

Minutes of the BTA General Membership Meeting: September 6, 2011

*This meeting was held at 2:00 pm in the theater of BHS

** Several sheets of information were distributed to the membership, including an Information Guide, NYSUT Calendars and volunteer forms.

WELCOME TO OUR FUTURE – Kim Atwell

- ❖ A power point presentation which displayed information about technology advances and how quickly information travels through several different avenues was shown. Kim remarked on how this relates to education and the pace at which things are changing. Kim stressed the importance of all of us sticking together and working with one another to create unity.

INTRODUCTIONS – Kim Atwell

- ❖ Introductions of new Representative Assembly Members: (In the interest of saving time, Kim did not make actual introductions)

BTA Officers:	<i>Vice-President</i> – Dawn Clemens	<i>Secretary</i> – Gina Fontenot	
Building Representatives:	<i>Rombout</i> – Glen Morris	<i>JVF</i> – Lesli Tompkins	<i>Sargent</i> – Maryanne Ceriello
	<i>South Avenue</i> – Alicia Tyra		
NYSUT & AFT Delegates:	<i>NYSUT</i> – Tony Truscello	<i>AFT</i> – Charlotte Sypher	
Retirement Delegate:	<i>Frank Lofaro</i> – BHS		
Committee Chairs:	<i>Negotiations</i> – Kim Atwell	<i>Membership</i> – Gina Fontenot	<i>Constitution</i> – Gina Fontenot
	<i>Public Relations</i> – Donna Snowden	<i>Elections</i> – VACANCY for NYSUT Delegate	<i>Grievance</i> – Dawn Clemens
	<i>Budget</i> – Jeff Matus	<i>Scholarship</i> – Dave Ryley	<i>Political Action</i> – Kim Atwell & Dawn Clemens
	<i>Social</i> – Jennifer Fisher	<i>Technology</i> – Bill Castaldi	<i>Retirement</i> – Kim Atwell & Frank Lofaro
	<i>Retirement Alternates</i> – Eric Romanino & Christina Dahl	<i>Dental</i> – Kim Atwell	

NOTE: There is a vacancy for a NYSUT Delegate – Please contact Kim Atwell if you are interested in this one year position.

INFORMATION FROM THE TREASURER – Jeff Matus

- ❖ Jeff discussed the following information:
 - *Health Insurance* – Jeff noted that there will probably be an increase next year as health insurance costs are on the rise.
 - *Dental* – The district is taking control of dental as of September 1st. The BTA no longer owes a balance toward this. There will be a 30 day window for new members to enroll in the dental plan.
 - *Dues* – Jeff stated that NYSUT dues increased due to over 9,000 layoffs. If there is not the same amount of contributors, then dues will go up for remaining members to make up the difference. Our dues is distributed statewide (NYSUT), nationally (AFT), and locally (BTA). This year our dues will be \$35.38 per paycheck.

- *Paychecks* – Jeff reported we will be having another paycheck workshop this fall. You should see a STEP INCREASE only in your paycheck this school year. There will not be any other increases in salary until there is a new contract in place. Members should report any under OR overpayment in paychecks. Make sure you check this carefully!

PRESIDENT'S DISTRICT UPDATE – Kim Atwell

❖ *District Administrators:*

- Superintendent – Interim Superintendent Dr. Hillburgh is resigning as of October 31st and Dr. Raymond Bandlow will be starting as Superintendent on November 1st. Kim noted that the process for choosing the new Superintendent went very well. It was a very successful collaboration with a lot of input from various constituencies. Kim also mentioned that Dr. Bandlow has experience with running a district with a 2% tax cap because of his experiences in New Jersey.
- Assistant Superintendent – Dr. Barbara Walkley will remain the Interim Assistant Superintendent until December. She has been a great asset and she has been working collaboratively with Kim on many areas of concern.
- Assistant Superintendent for Media and Operations – Charlie Symon will be retiring this year

❖ *APPR* – Dr. Walkley, although she had a presentation via video during our meetings today, will also be attending faculty meetings to discuss the APPR more in depth.

- It is important to note that The Regents Reform is NOT a “Beacon” thing. This is all throughout the state and we cannot ignore it nor change it.
- There are portions that can and will be negotiated through our contract. The BTA’s concern is that it is implemented fairly and without subjectivity.
- Kim also noted that knowing as much as we can about the APPR is the best tool we have. She suggested that we all read as much as we can and to certainly read her e-mails regarding this topic.
- The new evaluation system will be in place for ELA and Math teachers’ grades 4-8 for the 2011 – 2012 school year. Those evaluations will be very different this year, but the rest of us will follow the same format as last year. Although there are a lot of unanswered questions, we are all in the same situation from administrators down.
- BCSD will be using the Danielson Framework for Teaching 2011 Rubric for evaluating teachers. This was sent in a previous e-mail, but can also be viewed at the following web address: http://usny.nysed.gov/rtt/teachers-leaders/practicrubrics/Docs/Teachscape_Rubric.pdf
- In summary, the framework is as follows: the teacher evaluation is comprised of using the Danielson Rubric (40% from observations and 20% from a teachers choice which is yet to be determined), 20% from state assessments and 20% from local assessments.
- The appeals process for teachers who may need this in the future is negotiable and something the BTA will be working on.
- Kim stated that more info will continue to come and urged the membership to read all and to ask questions. She also noted there would be FAQ’s created and e-mailed. As members have questions, please e-mail them so these Q&A’s can be added. (NOTE – the first FAQ was e-mailed to all members on Friday, 9/9)

❖ *TAX CAP* – The NYS Legislature passed the Tax Cap bill. This will make it very difficult for school districts to budget and maintain programs. This will be SIGNIFICANT for 2012-2013 and will really affect us. Things will definitely get tougher. Knowing and understanding what will happen is very important.

❖ *NEGOTIATIONS* – The process has begun

- Our contract expired on June 30, 2011. However, we are covered under the Triborough Amendment, which means we are still covered under our 2007-2011 contract. Everything is maintained except for increment increases on salary. Step increases remain in place.
- Negotiations have begun with Dr. Hilburgh.
- The committee did meet over the summer

- There will be two meetings in October. These meetings are for the purpose of trading proposals for “clean up language” and substantive new negotiations procedures are being discussed and agreed upon. An MOA for new negotiations procedures is forthcoming.
- Kim stressed to the membership that it is important to understand that updates will be given whenever possible, but some information will have to remain confidential.
- ❖ *RETIREMENT* – Kim will be trying to set up a seminar for early spring for members.
- ❖ *MEMORANDUMS OF AGREEMENT (MOA’S)* – There have been many MOA’s, the most recent are listed below:
 - Theater positions were consolidated so as not to lose it entirely as the positions were collecting more money than necessary for the work being done. In order to benefit as many people as possible, the positions were consolidated into one and so as not to lose the extra money, the MOA allowed the money to be split up among coordinators for grades 6-8, 7-9, and 9-12 since they have not had a “raise” since 1987. In addition, the high school yearbook stipend was increased as well.
 - CSE summer work – added to the contract to make payment legitimate
 - Teacher retirement on June 20th – MOA gave teacher accumulated sick time

WHEN TO CONTACT THE VICE-PRESIDENT – Dawn Clemens

- ❖ Dawn stressed the importance of contacting her for any of the following reasons:
 - Leaves of any kind, for any length of time
 - Seniority issues - this is especially important
 - Grievances
 - New members – the Vice President will work with the new Mentor Coordinator
 - Sick Bank – members may donate to the sick bank any time after their first year of employment. If anyone has a question about whether they can borrow from the sick bank, contact Dawn
 - Retirement – Dawn can help with any questions about this

**Dawn noted that volunteer forms were passed out to all members, to please fill them out and return them. There would be a drawings for prizes at the conclusion of the meeting for people who returned their slips.

REMINDERS FROM THE SECRETARY – Gina Fontenot

- ❖ Gina noted the following:
 - Conference forms – although conference forms previously went through the district and the union, union would not be involved in the paperwork aspect of this anymore. Therefore, conference forms should go to your building principal first and then forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent.
 - If you have a name change or an address change, please inform the secretary as soon as possible
 - If you are returning from a leave, please inform the secretary as soon as possible

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT POLITICAL ACTION? – Kim Atwell

- ❖ Political Action is NOT all about endorsing a candidate, but about supporting the budget and pro education. It is so important that members realize the significance of their involvement of time and donations.
 - Board Members/Community Members
 - Board Members VOTE on our contract. There are 9 board members. We must continue working toward endorsing pro – education candidates for our Board of Education.
 - We must continue to reach out to the community in order to help them recognize the importance of our education system.
 - State Legislators impose regulations on education and the public as a whole
 - VOTE-COPE – This money is OUR money that helps US!!! In order to GET support we have to GIVE support!
- ❖ The Political Action Committee will be much more involved this year in several areas:
 - Recruiting members who have close ties to the Beacon Community
 - Working closely with the Public Relations Committee

- Creating new evaluations for current and potential BOE candidates
- Increasing efforts to pass the BCSD budget
- Continuing to solicit donations to VOTE/COPE to provide funding for these activities

FINAL THOUGHTS – Kim Atwell

- ❖ *Professionalism –*
 - More than ever, as our profession is under constant scrutiny, we must maintain professionalism at all times.
 - Professionalism is how we will move this union forward
 - Understand that the President MUST be objective because there is a need to keep everyone’s best interest in mind.
 - Be patient. If you have questions or concerns, rather than listen to innuendos and rumor, contact Kim – she will always be as forthcoming as she can.

- ❖ *FMLA – the Family Medical Leave Act*
 - This is not just for pregnancy. Members should make it a point to become more knowledgeable in this area

- ❖ *Q & A’s*
 - There is no answer yet as to what happens to teachers that do not teach areas which have state tests in regards to the APPR
 - The Sub-Service is the same
 - Local assessments for the APPR have yet to be determined

- ❖ *Breast Cancer Walk – October 16th at Dutchess Stadium.*
 - Arleen Phypers has sent a district e-mail with a link to the website. Please consider donating or walking with our school in support of this very worthy cause.
 - Arleen passed out a bag of information to each schools building representative. You may see them with any questions you may have.

- ❖ *Prize Drawings – Congratulations to all the winners!!!*
 - Thank you to the many members who are offering their assistance.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by BTA Secretary, Gina Fontenot

****The following e-mail addresses are for your convenience in contacting the BTA Officers OUTSIDE of the school district computers only**

Kim Atwell	atwell.k@beaconteachers.org
Dawn Clemens	clemens.d@beaconteachers.org
Jeff Matus	matus.j@beaconteachers.org
Gina Fontenot	fontenot.g@beaconteachers.org