtwide.

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

CODE OF CONDUCT: Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services **Anne Lillis** provided background for the required annual review of the Code by the Board. She said the Code was adopted in 2001 as a result of State legislation and Project SAVE (New York State Safe Schools against Violence in Education Act). The Code incorporates and expands upon many district policies concerning rules governing behavior and provides a legal and procedural framework for disciplinary decisions. A copy is mailed to parents each year and the code is reviewed with all students. No changes are recommended for 2008-09. Mr. Connors added that he expects more attention this year to the issue of bullying and an emphasis on respect. He said the Code has served the district well.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: The Board approved this plan for the current school year and **Dr. Margaret Dwyer**, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, described the collaborative effort with the District Staff Development Team. She said key goals are aligned with the Strategic Plan and believes we are seeing “a clear positive correlation between our targeted professional development and improved student outcomes.”

NEW ENRICHMENT PROGRAM: A presentation on this program, to be implemented in third grade this year, was presented by **Terri Klemm** and **Lorretta Cannito**, members of the committee which has been working in this area for the past three years. This Small Group Enrichment Program will address the needs of students who require a greater challenge, more depth and a faster pace in their areas of strength. It will be rolled out into fourth and fifth grade in the following two years.

Parents will be informed by a letter and a new identification process will be implemented. The district believes that the program will build on the goal to stretch students to higher learning levels.

UPCOMING MEETING: October 6: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld