

THE BOARD REPORTS

Highlights of the White Plains Board of Education Meeting

September 8, 2014

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Superintendent **Timothy Connors** said the opening of school went very smoothly, from the initial orientation sessions to the students' arrival on September 3rd. He thanked **Assistant Superintendent for Business Fred Seiler** and **Director of Facilities Frank Stefanelli** for their excellent work to prepare the schools for opening, following a great deal of work in the buildings over the summer.

Reporting on Summer School, Mr. Connors said over 500 students attended the secondary program and there were 130 at the elementary level. Fifteen students became eligible for graduation and Board members attended that ceremony in August. He said this was one of the better summer sessions.

District Clerk Michele Schoenfeld read the list of 14 students honored by the National Merit program in their various categories. **Madeleine Beck** and **Andrew Smiley** were named Semi-Finalists in this year's competition.

Discussing the recent release of the 2013-14 State Assessment data, Mr. Connors quoted **Commissioner King**, who said "we're in a period of transition...and these scores show we have a lot of important work ahead..." **Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Jessica O'Donovan** presented slides showing specific results and said scores have been uploaded into the Parent Portal. There are some significant increases in Math scores and some decreases in ELA, which are in line with results across the state. As far as next steps, Ms. O'Donovan said the district began its efforts two years ago and will continue to refine and enhance them, with emphasis on literacy across the curriculum, student engagement, and a growth mindset.

SAFETY ISSUES: **Sue Golden**, Co-Chair of the PTA Council Walk/Bike Safety Committee, said the group is beginning its third year of an awareness and advocacy campaign to improve safety. She cited various conditions in the city which make it unsafe for students to walk or bike. Solutions for some of these might require the participation of the School District and PTA Council is therefore requesting that the Board make this a priority. Ms. Golden offered some suggestions for actions the District might take and invited everyone to participate in the October 8th Walk/Bike to School Day.

Board President Rosemarie Eller thanked Ms. Golden and made a statement on behalf of the Board Members, saying that they share PTA Council's concerns about traffic and safety. The Board has been looking at these issues in conjunction with the FASNY proposals and had already agreed in August to convene a committee to review the available information, particularly the city's traffic study. Mrs. Eller said we will complete our due diligence and will share our findings and recommendations within two weeks.

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

PERSONNEL: The Board approved the appointment to tenure of **Raegan Figueroa**, House Administrator at the High School. Mr. Connors said Ms. Figueroa is an outstanding administrator who cares about students and staff and who is respected by everyone. He presented the recommendation of the High School Principal, **Ellen Doherty**, who said Ms. Figueroa is “well-organized, a creative problem-solver and a team player.” Ms. Figueroa thanked everyone, particularly Mr. Connors and Ms. Doherty, for their support. She looks forward to a long career here.

UPCOMING MEETINGS: September 15: Special Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.
 October 6: Regular Meeting, Education House, 7:30 P.M.

Editor: Michele Schoenfeld