



Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day



Minutes of the BTA General Membership Meeting: June 8, 2010

*This meeting was held at 4:00pm in the theater of BHS.

Professionalism- Kim Atwell

- The email that was sent out May 29, 2010 concerning professionalism was not directed at one person. There have been multiple instances of unprofessional behavior.
- Professionalism is our own personal responsibility both inside and outside the classroom.
- Confidentiality is extremely important!
 - Gossip creates a lack of unity
 - We need to be role models for ourselves and our students
 - We need to be supportive of our colleagues by not gossiping, by doing so we become part of the problem
 - Rumors have spread to the community and have made us look bad
- We weaken our union and our profession as a whole when we act unprofessionally
- It is difficult for the BTA to defend unprofessional behavior/actions

Education Reform- Dawn Clemens

- ESEA- Elementary & Secondary Education Act
 - Originally enacted in the 1960's as part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and must be reauthorized every few years
 - Next phase of education reform following No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
 - Obama administration is working on reauthorization of ESEA
 - Idea: states and districts should compete for funding
 - Focus for evaluation of teachers is based on student test scores
- Race To The Top (RTTT)
 - National competition for education funding, purpose: to encourage states to enact reforms
 - 1st round winners were Delaware & Tennessee, NYS finished 15th out of 16 finalists
 - 2nd round applications were due 6/1, finalists will be announced this summer and the winners will be announced in September
 - NYSUT urged locals to sign a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) stating that the district and the local will engage in "good faith" bargaining
- APPR- Teacher/Principal Evaluations
 - To improve the NYS application for RTTT, a new APPR was signed into law which goes into effect September 2011
 - New ratings for teachers: highly effective, effective, developing, ineffective
 - Teachers will be evaluated on a 100 point scale: 20%- student growth on state exams, 20%- local measures of student achievement, 60%- teacher effectiveness in 8 criteria
 - Criteria: content knowledge, pedagogical practices, instructional delivery, classroom management, knowledge of student development, use of assessment techniques/data, effective collaborative relationships, and reflection of teaching practices
 - The state initially wanted 51% of teacher evaluations to be based on student test scores, NYSUT negotiations reduced that to 20%
 - The negotiations team will be part of the district APPR committee to ensure our contract is upheld
 - Questions:
 - What will be the effect on special areas (ex. School Psychologists and Social Workers)? It is unknown at this time. NYSUT is working on that currently.
 - Will alternate assessments still be offered? We are unsure at this time.

Transfers and Placements- Kim Atwell

- There have been many discussions and a lot of tension over transfers this year
- Transfers are not based on seniority. The contract reads "all eligible candidates for openings or reassignments will be considered. In the event that there are more eligible candidates than positions, seniority will be considered, as well as competency".
- June 15th- deadline for notification of tentative assignments (although some Special Education teachers have been notified previously)
 - Atwell has spoken to the district administration and the Board of Education about the need for those being transferred to be notified as soon as possible since most of the buildings will be inaccessible this summer.
- Retirement incentive has delayed the process

Negotiations- Kim Atwell

- Membership will be getting information throughout the process
- Atwell asked members to please do not rely on others to get your information. It is very important to be an educated member of our organization. She urged members to take ownership and to know what you are voting on.

Elementary Prep Time- Kim Atwell

- There have been discussions about changing the Elementary Prep Time from 6 times per week for 35 minutes per prep to 5 times per week for 42 minutes per prep
- This would keep total prep time at 210 minutes for elementary teachers
- Benefits to the change:
 - More equal access to programs
 - Aligned with secondary A/B scheduling
 - Lessens the frequency of travel for shared staff
 - Greater potential for intervention periods
 - Teachers get a better balance of preps (not missing a double prep due to a holiday)
 - Teachers would be able to accomplish more within a prep period
 - It will keep scheduling consistent with sixth grade which is part of elementary
- Atwell is proposing that prep time be equalized for all grade levels. Currently the high school receives 230 minutes of prep time per week and the middle school receives 225 minutes per week.

VOTE/COPE

- Board of Education Elections
 - Color flyers (handed out at Beacon Barks, community sporting events, and at PTA/PTO meetings)
 - Lawn signs
 - Pens
 - Total Cost: \$1,143 (\$381/candidate)
- Budget Vote
 - Color flyers (handed out at Beacon Barks, community sporting events, and at PTA/PTO meetings)
 - FaceBook group (Vote Yes for Education in Beacon)- no cost
 - Total Cost: \$150
- The BTA receives a rebate of 40% of money contributed to VOTE/COPE (This year we received: \$1,080)

Open to the Floor

- There is a concern about the alternate assessment for tenured teachers. They are seen as being ambiguous.
 - Atwell was part of the team which rewrote the APPR last summer. It was labor intensive since different procedures were being followed in each building.
 - The new APPR was only approved for one year with the idea of revisiting it this summer.
 - The building administrators were supposed to meet in the beginning of the school year to iron out details. There is a concern that administrators lack the specific knowledge of the APPR process.
 - Atwell will be asking membership for ideas and suggestions prior to the end of the school year.
- Evaluations are also an issue with the membership. They are concerned about the similarities between various teachers' evaluations and the fact that many of the evaluations are very basic and lack specific detail.
- Atwell will propose having a Superintendent's Conference Day next school year dedicated to explaining the observation and evaluation process.

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