

Executive Council Minutes October 26th, 2016

Present: Executive Board (Officers) Chris Greer, Kelley Snow, Vinny Leis, Anthony DeAngelis. **Present: Executive Council (Building Reps)**
Brookside: Suzanne Ryan, Jessica Piccarillo; **Lenox:** Shelly Stanley, Heather Lombardi; **Meadow:** Lisa Traum, Joanne Prochilo, Allyson Wolper, Linda Hayhurst; **Plaza:** Tricia Wilder, Theresa Cole-McCabe; **Steele:** Tina Connell, Lisa Meaney; **Middle School:** Phil Zirkuli; **High School:** Cindy Britton, Sandra Pionegro, Ursula Moorer, Vinny Leis. **Present: (Teaching Assistants)** Marlene Asulin; **Present: (Political Action)** Christine Pellegrino; **Present: (Professional Development and Health and Safety)** Kerry Xjimenez. **Absent (not scheduled or unable to attend):** Chris Fahey, Sharon Meyer, Vanessa Machado, Lori Brady, Miguelina Ortiz, Chris Souprios, Ed Cricchio, Kerry Xjimenez, Ann Marie Lynam, Maggie Delahunty, Lillian Felicio.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1. **JEANS FOR A CAUSE:** Chris asked the reps to remind members that we are still sponsoring "Jeans for a Cause" on the first Wednesday of every month. Chris also asked the reps to inform their principals and invite other staff members to participate. All proceeds go to the St. Christopher Food Pantry.
2. **PHONE BANK:** Chris announced that today's Executive Council meeting would be truncated in order to allow time for Council members to participate in phone banking for the upcoming elections.
3. **STAC:** On **Monday, October 17th, 2016**, the members of the Executive Board and building reps met with Superintendents to ask questions, discuss concerns and share positive feedback regarding some of the new programs and support being offered district-wide.
 - a. **CLASS SIZE:** Chris asked the building reps to share concerns regarding class size at all levels. Dr. Gallo responded stating that District administration agrees that class size is important, but added that to reduce class size they would have to hire a lot more teachers (which costs a lot of money). She said that it is up to the Board to decide if they can afford to reduce class size and sustain it. Chris added that Dr. Camhi spoke to this at the Legislative Forum, sponsored by the Baldwin Council of PTA's. At that forum Dr. Camhi stated that District administration is looking at the census data to try to determine if enrollment will increase or decrease over the next 5 – 10 years so that they can plan accordingly.
 - b. **NEW STAFF ORIENTATION:** Chris Greer asked why and when NSO was changed from one (1) year to four (4) years. Dr. Gallo stated that they changed it to mirror the new requirements for Tenure (since it now takes new teachers four years to attain Tenure). Dr. Gallo stated that it is provided to support and help new staff members. Chris then shared concerns regarding the fact that these NSO meetings are scheduled on Tuesdays which effectively prohibits new teachers from being able to enroll in graduate level classes during the week because most graduate classes are either offered on Mondays & Wednesdays or Tuesdays & Thursdays. New staff members can't enroll in these classes because they have NSO on Tuesdays and District meetings on Wednesdays. Dr. Gallo said that they will discuss it and possibly change the day of the week NSO is offered.
 - c. **PROJECT EXCELLENCE:** Chris asked the Middle School Reps to share their experiences with the Project Excellence program. MS reps reported that they are seeing positive results and a boost in morale. They added that they would like to develop a three (3) and five (5) year plan in addition to the short term goals. Mr. Mignella (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction) stated that he will be meeting with the Middle School administration to go over scheduling which includes a move back towards the teaming model. Mr. Mignella also stated that he had computers installed in the ISS room so that students could do work instead of fooling around and being disruptive. Middle School reps said it has already helped.
 - d. **MS DISCIPLINE/RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:** Chris asked the Middle School reps to share their questions regarding restorative justice. The reps stated that they are seeing very positive results from this program, but that some students are not following through with the requirements and in at least one case the student was suspended two (2) more times since his/her first infraction. The question they raised was what is the next step for a student who refuses to follow the plan? Mr. Mignella said he wasn't familiar with the Middle School administration's discipline policy, but he would look into it. The reps quickly clarified that the restorative justice program was developed by central administration, not building administration. Mr. Mignella said that he will look into it and get back to us with an answer.
 - e. **MS SCHEDULING:** Chris asked the reps to share concerns regarding the scheduling at the Middle School. The reps explained how students show up to their class without any notice and others never return (and are removed from their roster) without any notice. The continuous schedule changes made it impossible for some teachers to cover all the material they had planned for. Mr. Mignella stated that he will be working with the Middle School administration to try to avoid scheduling issues in the future.

(President's Report-continued on the next page)

President's Report (continued)

- f. **MS 9th PERIOD:** Chris asked the Middle School reps to share concerns regarding the over use of the 9th period. It was reported that the 6th grade teachers are experiencing the most difficulty because they teach two subjects and are constantly being asked to attend meetings with both departments. When added to scheduled parent phone calls and other meetings/professional obligations they are feeling like they are being pulled in too many directions at once. Mr. Mignella said that he will work with the Middle School administration to try to reduce the number of meetings and to avoid having multiple meetings scheduled on the same day.
 - g. **MS CONSULTANT SCHEDULE:** The Middle School reps said that they appreciate all of the PD support, but that some consultants are giving them very little (if any) notice. They requested that they be provided with a master schedule of when they will be receiving PD so that they can plan accordingly. Mr. Mignella said that he will work with the PD consultants and make sure that teachers are provided with more notice.
 - h. **SUBSTITUTE SHORTAGE (ELEMENTARY):** Kelley Snow shared ongoing concerns regarding the lack of substitute coverage at the Elementary level. Dr. Gallo stated that she does not believe there is a shortage. She said part of the problem is that sometimes teachers call in late making it impossible to get a sub. **EXAMPLE:** One teacher called in at 8:15AM. Another teacher entered in their ½ day PM at 11:39AM. In these two (2) instances there was no time to get a substitute to cover those absences. Dr. Gallo also stated that they have had issues with ½ days where subs don't take the jobs. Dr. Gallo said that they keep hiring subs and have more subs employed now than ever before.
 - i. **ELEMENTARY PD CONSULTANTS:** Kelley Snow shared concerns that some of the Elementary consultants are contradicting the building principals.
 - j. **WEBSITE SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS:** Kelley Snow asked about website subscription renewals. Mr. Mignella stated that he has been reviewing all of the subscriptions and also checking on the usage for each. He has started renewing them and said that he would make a list for teachers so that they know what is available.
 - k. **INITIATIVES:** Kelley Snow and the Elementary Reps voiced concerns over the amount of PD and different initiatives that Elementary teachers are being asked to follow. Teachers want the number of initiatives to be reduced so that they can focus on mastering a few instead of struggling with many. They also asked for more coaching/modeling and less observation. Mr. Mignella said that he would look into it and try to provide more coaching/modeling.
 - l. **TECHNOLOGY/SMART BOARDS:** Vinny Leis brought up concerns regarding the turnaround time on Smart Board repairs. He asked if the District is able to keep parts on hand (like Smart Board bulbs) to reduce the amount of time it takes to repair Smart Boards. Mr. Mignella said that they are looking to address this concern as well as replacing aging Smart Boards with newer more durable technology (that is compatible with existing Smart Board software).
 - m. **DISTRICT-WIDE SLO's:** Mr. Mignella distributed copies of the District-wide K-12 SLO's (for all teachers except Regents teachers who must have a SLO based on their Regents) and explained the baselines and targets. Chris added that no teacher will be harmed by these SLO's and that he hopes that teachers will be able to stop worrying about APPR and go back to what they love, teaching their students.
4. **NEGOTIATIONS:** Chris stated that the next negotiations session will take place on Monday, November 7th, 2016. Chris hopes to have more substantive information to report on after that meeting.

Vice-President for Elementary (Reported by Kelley Snow)

- 1. **ELEMENTARY INITIATIVES/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Kelley met with Anthony Mignella to discuss member concerns regarding the sheer volume of initiatives which are compounded by the overwhelming amount of professional development. Kelley shared that although the teachers appreciate and welcome "most" of the staff development, they are overwhelmed by the intensity of professional development being delivered in a condensed format. Teachers want more time to digest and implement strategies in between professional development/consultant sessions. Anthony reported that after listening to the teachers at **STAC on October 17th, 2016**, he did the following: 1) immediately removed Diane Ripple from the elementary buildings; 2) eliminated midyear AIMS Web testing; 3) met with the staff developers to make sure that they were communicating with one another; 4) requested permission to direct the staff developers to do more modeling for the teachers; and 5) asked administrators to provide teachers with more freedom and flexibility in how they plan for and utilize their existing literacy and math blocks so that they can get the most out of that time. Kelley asked the Reps to impress upon the members the importance of completing the BTA Professional Development/contract hour forms. We need data (from evaluations) to support member concerns and it helps us effectively advocate for the elimination and/or modification of PD to resolve and/or alleviate the issues.
- 2. **MEMBER TO MEMBER MEDIATION:** Kelley ask all the Reps to remind their teachers that if they or someone they know is having an issue with a colleague that they should try and work it out amongst themselves and not go to administration. If a teacher is unsure about what to do if they are caught in a situation with another colleague Kelley encourages them to speak with a Rep. If the member is not comfortable with a Rep mediating the situation, Kelley and Chris Fahey are always willing to mediate situations as well.

Vice-President for Secondary (Reported by Chris Greer)

- 1. **JURY DUTY:** Chris Fahey was on Jury Duty, but continued to work with Secondary Reps to resolve concerns.

Vice-President for Public Relations (Reported by Vinny Leis)

1. **BTA READY OR NOT RETIREMENT WORKSHOPS**: Vinny stated that he has 38 participants in this year's BTA Ready or Not Workshop Series. **SESSION 1 Date: Monday, November 7th, 2016** Topic/Presenter: District Benefits / Ms. Eileen Lyons & Margaret D'Angelo **SESSION 2 Date: Monday, November 14th, 2016** Topic/Presenter: Legal Plan/Elder Law / Mr. Steve Kramer **SESSION 3 Date: Tuesday, November 22nd, 2016** Topic/Presenter: NYSTRS / Mr. Tim Southerton **SESSION 4 Date: Monday, November 28th, 2016** Topic/Presenter: Social Security / Mr. Paul Orlando All sessions will take place from **3:45pm - 5:00pm** at **District Office in Gymnasium located at 960 Hastings Street Baldwin, NY 11510.**
2. **VOYA 403(b) FALL VISIT TO BALDWIN UFSD**: Vinny stated that Mr. Jonathan Wicker and his associate Mr. Stephan J. Coles will be visiting your schools on the following dates to discuss 403(b) Tax Deferred Annuity Opportunities which is made available for teachers and district employees. This is part of an annual visit that takes place a few times a year that the Baldwin Teachers Association works in conjunction with Dr. Draper and the Business Office to provide staff members/employees with financial planning opportunities. Visits will take place at the: **High School on Monday, October 31st, 10:30AM-1:30PM**; **Lenox on Monday, October 31st 2:00-4:00PM**; **Brookside on Tuesday, November 1st, 8:00-10:00AM**; **Meadow on Tuesday, November 1st, 10:30-1:30PM**; **District Office on Tuesday, November 1st, 3:30-5:00PM**; **Steele on Wednesday, November 2nd, 8:00-10:00AM**; **Middle School on Wednesday, November, 2nd, 10:30AM-1:30PM**; **Plaza on Wednesday, November 2nd, 2:00-4:00PM.**
3. **PERSONAL ISSUES**: Vinny stated that he is currently working with members on resolving confidential issues.

Vice-President for Treasury and Membership (Reported by Anthony DeAngelis)

1. **MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**: Anthony continues to update membership records with NYSUT. If anyone has not received a new NYSUT ID card, or is not receiving NYSUT benefits material, email Anthony at deangelisan@baldwinschools.org to check what address the BTA has for you.
2. **BTA AUDIT**: Anthony is preparing the yearly BTA audit with the accountant. Anyone who is interested in attending the audit should email Anthony (deangelisan@baldwinschools.org) at their earliest convenience.
3. **RETIREMENT INVESTMENTS**: If anyone is interested in more retirement account options, go to <https://www.omni403b.com> for a list of all available providers. Another investment option is utilizing the 457 plan which has Vanguard mutual funds. If anyone has any questions about the difference between the 403B and 457 plans, email Anthony at deangelisan@baldwinschools.org.

Teaching Assistants (Reported by Marlene Asulin)

1. **TABLED**: The TA's had nothing new to report and tabled their agenda.

Committees

Political Action (Reported by Christine Pellegrino)

1. **PHONE BANKING**: The BTA PAC team organized and executed a virtual phone bank in the BTA Office using NYUST laptops and pre-paid cell phones. Council members participated in making phone calls supporting local candidates that we have endorsed (like Todd Kaminsky) in the upcoming election.

Professional Development (Reported by Kerry Xjimenez)

1. **MEETINGS**: The Professional Development Committee met on **Wednesday, October 26th**, Executive Council members who are on the committee were excused from Wednesday's Executive Council meeting in order to attend this meeting. This was the first meeting with our new Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Anthony Mignella. The Professional Development Committee will report back at our next Council meeting on **Wednesday, November 9th, 2016.**

Health and Safety (Reported by Kerry Xjimenez)

1. **MEETINGS**: The Health & Safety Committee met on **Thursday, October 6th, 2016.** Kerry was excused from the Council Meeting so that she could attend the Professional Development Meeting. Kerry will report on the **October 6th, 2016** Health & Safety Meeting at our next Council meeting on **Wednesday, November 9th, 2016.**

School Concerns

1. **TABLED**: School concerns were tabled in order to facilitate an Executive Council Phone Bank.

(MINUTES CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE)

THE VALUE OF NYSUT MEMBERSHIP

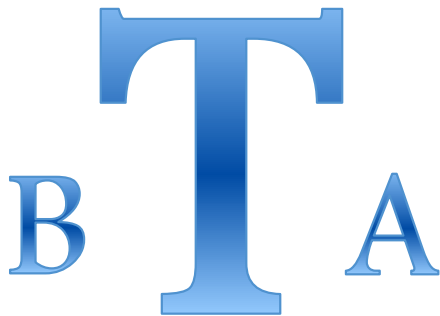
POWERFUL SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE OUT TO DESTROY UNIONS

Rich, powerful corporate special interests have been investing huge sums of money in recent years to try to destroy unions like NYSUT. In the courts, in Congress, in state legislatures and in the media, their attacks have been constant, relentless and effective:

- Legal battles to take away our right to organize and collect dues
- Legislative battles to slash school funding, privatize public services and eliminate rights we have enjoyed for decades
- **Negative attacks in the media demonizing and blaming teachers and other public employees**

BECAUSE UNIONS DO GOOD THINGS FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Unions like NYSUT exist to advocate for and defend working people. In a system that is rigged against ordinary working people, the collective voice and power of the union is the only thing protecting your financial, professional and personal interests:



***Baldwin Teachers Association
"Baldwin Teachers Promote Excellence"***

- **Salaries of union workers are nearly 30% higher than non-union workers**
- Unions like NYSUT fight excessive testing, battle for better pay and protect your due process rights and retirement benefits
- NYSUT provides quality professional development, specialized training opportunities and works to improve the quality of education in every classroom in the state.
- NYSUT provides the BTA with critical field services including our Labor Relations Specialist, a highly qualified legal department, union finance experts and a top notch educational research department.

Executive Council adjourned at **4:15** PM.
Executive Council Phone Bank reconvened at **4:30** PM.
Executive Council Phone Bank adjourned at **5:30** PM.
Executive Board reconvened at **5:45** PM.
Executive Board adjourned at **6:45** PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Christopher Greer