

## Two new members join School Board

Lenore Bruno and Kelly Jowett were appointed to the School Board this winter to fill the vacancies created by the departures of Dr.

Pascal Scoles and Marc Orlow. Dr. Scoles cited increased work responsibilities when he departed in November. Mr. Orlow stepped down in January to address health issues.

“Lenore and Kelly are both excellent additions to the Board and have meshed well with our other Board members,” said new Board

President Gary Johnson. “Lenore has considerable public service experience having previously served on the School Board and the Plymouth Township Council. Kelly has been actively involved in the Ridge Park PTO and other District support groups and has held leadership roles in those organizations.”

A long time Plymouth Township resident, Bruno was a member of the Plymouth Township Council from 2001 through 2008. She previously served on the Colonial School Board from 1987 through 1994 and

has served on the Boards of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation and the Colonial Exchange Club. She was a member of

the Plymouth Township Parks and Recreation Board from 1993 through 1999 and held leadership roles with the Conshohocken FunFest Committee.

“I am honored to once again be a member of the Colonial School Board,” Bruno said. “I truly care about the education of our children and feel that

the Colonial School District is one of the cornerstones of our three communities.”

For that reason, Jowett decided to move to Colonial nearly a decade ago.

“We left Philadelphia to move to this area because we heard great things about the Colonial School District,” she said. “I am pleased to serve on the School Board, and I look forward to working

with the Board and administration to continue to move the District forward in its drive for excellence.”

**See Board on next page**



**Lenore Bruno**



**Kelly Jowett**

## Preliminary Budget approved by Board

The Colonial Board of School Directors approved a 2009-2010 Preliminary Budget of \$92,852,000 at their April 16 public business meeting. The proposed budget is 3.31 percent or \$2,975,000 higher than the previous year’s budget. The real estate tax mil rate is established at 16.90 which represents a 2.0 percent increase in local real estate taxes. The rate translates to an increase of \$33 for every \$100,000 of property assessment or \$48 on the District’s median assessed value of \$146,990.

Nearly 77 percent of the budget is funded through local revenues, including current and interim real estate taxes, Act 511 earned income taxes, transfer and delinquent taxes, public utility tax, interest savings, payments from other districts, tuition and facility rental payments. The District also expects to receive some funds from the Pennsylvania Real Estate Tax Relief Program, though that amount is not yet known.

State funding is expected to decrease 4.27 percent while federal funding is down 16.59 percent.

The Board expects to use more than \$8 million of the District’s projected 2009 fund balance of \$10.9 million in order to balance the 2009-2010 budget.

## District collaborates on reforestation project

The Colonial School District (CSD) has teamed with Whitemarsh Township and the Lafayette Hill based Native Return, LLC on a riparian and storm water management reforestation project in the area of Victory Fields and McCarthy Park. The District and Township received Tree Vitalize grants of \$14,200 and \$36,400, respectively from the Department of Environmental Protection to fund the first phase of the project.

Trees in the area were being compromised by invasive vegetation that was essentially choking the life from the trees. The encroaching undergrowth was treated with an herbicide in late October 2008 and subsequently removed. In March, District Turf Management personnel in conjunction with All Seasons Landscaping, planted 380 native trees and shrubs in the

**See Tree revitalization on page 3**

# Quick Facts

Location .....	Plymouth Meeting, Pa. Serving Conshohocken Borough and Plymouth and Whitemarsh Townships
District Population .....	Approximately 40,336
Number of Employees .....	720 374 teachers 50 Administrators 296 Support Staff
Schools .....	Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Colonial Middle School Colonial Elementary School Conshohocken Elementary School Plymouth Elementary School Ridge Park Elementary School Whitemarsh Elementary School
Total Enrollment .....	4,722
Special Education .....	791
Gifted .....	209
Low Income .....	15%
Average Class Size .....	19-22
2008-09 Budget .....	\$89,877,000
Expenditure per Student .....	\$18,906.60
Highly Qualified Teachers .....	100%

## School Board

Gary J. Johnson .....	School Board President
Susan Moore .....	School Board Vice President
Lenore Bruno .....	School Board Member
Tom Davis .....	School Board Member
Kelly Jowett .....	School Board Member
Hope Luken .....	School Board Member
Dr. Bill Ryan .....	School Board Member
Steven Slutsky .....	School Board Member
Mitch Zimmer .....	School Board Member

## Administration

Dr. Vincent F. Cotter .....	Superintendent
Dr. MaryEllen Gorodtzer .....	Asst. Superintendent
Joseph P. Bickleman .....	Chief Financial Officer
Cassandra DeLong .....	Director of Pupil Services
Andrew Boegly .....	Chief Information Officer
Terry Yemm .....	Director of Operations
Richard Hartz .....	Director of Human Resources

## Contact Numbers

District Office .....	610-834-1670
District Office Fax .....	610-834-7535
Conshohocken Elementary School .....	610-828-0362
Conshohocken Elementary School Fax .....	610-828-4582
Plymouth Elementary School .....	610-825-8190
Plymouth Elementary School Fax .....	610-825-7853
Ridge Park Elementary School .....	610-825-1083
Ridge Park Elementary School Fax .....	610-825-7983
Whitemarsh Elementary School .....	610-828-9092
Whitemarsh Elementary School Fax .....	610-828-1516
Colonial Elementary School .....	610-941-0426
Colonial Elementary School Fax .....	610-834-8701
Colonial Middle School .....	610-275-5100
Colonial Middle School Fax .....	610-278-2447
Plymouth Whitemarsh High School .....	610-825-1500
Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Fax .....	610-832-0766

# News & Notes

## Board

Jowett holds a bachelor's degree from Rosemont College. She is serving on the Community Relations and Student Life (CRSL) and the Facilities Management and Transportation (FMT) Committees.

Bruno is a graduate of Plymouth Whitemarsh High School and the Roxborough Memorial Hospital School of Nursing. A health care worker, she chairs the Safety and Wellness Committee and serves on the CRSL and FMT Committees.

Mr. Johnson was unanimously elected by the Board to fill the remainder of Mr. Orlow's one-year term as Board President.

"When your peers have the confidence in you to elect you as their leader, it means a lot," he said. "I just wish I had become president under different circumstances."

Johnson had served as Board Vice President for nearly five years. He was first elected to the School Board in 1995. Susan Moore was selected as Vice President replacing Johnson.

## Orlow recovering from treatment

Former School Board President Marc Orlow completed radiation treatments on a recurring benign brain tumor in March and reports that he is doing well. Orlow had an MRI during the first full week in April, and doctors were pleased with the results. They said that the prognosis is very good according to Orlow.

"I have continued to get cards, letters and e-mail from staff members, PTO groups and people in the community," he said. "The ongoing show of support and good wishes has truly been overwhelming and greatly appreciated. I intend to personally acknowledge them all as soon as I can."



Marc Orlow (center) received a citation from state representatives Kate Harper (left) and Mike Gerber (right) during his final School Board meeting on January 15.

## News & Notes

### First responders conduct emergency drills at PWHS

Area law enforcement officers and other first responders took part in emergency drills at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) on April 8. Officers from the Conshohocken Borough, Plymouth Township and Whitemarsh Township Police Departments, along with the Philadelphia Police Department hostage negotiators, took part in the drills. Also included was the Colonial Special Operations Team, a tactical unit comprised of officers from all three local police departments. Other participants included, the Plymouth Ambulance tactical medical team, officers from the Montgomery County Correctional Facility, the Whitemarsh Fire Marshall and security personnel from the Colonial School District (CSD).



(L to R): Lieutenant Michael Beaty of the Whitemarsh Township Police Department, Colonial School District Safety Officer Paul Antal, Plymouth Township Police Department Lieutenant John Myrsiades and Chief of Police Joseph Lawrence and Whitemarsh Township Chief of Police Eileen Behr debrief after the emergency drills at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School. Not pictured is Conshohocken Borough Police Department Sergeant George Metz.

The drills were conducted during spring break while no students were in the school. The first responders practiced emergency response procedures and techniques for a wide variety of potential incidents.

"The exercise was very productive in that all of the first responders came together and were able to simulate how they would respond to various situations and communicate with each other throughout the process," said CSD Safety Officer Paul Antal. "It isn't often that personnel from all of these different agencies can come together at one time to conduct drills like these."

Colonial Instructional Television Director John Quinn videotaped some of the drills so that the law enforcement personnel could review and critique their performance.

### Tree revitalization

grove near the tennis courts and the wooded area adjacent to Victory Fields #3 and #4 that serves as a buffer between the athletic complex and the residences on Indian Guide Road, La France Road and Marquis Road.

"Removing the undergrowth was essential," said CSD Director of Operations Terry Yemm. "It was suffocating the trees, and they would have died if the area was not cleared out. The newly planted vegetation is natural to the area and will attract birds and other wildlife dependent upon this type of habitat."

The native trees and shrubs include American Elm, Canadian Hemlock, Flowering Dogwood and Wild Black Cherry. Low growing warm season indigenous grasses will be seeded in some areas underneath the newly planted trees and shrubs.

The Township portion of the project includes the planting of 750 native trees and 250 native shrubs in the McCarthy Park area. The plants will help absorb rainwater and improve the wildlife habitat.

Additional Tree Vitalize grant funding for the project is anticipated.



Ed Kauffeld (left), job foreman for All Seasons Landscaping, and Gene Kelly (right), CSD Turf Management Supervisor, plant one of the 380 native trees that were added in and around the Victory Fields complex.

## News & Notes

### Cotter receives eSchool News Tech-Savvy Superintendent Award

Colonial School District Superintendent Dr. Vincent F. Cotter was one of the top ten superintendents from around the nation to receive a 2009 eSchool News (eSN) Tech-Savvy Superintendent Award. Launched in 2001, the Tech-Savvy Superintendent Awards (TSSA) Program honors the nation's leading chief school executives who have displayed exemplary vision in the use of technology to further the goals of educating today's students and equip them with 21st century skills.

Under Dr. Cotter's leadership, Colonial has drawn national acclaim for its data-driven approach to curriculum and instruction. Colonial's Pathways to Excellence program uses data to measure student performance and tailor curriculum to meet individual needs. Customized performance tracking software provides teachers with data profiles of their prior and current students' performance on state and District assessments at the start of each school year. Reviewing the data promotes teacher reflection on their practice and insight into instructional successes and areas that need attention. In addition, student data profiles assist the teachers in targeting priorities and differentiating instruction from the start of the school year.

Colonial is also at the forefront of integrating technology into curriculum delivery. CSD students are more engaged in everyday learning thanks to the cutting-edge

technology employed in every classroom. Many of the same technological applications that students use in their social lives are integrated into curriculum delivery.

In 2006, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) was named a Technology School of Excellence by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association. The District has also received more than \$532,000 in Pennsylvania Department of Education Classrooms for the Future grants over the past three years. Combined with significant support from the Colonial Board of



Dr. Vincent F. Cotter

School Directors, the funding has enabled the District to equip all Colonial classrooms with interactive white boards, projectors, high powered digital overhead presenters and document cameras. Video conferencing capability and at least one computer lab also exist in each building. PWHS is equipped with wireless technology and, by the end of the current school year, will have more than 800 wireless laptops in use by students each day. Wireless technology will soon be installed in other District buildings, as well. Additionally, keeping with Colonial's commitment to continuous professional development, teachers are being schooled on how to effectively incorporate that technology into their daily lessons. Through an online portal, teachers, students and their parents may access "best practice" lessons, curriculum, on-line student courses and more.

### Senior citizens turn out for winter concert and spring matinee

More than 220 Colonial School District senior citizens participated in the second annual Senior Citizen Winter Concert and Luncheon at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School on December 12. Seniors were treated to band, orchestra and choral performances before being served a lunch. On March 28, 350 senior citizens took part in the annual luncheon and matinee performance of the Colonial Players spring musical presentation. This year's show was *Little Shop of Horrors*.

The two events are free of charge to District residents aged 65 or older as part of Colonial's Gold Card program. The Colonial Gold Card provides the District's senior citizens with free admittance to one adult evening school class per semester and free access to regular-season home athletic events, concerts, musicals and other District activities. For more information contact Community Relations Coordinator Dave Sherman at (610) 834-1671, ext. 2115 or e-mail: [dsherman@colonialsd.org](mailto:dsherman@colonialsd.org).



Senior citizens enjoy the luncheon that followed a special performance of the PWHS Winter Concert.

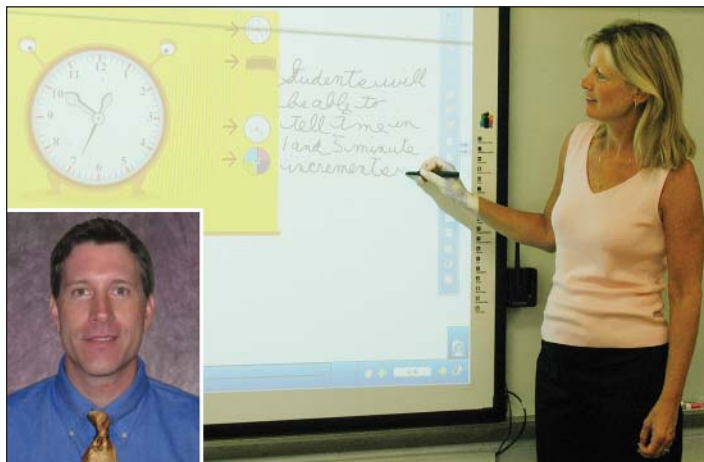
## News & Notes

### Colonial teachers receive honors, achieve milestones

Colonial School District (CSD) Master Teacher Linda Colantonio, a third grade teacher at Ridge Park Elementary School, has been named a finalist for the 2009 Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence sponsored by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and Freedom Credit Union. As a finalist, She will receive a \$500 reward for "going above and beyond the call of duty as an educator in Montgomery County" and is in consideration for one of three grand prizes of \$1,500.

Last fall, Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Spanish teacher Adam Bailey received National Board Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). According to its Web site, NBPTS is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan organization founded in 1987 to create a system of advanced certification for teachers based on high and rigorous standards.

Bailey joins Colonial Elementary School teacher Linda Chmielewski, PWHS teacher Tonia Kaufman and Plymouth Elementary School teacher Sandy Connelly as National Board Certified teachers in the District.



Master Teacher Linda Colantonio, a finalist for the 2009 Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence sponsored by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and Freedom Credit Union, works on a white board at Ridge Park Elementary School. (Inset) Adam Bailey, who earned National Board Certification.

Whitmarsh Elementary School (WE) teachers Susan Hope and Simie Krieger were among the teachers to receive a 2009 Educator 500 award at the 3e Institute's Seventh Annual Business and Education Leadership Forum held April 16 at the Union League in Philadelphia.

The Educator 500 are considered entrepreneurial educators who believe all children can succeed, who pursue educational solutions to challenges in our schools and who have the vision and courage to be value-creating change agents of education. They identify an educational need of students that is not being met and develop and implement an innovative project to meet that need. The Educator 500 is inspired by the Forbes 500 list of business entrepreneurs.

Hope was nominated by a parent for her Show, Share and Write program.

Krieger won for Go Orange, Think Green -- Helping Community Animal Shelters. This is the second straight year Hope has been named to the Educator 500. Last year she was honored along with WE third grade teacher Bill Rathgeber for the Partners Program that pairs each WE kindergarten student with a WE third grader for the entire school year.

### CMS students win \$40K worth of instruments in contest

Colonial Middle School (CMS) students Erica Kushner and Michael Taunton won first and second place, respectively in the "Give the Gift of Music" essay contest sponsored by Music & Arts. Students were asked to describe why their music director was the best.

In her essay, Kushner stated CMS band director David O'Neill "makes it look easy, like anyone could go up to the podium and conduct flawlessly, know where

every instrument was and hear any mistakes made. He inspires me to go up there and direct the band."

For placing first and second, the students won a total of 42 instruments for CMS from Jupiter Band Instruments, Inc. The instruments, worth \$40,050.00, were delivered to the school during the first week in May.

Kushner and Taunton were chosen as winners from more than 350 contest entrants nationwide.



(L to R): CMS music teacher David O'Neill, Michael Taunton, Erica Kushner and Music & Arts representative Dwight Weaver.

# Student News

## District students shine in state and regional competitions

### Science Olympiad

The Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Science Olympiad Team qualified for the state competition by placing fifth out of 33 teams at the Southeast Regional Science Olympiad held in March at Cabrini College. The PWHS squad placed in the Top 10 in 14 of the 23 events and took first in four events. Rachel Feldstein and Lillian Wang teamed to win “Cell Biology” while Simon Wong and Jessica Wang won “Chemistry Lab.” Alex Cho and Jae Lee earned the top spot in “Egg-o-naut (Bottlerocket)” and Cho and Steven Roscioli took the top prize in “Trajectory (Catapult).” Feldstein and Amanda Harris placed second in “Disease Detectives,” while Harris and Wang were second in “Ecology.” Mike Klein and Matt Collier were second in “Elevated Bridge.” The state Science Olympiad will be held at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pa., on May 1.

Students from Colonial Middle School (CMS) won medals in four events at the Science Olympiad. Blake Milstein, Cassidy Silverthorn, Kaylin Butler and Cindy Ly teamed to place second in the “Pentathlon” event. Silverthorn and Seth Horry were third in “Bio Process Lab.” Ethan Trucker and Leigh Brosop placed fourth in “Disease Detectives” and Silverthorn and Zach Goldstein finished fourth in “Write It, Do It.”

### Flanagan selected for All-State Orchestra

PWHS Senior Molly Flanagan, a horn player, has been selected to participate in the PMEA All-State Orchestra. She was chosen the number one horn player in the State of Pennsylvania. Flanagan represented PWHS during the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association State Conference at Valley Forge in April.

### Katch named to All-State Chorus

PWHS Senior Samantha Katch qualified for the PMEA All-State Chorus. She placed third chair in the second soprano section of the choir from Region

VI Chorus. Katch also attained the larger honor of participating in the MENC All-East Festival in March. She is the ninth PWHS choral student to attend the All-East level of MENC.



Ten Plymouth Whitmarsh High School students won medals at the Southeast Regional Science Olympiad. They are: Front Row (L to R): Simon Wong, Jae Lee, Lillian Wang, Rachel Feldstein, Amanda Harris and Jessica Wang. Back Row (L to R): Steven Roscioli, Alex Cho, Matt Collier and Mike Klein.

### PWHS dominated regional computer fair

PWHS students dominated the Pennsylvania High School Computer Fair held at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) in March. The MCIU organizes and hosts judging for the regional competition which highlights Pennsylvania high school students’ application skills and computer knowledge. PWHS claimed first place in four of the six categories. Jennifer Shin was first in the “Computer Fair Logo” category, while Jack Lotkowski was first in “Information-Based Web Page.” Keith Horrocks and Joe Puglielli teamed to win the “Programming” category, while Timothy McClure and Julius Selfinger were first in “Digital Movie.”

The students will compete in the state competition at Dickinson College on May 19.

### DECA Nationals

Two PWHS students have qualified for the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) national competition by placing among the top four in their events at the state competition. Andrea Kaplan placed first in the “Apparel and Accessories Marketing Individual Series” event, while Maura Ogletree placed fourth in the “Marketing Management Individual Series” event. Just missing out on a trip to the national competition were Brett Schwab and Max Steinberg, who were fifth in “Sports and Entertainment Marketing Management Team Decision Making.” Also Kelly Moyer and Danielle Fishman finished sixth in “Financial Analysis Management Team Decision Making.”

# Student News

## CES Odyssey of the Mind Team advances to World Finals

For the third straight year, Colonial Elementary School (CES) is sending a team to the Odyssey of the Mind (OM) World Finals. The team of Jack Clancy, Allie Cohen, Nikki Knudsen, Aaron Paskin, Ray Sellers, Jhanna Simons and Alex Wilkens placed first in the "Superstition" category at the state competition in Williamsport, Pa. on April 18. They won the Long Term Problem Solving competition and placed second in the Spontaneous Problem Solving competition. The squad is coached by Julie Knudsen and Jack Cohen.



The CES "Superstition" team is headed to the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals: (L to R): Ray Sellers, Jack Clancy, Jhanna Simon, Aaron Paskin, Nikki Knudsen and Alex Wilkens teamed to place first in the Superstition category of the Odyssey of the Mind competition. Not pictured, Allie Cohen.

The OM World Finals will take place in Ames, Iowa in May.

Another CES team placed fourth overall in the "Lost Labors of Heracles" category. They were second in the Spontaneous Problem Solving Competition. The team, coached by Adam Horry and Joe Petusky, included Carli Fine, Samantha Horry, Sarah Manno, Alex Mellon, Rachel Mellon, Rebecca Petusky and Katie Reilly.

Twelve Colonial School District teams, six each from CES and CMS, took part in the OM Southeast Region competition in March.

## PWHS Debate Team advances to state competition

In just its first year of competition, the PWHS Debate Team sent two debaters to the state competition based upon their performance at the District 10 debate. The district event featured 12 schools competing in three categories of debate. Phil Yuare and Luke Mecurrio placed first and second, respectively, in the Lincoln Douglas Debate. Yuare posted a record of 4-0 and Mecurrio was 3-1 in their debates.

At the state competition in March, both Yuare and Mecurrio had 2-2 records.

## PWHS students excel in language competition

PWHS students captured first place in three events in the annual James J. Doyle Oral Proficiency Contest.

Rosa Hargrove won first place in "French Level 2." Emily Weiss took first in "French Advanced" and Zack Cylinder was first for the second straight year in "Spanish Advanced."



The CES "Lost Labor" team placed fourth at the state competition: Front Row (L to R): Rachel Mellon, Carli Fine and Alex Mellon. Back Row (L to R): Sarah Manno, Samantha Horry, Rebecca Petusky and Katie Reilly.

Seventeen schools, both public and private, from Montgomery County took part in the event that featured oral interviews in four different languages.

## Goldstein wins Geo Bee

Eighth grader Zach Goldstein was the winner of the annual CMS Geography Bee. Goldstein also successfully completed a 70-question exam and qualified for the state Geo Bee at Penn State University in April.

## Cheerleaders win title

The PWHS varsity cheerleaders were named Grand Champions in their division at the Eastern Cheerleading Association Nationals held March 14-15 at William and Mary University in Williamsburg, Va. PWHS competed against schools from Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Maryland.



**Milestone (L to R):** Current Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Boys basketball coach Jim Donofrio, former coach Dave McAvoy, legendary coach Hank Stofko and School Board president Gary Johnson hold a ball commemorating the school's 1,000th win. The Colonials posted a 25-6 record this season, won their sixth straight Suburban One League American Conference title and advanced to the semifinals of the PIAA AAAA Championship.



## Reaching “Above and Beyond”

### CSD elementary students “Go for the Greens”

And the winner is.....grapes, followed closely by kiwi.

March 17 was “Go for the Greens Day” at all Colonial School District Elementary Schools. The event, promoted by the Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity, was coordinated by Director of Food Services Lori McCoy, and school nurses Kathy Dale and Karen House.

A green fruit and vegetable bar was offered to all students for taste testing. Students then voted for which fruit or vegetable they liked the best. The green offerings at Plymouth Elementary School included kiwi fruit, baby spinach, celery, sugar snap peas, grapes, cucumbers and broccoli.

One student exclaimed “ I love this kiwi....it is so sweet and good.” When asked if he had ever tasted kiwi before, he answered “no.” Other students commented that the baby spinach leaves and sugar snap peas were very good.

Leading up to the event, the school nurses provided fun food and nutrition facts and tips during morning announcements.

“I’m pleased to see the students trying new fresh fruits and vegetables and even more pleased that they were coming up for seconds,” McCoy said. “The goal of the day was to raise awareness and encourage consumption of green fruits and vegetables, and it seemed to be quite a success.”



Plymouth Elementary School first grader Sangeetha Gopi displays a piece of broccoli from her cup of greens. March 17 was “Go for the Greens Day” at all Colonial School District elementary schools.

The Colonial School District (CSD) is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability and/or handicap or age in its admissions procedures, educational programs, services, activities or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and/or any applicable federal statute.

The CSD will assist students who have Limited English Proficiency to participate in all programs, services and activities.

For information regarding civil rights, admissions, grievance procedures, bilingual education and accessibility of programs, services, activities and facilities that are usable by persons with disabilities, contact the Director of Pupil Services, Colonial School District, 230 Flourtown Road, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, 19462.