



Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day



Minutes of the BTA Representative Assembly Meeting: September 2, 2009

Table with 3 columns listing members and their roles: Kim Atwell- President, Diane D'Uva- Vice President, Jeff Matus- Treasurer, Dawn Clemens- Secretary, Bobby Atwell- BHS - excused, Bill Castaldi- BHS, Tom Clemens- RMS, Roe Greco- RMS, Elizabeth Hanrahan- JVF, Terri Losito- JVF, Alicia Falman- Glenham, Donna Snowden- Glenham - excused, Matt Carpenter- Sargent, Jane Cervone- Sargent, Kelly Bender- South Avenue, Lisa Biersack- South Avenue, Charlotte Sypher- NYSUT Delegate, Amanda Conover- New Member Coordinator, Cassandra O'Dell- New Member Coordinator - excused, Donna Glynn- Mid Hudson Teacher Center Liaison, Davy Ryley- Scholarship - excused, John Burns- VOTE/COPE, Jennifer Fisher- Social, Tom Burns- Technology - excused, Gina Fontenot- Retirement, Aaron Burke- Dental - absent, Arleen Phypers- Making Strides Walk Representative- excused

President Kim Atwell called the meeting to order at 6:44pm in the banquet room of the 84 Diner. Bill Castaldi made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 2, 2009 meeting. Seconded by Kelley Bender, the motion passed unanimously.

Officer Reports:

TREASURER: Jeff Matus Balances as of September 1, 2009-

Table with 2 columns: Account, Balance. Rows include Checking (\$7,983.28), Savings (\$23,775.51), CD #1 (\$19,214.16), CD #2 (\$3,500), CD #3 (\$3,500), and Total (\$57,972.95)

- Dental is currently \$-3,380.69 because of bills being paid over the summer. This will be rectified once pay deductions begin again in September.
- Dues will be taken out of 20 paychecks in the amount of \$33.67 per paycheck
- Dues will not be taken out of the first paycheck of the school year
- Taxes will be filed by November 15, 2009 using the 990 EZ form.

SECRETARY: Dawn Clemens

- Thank you notes were received by Pat Deleo on behalf of the BHS English Department and Karen Hallock in gratitude of the BTA Teacher Appreciation breakfast. Additionally, Samantha Wilson, BTA Scholarship recipient, wrote to express her gratefulness in receiving the scholarship.
- Email distribution lists are almost complete for BTA officers, Building Reps., and committee chairs to better communicate with the membership
- Attention was called to the Information Packet which will be included in folders for the General Membership meeting and thanks was given to Elizabeth Hanrahan for her work on this document last year
- Clemens mentioned the Cooperstown Leadership Conference which she attended with Kim Atwell, Diane D'Uva, Charlotte Sypher, and John Burns. She stated that one of the most important things she learned there is the problems that arise when teachers communicate with students via cell phone, email (personal), and websites such as Facebook and MySpace. The union leadership urges the membership to NOT ENGAGE WITH STUDENTS using these methods. The union will be unable to protect a member who engages with students in this manner.

- Building Reps were encouraged to look over their Building Rep Training packets given to them in their Representative Assembly folders

VICE PRESIDENT: Diane D'Uva

- Grievance protocol was discussed. First, Building Reps. should engage in informal meetings with the building principal, and then if that does not work, type the grievance on the grievance form. A grievance must be filed within 30 days of its occurrence and the principal has 5 days to respond. The grievance, if not resolved, will go on to Stage 2 and will be discussed by the Grievance Committee.
- A reminder was given about our contractual requirement of 50 minutes per week. 25 minutes must be spent engaging in student tutorials. A principal cannot assign students, no lesson plans are required, and attendance should not be taken. Contact your Building Reps. if there are problems such as students still being present after the 25 minutes are completed. This may go on to become a District Advisory topic. The other 25 minutes are for you to use as you see fit (i.e. lesson plans, parent/teacher conferences, department meetings, etc.).
- The Sick Bank is available to second year teachers. To sign up contact Anne Marie Quartironi.
- D'Uva agreed with D. Clemens that the Leadership Conference in Cooperstown was very beneficial.

PRESIDENT: Kim Atwell

- Atwell began by welcoming everyone and introducing those new to the Representative Assembly
- MOA's (Memorandum of Agreements) were discussed. She will be providing the RA with old MOA's so that they can become part of the language of the contract
 - o Sandra White- MOA was a result of a medical condition and was not something that is likely to be repeated
 - o President's release time (having a 4/5 schedule) will be approved on a year to year basis. The hope is to have the language put into a future contract and have it made applicable to any grade level.
- Certification has been an issue with our members; Atwell urges the membership to know their certification timelines and requirements and keep them up to date. **IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DISTRICT TO NOTIFY YOU ABOUT ISSUES WITH YOUR CERTIFICATION; IT IS THE TEACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY.**
- ELT (Education Learning Trust) classes will be offered for free to teachers with less than 5 years experience. These courses are provided by NYSUT at no cost to our union. Tentatively, a course will be offered in October, January, and April of this school year. The courses will be Classroom Management, Discipline Strategies, and Achieving Tenure. A minimum of 15 people are required and a maximum of 35 will be accepted. Look to see more information on our website.
- Atwell has expressed to the Superintendent and the President of the Board of Education that teachers should be a part of the hiring process for administrators and serve in an advisory capacity when vacancies occur.
- Board of Education agendas and district postings will now be forwarded to the membership via email.
- Concerns have been brought up about Non-Coaching Supplemental Pay. According to our contract, teachers are entitled to a 7% raise in salary after 3 consecutive years in a post. This has not occurred in instances such as Night School, Summer School, AIS, NYSSMA, etc. Atwell stated that she is looking into the issue but has already found that it does not apply to department coordinators positions.
 - o A question about when the salary increase should take place in instances of coaching. The district's position is that it goes into effect AFTER the 3rd year is completed to be paid during the 4th year of service.
 - o According to Tom Clemens, supplemental pay for coaches was originally negotiated in 1976 with the goal to attract and maintain coaches.
 - o A history was also given about post season pay for coaches.
- Cancer screening law in NYS states that employees are entitled to a half day (4 hours) to either get a mammography or a prostate exam. You will be required to have a doctor's note to not be charged for a sick day. More info will be provided on the BTA website.
- Child rearing leave template forms are currently on the BTA website. More information will be provided in the future including your rights under FMLA and district policy.
- APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review Plan) will be adopted by the Board of Education at their next meeting. This document is required by law as are TIPS (Teacher Improvement Plans).
 - o The APPR took 8 months to develop and will be approved and updated on a yearly basis
 - o The document contains a schedule for observations and evaluations which is specific to each discipline (Guidance, Social Workers, School Psychologists, etc.)
 - o Will provide for consistency for grade levels in evaluations
 - o Tenured teachers will be evaluated differently than Non Tenured teachers. Tenured teachers will have a choice in their evaluation methods.
- A change in schedule for the elementary schools was proposed by the Superintendent this summer to ease bussing difficulties. This topic will be discussed during District Advisory Committee meetings this school year.

- The BTA contract will expire on 6/30/11. Research has already begun about the negotiations process. Atwell stated that she is working to become more knowledgeable and has been attending workshops and speaking with NYSUT to that cause.
 - o Atwell stated that the negotiations will be difficult because of the current economic climate
 - o She plans for it to be a transparent process- there will be general membership meetings to inform the membership
 - o Atwell informed the group that she plans to be strategic about picking a negotiations team and gauging the membership's opinions. The team will be approved by the RA and qualifications for a team will be created.
 - o Her current plan is to educate the RA this school year and to start the "real" process of negotiations in September 2010.
- Atwell also shared her opinion that the Leadership Conference in Cooperstown was highly informative as well as the New Presidents conference she attended earlier in the summer.
- There will be a Building Rep. training in October in the Kingston NYSUT offices from 5-7pm.

Committee Reports:

MEMBERSHIP: Dawn Clemens

- Amanda Conover and Cassandra O'Dell will be serving the membership as New Member Coordinators. They will work in conjunction with the Mentor Coordinator to help teachers with questions regarding certification and general teaching questions
- All members who have changed their name or have returned from a leave of absence should send their paperwork to Dawn Clemens at BHS.

CONSTITUTION: Dawn Clemens – Meetings will begin for this committee later in the school year.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Dawn Clemens

- The BTA will have a booth at Spirit of Beacon Day on 9/27. We will be giving away balloons and holding a raffle to benefit the BTA Scholarship fund. If you would like to volunteer to "man" the booth, please contact D. Clemens.
- D. Clemens is looking for building reporters for the BTA Newsletter. The only requirement would be to inform Clemens about activities/events/interesting items that are happening in your building.
- The BTA will be participating in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk on 10/18 at Woodbury Commons. If you are interested in participating please contact Donna Snowden or Arleen Phipers.
- The next BTA Apparel sale will be in October. We will be adding \$5 to the cost of each item to contribute to the BTA Scholarship fund.

GRIEVANCE: Diane D'Uva

- There is a Stage 1 Grievance at the secondary level dealing with a department coordinator position. The grievance was tabled during the summer, rewritten and resubmitted.

BUDGET: Jeff Matus – The budget was passed in May and thus no vote will be necessary at the General Membership meeting

SCHOLARSHIP: Dave Ryley – No report

POLITICAL ACTION: John Burns

- Burns mentioned that at the Leadership Conference at Cooperstown, NYSUT VP Alan Lubin stated that everything in the contract relates to VOTE/COPE.
- Burns stated that although there are political ideologies that NYSUT supports that you may not, VOTE/COPE money allows NYSUT to have an influence with our lawmakers. He cited examples such as Tier 5 retirement being taken off of the table after NYSUT organized the Committee of 100.
- There is a fear that mid-year budget cuts could occur this year given the current state of the economy. Burns stated that NYSUT has proven powerful in supporting teachers during times such as these.
- Burns encouraged everyone to contribute to VOTE/COPE whether by check or more preferably through payroll deductions. He also reminded the RA that 40% of our contributions come back to our organization and can be used in endorsing Board candidates.

SOCIAL: Jennifer Fisher

- There are plans to continue get-togethers such as Oktoberfest, 100th Night, and June Picnic.
- Fisher has been brainstorming other ways that the membership can come together such as: 1st Friday of the month happy hours, a Rock Band/Guitar Hero night, bowling tournament, and movie nights.
- Fisher stated that she welcomes suggestions for further activities.

TECHNOLOGY: Bill Castaldi

- The website is a work in progress that both Castaldi and Tom Burns have been working on throughout the summer. They are open to ideas for further developing material on the website. Please contact Bill Castaldi and Tom Burns with your suggestions.

RETIREMENT: Gina Fontenot

- Fontenot and Kim Atwell will be attending the NYSTRS (New York State Teachers Retirement System) conference in Saratoga November 8-9th.
- The BTA will be hosting a Retirement Seminar in March 2010 for those within 10 years of retirement.

DENTAL: Aaron Burke – No Report

Building Reports:

BHS: The building looks good and is in good shape for the beginning of the school year thanks to the custodial staff's hard work. The administration is in flux currently. Good luck to Jason Gerard in his new position. They are hopeful for a successful opening to the school year.

GLENHAM: Welcome to new teachers and good luck to all for the new school year.

JVF: The building looks great thanks to the custodial staff. Welcome to new teachers.

RMS: The custodians worked very hard during the summer and as a result teachers had good access to their classrooms.

SARGENT: Welcome to three new teachers in the building.

SOUTH AVE.: The building looks good. They are appreciative of the new windows and screens. Some of the boxes were haphazardly placed in rooms but otherwise everything is good.

Old Business:

- At the June BTA meeting, the possibility of having all RA meetings take place at BHS was discussed.
 - o Elizabeth Hanrahan made a motion for all RA meetings to take place at BHS, this was seconded by Terri Losito. The motion passed unanimously.
- Discussion of who would be responsible for providing snacks for the RA meetings was discussed as well as the amount which would be allotted to be spent on said snacks.
 - o Lisa Biersack made a motion to purchase snacks for the first half of the school year, this was seconded by Elizabeth Hanrahan.
 - o After discussion, Bill Castaldi amended the motion to set a spending limit of \$200.00, this was seconded by Charlotte Sypher. The motion passed unanimously.
- Jeff Matus drew the RA's attention to a new Conference form which members would need to fill out if they would be attending a union conference. This form includes pre-approval and reimbursement sections. A vote to approve the form has been delayed to the next RA meeting.

New Business:

- Diane D'Uva stated that there is a need to a special election for NYSUT and AFT delegate positions because the results of the May 2009 are not in compliance with our new BTA Constitution.
 - o Bill Castaldi made a motion to hold a special election for the positions of NYSUT and AFT delegates; this was seconded by Tom Clemens. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the BTA Representative Assembly (RA) will take place on Tuesday, October 6, 2009 in the Community Room at BHS. The meeting will start at 3:45pm.

All business having been completed, Terri Losito made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alicia Falman. Kim Atwell adjourned the meeting at 9:17pm.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by BTA Secretary, Dawn Clemens.