

# THE BOARD REPORTS

## Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

October 17, 2011

**HONORS:** Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Christopher Clouet** announced the names of students selected for recognition in the National Merit competitions. Students named Semifinalists were **Matthew Africano, Aneesh Bhattacharya, Emmett Caruso, Isabelle Daly, Adam Jaffe, Jens Sannerud, Eric Smiley** and **Benjamin Van Doren**. Commended students are: **Shaina Brady, Rong-Si Deng, Rachel Eddy, Jordan Grobe, Alyssa Habermann, Michael Lau, Khalilah Lushiku** and **William Tunney**. In the National Achievement Scholarship, Semifinalists are **Khalilah Lushiku** and **Cheyenne Vlymen-Williams**, and **Ty Matsushita** was named Outstanding Participant. Three Scholar Award Recipients were named in the National Hispanic Recognition program: **Matthew Africano, Selina Thompson** and **Ana Velasquez**. Honorable Mention went to **John Medelius**. Dr. Clouet congratulated the students, their parents and teachers.

**ROAR**, the High School Literary Magazine has won a gold medal from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. Dr. Clouet congratulated Editor in Chief **Nate Lanman**, Art Editor **Hannah Fine** and Literary Editor **Eero Talo**. The Faculty Advisor is **Brendan Donegan**.

Dr. Clouet announced that White Plains has been named one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People by America's Promise Alliance, in a cooperative effort with the City's Youth Bureau. The award comes with a \$2,500 grant.

Presidents of the three bargaining units were present to honor Board Members for School Board Recognition Week, beginning October 31<sup>st</sup>. They thanked the Board for their time, energy and good will, on behalf of the students and the community, and presented a certificate of appreciation and a donation to the school libraries.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Clouet presented the October 1<sup>st</sup> enrollment report and plans to discuss this with the Board at a future meeting. Total enrollment is at 7,110, down a little from 7,151 last year.

The district worked with the City's Youth Bureau on a very successful "Dads Take Your Child to School Day" in September, which brought over 1,000 fathers/guardians into the schools.

**DONATIONS:** **Larry Geiger**, President of **The Foundation for Public Education in White Plains, Inc.**, presented the group's check for \$10,000 to support Beyond Ballroom Dancing in the elementary schools. This is the fifth year the group has sponsored this very popular program. Mr. Geiger thanked the staff and community members who support the Foundation.

Other donations accepted by the Board were: uniforms from **Nancy Freeman** for the Field Hockey Program; cookbooks from **Jeannette Bogart's Best Breads Limited** for the LOTE Department; an American Flag from the **Warager Family** for the High School Athletic Program; \$1,000 worth of Gift Cards from **Walmart** for classroom supplies; copies of "Llama, Llama, Red Pajama" from the **Pearson Foundation** for all Prekindergarten students; and a color printer from **Lenora Boehlert** for the Technology Department.

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

PERSONNEL: Two staff members were awarded tenure by the Board: **Jennifer Montgomery**, Deaf Education Teacher, Districtwide; and **Miriam Pena**, School Psychologist, Post Road School. They were presented by **JoAnn Doherty**, Co-Director of Special Education. She described Ms. Montgomery as “an inspirational teacher who makes a difference in the lives of her students.” Ms. Pena, formerly a CSE Chairperson, is “a very hard-working staff member who supports both children and families.”

Resignations for the purpose of retirement were accepted from **Joel Chabon**, Social Studies Teacher, Middle School-Highlands, and **Sandee Levinson**, Teaching Assistant, Mamaroneck Avenue School.

SCHOOL DISTRICT AUDIT: **Scott Oling**, Partner at **O’Connor Davies Munns & Dobbins, LLP**, reviewed the district’s independent audit report for 2010-11, noting the “unqualified opinion” of the auditors – the highest form of assurance which can be provided. Mr. Oling reviewed General Fund information as well as the Fund Balance, which has a new presentation required by the State. He discussed the resources the district has available to fund tax certioraris and then answered questions from the Board. It was noted that Board Members and the Board Finance/Audit Committee had opportunities to discuss this in more depth prior to tonight’s meeting.

OTHER MATTERS: The Board approved an extension of the Pilot Agreement for Vehicle Maintenance with the City of White Plains. The Common Council approved the extension last week, which will run to June 30, 2012. The district will try to plan vehicle maintenance well in advance, in order to avoid scheduling conflicts, and will have back-up service available, in case it is needed.

Tax certiorari refunds to four commercial property owners, for more than \$322,000, were approved by the Board. This brings the total to over \$7 million in payouts approved since July 1st.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

October 24:	Special Meeting, Education House, 4 P.M. (Executive Session for Board Retreat)
November 14:	Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
November 28:	Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M. Technology

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld