

BYRAM HILLS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
MEETING OF EXECUTIVES AND REPRESENTATIVES
DECEMBER 5, 2006

Attendance: D. Bruskewicz, J. Black, B. DiMartino, M. Delamonico, L. Jones, P. Cerreta, C. Lewick, C. Beck, D. Glim, T. Slosek, S. Tyrrell, S. Davies, J. Rowell, M. Roberts, K. Russell, M. Goodman.
Excused: B. Gallivan, L. Bastone, A. Ancona Guest: Robin Langsam

The agenda of December 5 was approved.
Minutes of November 14 were read and approved with correction.
Treasurer's Report was presented and approved.

President David Bruskewicz reported that several BHTA members from Groups 1 through 3 entered into the new attendance plan this year and had contributions made to their 403b in accordance with our contract. The Negotiating Team explained that members tenured in 2004 and 2005 were not assigned to any attendance group during contract negotiations due to the expense. The team's understanding was that these members would enter the new attendance plan this year as well. The language of the side letter and Memorandum of Understanding must be modified to include these people, as was previously agreed upon and reflected in the notes retained by the Negotiating Team. Notes kept by Jane Black during a meeting on May 5, 2005 with superintendents also reflect this agreement. This language of inclusion will be put before the BOE in Executive session on January 9 for its approval and inclusion in the Budget. At the administration's urging, the BHTA will promote excellent attendance and communicate to its members their advice on the prudent use of sick days. Bob DiMartino will address the use of personal days in the Newsletter, and instruct the staff about when and how to file absence forms. The Byram Hills contract gives great flexibility in the use of personal days for family illness and household emergencies, but reserves the use of sick days for illness. The District has expressed concerns about the frequency of absences on Mondays and Fridays, and the extension of holidays. The following statement has been prepared and will be read to the staff:

BHTA Statement in Support of Prudent Use of Sick Days

The BHTA recognizes that the Commissioner of Education defines sick days as restricted use days that can be used only when a teacher is ill unless otherwise approved by the superintendent. The BHTA also recognizes that the annual contractual allocation of sick days is not an entitlement to be used unless the above conditions are met.

The BHTA recognizes that a pattern of suspicious absenteeism might invite closer Scrutiny of the teacher's record by the superintendent, and that such scrutiny is also supported by case law and the Commissioner's past decisions.

VP Jane Black gave an update on Vote COPE contributions by the staff. Coman Hill, Wampus and Crittenden have completed their solicitations, but BHHS will make a final effort. Jane suggests that the staff be individually contacted for their contribution. She also suggests that next year BHHS members consider payroll deduction for Vote COPE.

A 403b Workshop will be presented at HCC on December 11. It will be conducted by Rob Lamoureau of NYSUT, and 52 members have signed up to attend. The workshop will be repeated if there is interest.

J. Black reported on the Board of Education meeting of 11/21. The BOE asked the administration about curriculum differentiation. A baseball trip was discussed at length, and a discussion was held regarding the policy requiring 24 hour advance notice for playdate release of a child.

The NYSUT Food Drive will take place from Jan 16 to Feb 2. Bob DiMartino will send notice to all. Bob also asks for updates for the Newsletter.

The BHTA stipends will be issued on January 5.

The BHTA purchases two laptop computers for use by the President and Treasurer, as previously approved by this Board. The software "Quickbooks 2007" was also purchased.

The search for a Coman Hill principal will begin in December, and all viable candidates will be interviewed by the previously constituted Interview Committee, which represents all grade levels, Special Education and Special subjects.

The Guidance Chair must be filled by someone with an administrative degree. Also, a position needs to be filled at the high school which is currently being covered by other teachers working an overload schedule.

At the meeting with Superintendents, David Bruskevicz reviewed the notice concerning Epi-pen use that was given to HCC teachers. There followed a discussion concerning the communication of students' medical problems to the staff and an inconsistency among the schools of the district was revealed. Two consultants were hired to examine our health services system and protocols. A meeting will be scheduled with the consultants and every building VP or their representative will attend.

The piercing sound made by the new fire alarms will be discussed with the construction company.

The need for more copy machines was discussed with the superintendents. Frances at DO continues to encourage teachers to use her service for copying. Additionally, John Chambers will see if additional copiers can be included in the budget.

Marie Kish will request that "Google Images" once again be available to teachers. Currently, the BOCES filter is blocking this service.

The Committee of 100 will meet in Albany on March 19 & 20, and again in May. Jane Black and Diane Glim indicated interest in attending the March session and David Bruskevicz will attend in May.

The Representative Assembly will be held on April 26-28. Nomination forms for the 3 delegates have been sent to the BHTA board.

The calendar for 2007-2008 has been revised again and is not yet finalized.

The Board held its executive session.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:15.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Loretta Bastone and Theresa Slosek