

Teaneck Public Schools District Advisory Team

District Advisory Team Meeting Minutes for February 21, 2013

Present:

Bryant School	No attendee
Hawthorne School	Rebecca Alston, Florence Mitchell Brown
Lowell School	No attendee
Whittier School	Vanessa Bing
Ben Franklin Middle School	No attendee
Thomas Jefferson Middle School	No attendee
Teaneck High School	Denise Sanders

Ms. Pinsak began the meeting at 7:15 pm with review of the January 15, 2013 Minutes. The Minutes were approved.

Reports from each building representative summarizing the key points of the latest BQMT meeting, including questions, comments and/or concerns for the district team.

Ms. Bing reported that Whittier's BQMT Meeting is scheduled for the first week in March.

Ms. Alston summarized the Hawthorne School BQMT Meeting that occurred on January 22, 2013. Minutes of the meeting are **attached**. Regarding security, a script is in place and visitors are required to show identification. Students are no longer opening doors. Students need additional training as to what to do if they are separated from their classmates and teacher during a drill. Ms. Mitchell-Brown inquired about designated meeting place for students returning to the high school during a drill; where do they go? Ms. Pinsak responded that Eugene Field School gymnasium could be a designated meeting place for high school students.

At the request of the BQMT, Dr. Spollen-LaRaia will meet with Ms. Sarraga, Director of the Hawthorne Working Parents Association to review the structure of the program. Ms. Alston reported that outside landscaping is in progress following the solar panel construction.

Ms. Sanders summarized the Teaneck High School BQMT Meeting that occurred on February 21, 2013. (THS BQMT Minutes for January 17, 2013 are **attached**). Ms. Sanders reported that during HSPA testing, parents with younger students want them to go to school at regular time on testing days. Parents receive ample notice to make arrangements for a delayed opening start of school. Ms. Pinsak reported that during Sunday with the Superintendent meeting, the delayed schedule was discussed; if during midterms younger students could attend a study hall. Mr. Heck going forward will review the schedule during finals for the younger grade levels. We cannot afford a security breach during testing. Testing dates are state mandated.

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Ms. Sanders continued to report that the BQMT had a discussion about the T.E.A.M.S. Academy (Technology Enriched Academy for Math and Science). There is a large application pool of 100 students for 40 slots. Concerns are that juniors leave the program and go into other classes at the high school. Ms. Pinsak responded that we are reviewing the program. Teaneck High School is so comprehensive and offers so much but some students have complex schedules to include band. The same courses offered in T.E.A.M.S. are offered at the high school. This year, we added a Robotics course to the high school course guide. Ms. Sanders reported that parents asked about adding an APPs course and a review of the technology courses of the Academy.

Ms. Sanders stated that the 85 minute block schedule has helped Teaneck students in college. Ms. Pinsak responded that we are considering a schedule for 9th grade students to have math everyday for 60 minutes and create a smaller learning community. With the block schedule, they receive math every other day. Eventually we would move the whole high school to a schedule to include math every day for students. Ms. Sanders reported that parents and students requested a Summer Reading book selection survey and an account to download books. Ms. Pinsak responded that we have accounts to download books and I have a committee of parents and students regarding summer reading. The English teachers had a meeting about summer reading. A good option for the students is to read a book that they can connect to their course work for that year. Ms. Alston stated that the books on the summer reading list are classics.

Superintendent's Report on School Security

A test message was sent to parents/guardians. Our data person will compile a report and submit it to each building principal to update the emergency telephone and email accounts for the families that could not be reached. Data was also retrieved from the half-day telephone blast to parents. Two scripts for answering the main door/buzzer were developed for the schools. One was used at Hawthorne School by Mr. McHale. The principals selected one script for their buildings. With grant funds, we purchased cameras and walkie talkies. We found that some schools needed more walkie talkies at the buildings. We provided additional walkie talkies for Hawthorne and Lowell Schools.

The District was selected by the State Department Making Our Schools Safe (M.O.S.S.) to participate in cohort one. The M.O.S.S. representative from the State Department chose the high school and Hawthorne to review their security drill procedures. Mr. Finger attended the wrap-up symposium and Teaneck was given best practices for security drill procedures and plans.

The district security team has met twice and each member of the team was given one building security plan to review with the principal, visit the buildings and give feedback on the school plans. We are providing additional security to the buildings in case of an emergency. Please inform your BQMT members that we are providing more security.

Superintendent's Report on 2013-2014 Calendar

Ms. Pinsak informed the committee that there are two calendar proposals for approval by the Board in March. One calendar option does not have school on Election Day. During the Presidential Election, school was closed for students but teachers had a professional development day. We are checking with the township and police department about security during Election Day.

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Superintendent's Report on the Budget for 2013-14

There will be a Special Public Meeting on March 4, 2013 at Teaneck High School for approval of the preliminary budget. The February 13, 2013 PowerPoint presentation of the preliminary budget is available on the district website under Board of Education/2013-2014 budget. We do not know what we will receive in state aid but we will know by February 28, 2013. In 2009-2010, we received 7.1 million in state aid then with the economic crisis any surplus was taken by the Department of Education or reserved for roof replacement. The 2009-10 budget failed and that is why that budget was so high that year. In the preliminary budget PowerPoint presentation, page 7 lists the capital projects and equipment that would be funded: wireless internet; roof replacement; asbestos abatement; parking lot resurfacing; scoreboard installation. Page 10 lists the proposed budget reductions: administrative positions; increase mileage from .9 miles to 1.3 miles from school to be eligible for courtesy busing; tiering of non-public bus routes/increase bus utilization; outsource paraprofessionals and substitute teachers. The general fund tax levy increase would be \$120.26 (\$10.05 per month).

The high school was made wireless this year. With the solar project, we have upgraded to gas at all buildings. We have used capital reserves for roof replacement; THS and BFMS roofs are completed but we have one more roof to replace. The Teaneck Junior Soccer League will donate a scoreboard but we will incur the cost of installation. The van used in Operations & Maintenance is ten years old and would be replaced. Educational math materials are ten years old and changes were made to correlate with the new state standards. Outsourcing substitute teachers and paraprofessionals through a service would still allow us to interview and accept or reject applicants which would save the district \$80,000 to \$100,000. My concern is keeping class size down; we do not want to increase class size.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 1, 2013 at 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Linda Kuhran

Hawthorne School

Deirdre Spollen-LaRaia, Ed.D.
Principal

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Hawthorne BOMT Meeting *January 22, 2013*

Meeting Minutes 3:30 PM – 4:15

Team Members Present:

Lois Bono, Teacher
Florence Mitchell-Brown, Parent
Rebecca Riveiro-Alston, Parent
Deirdre Spollen-LaRaia, Principal

Principal Report

- ✦ School Goals and Progress through January 2013 (presented previously at PTA Meeting and Faculty Meeting)
 - Team members suggested the possibility of sharing Words of Wisdom with parents/families (how we are promoting positive character)

Reports/Concerns/Questions/Suggestions from Team Members

- ✦ Update on Lice (Letter sent home)
 - Suggestion for Nurse to conduct Hand Washing lessons in the classrooms
 - Suggestion to have children make signs for the bathrooms about good hygiene
- ✦ Exterminator followed up in our building regarding previous concerns about rodent issues. At this time, there are no reports from staff about rodent issues.
- ✦ School Calendar was revised to reflect days added due to hurricane sandy. All parents received copies of the revised calendar and it is posted on the website.
- ✦ Team Member brought up a concern regarding the substitute teachers in classrooms. Dr. Spollen-LaRaia stated it is important to maintain consistency and order in the classroom, teachers leave substitute plans that are aligned with daily routines and it is important for substitutes to maintain a high level of respect and rapport for children in our school.
- ✦ Team Member discussed heightened security measures and stated they were pleased that students do not open doors for adults. Team members requested that if students are walking when the late bell rings that the staff member assigned to door duty hold the door for students. This prompted a discussion of recognizing students that come to school on time.
- ✦ Team Member brought up a concern about the order and structure in WPA. It was suggested to recommend centers and to observe other after-school programs for suggested activities and management.
- ✦ Outside landscaping is in progress following our solar panel construction.

Next Steps/Follow Up

Report from District Advisory Team (DAT)

- ✦ Ms. Alston shared reports from the DAT regarding security measures including showing ID at sign-in, having a script for persons entering the buildings and obtaining additional support at doors during school assemblies.

Good of the Order

TEANECK HIGH SCHOOL
BQMT Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2013

Attendees: Barbara Morris-George, Dennis Heck, Peter LoGiudice, Faith Mootoo, Michelle O'Reilly, Pat Phillips, Pedro Valdes

I. Principal Report & Update

- A. THS was highlighted on MSG Varsity cable network as part of MSG Varsity Grant. MSG Varsity highlights schools in the NJ area.
- B. A. Folcarelli new Information Data Manager working on master schedule for THS and both middle schools. Also putting together grades for mid- year report.
- C. 60 seniors from THS will be randomly selected to take the NAEP (national assessment test in math and language arts) on February 13
- D. 16 educators (teachers and administrators) from South Korea will visit THS to review our curriculum. They feel their curriculum is all academic based
- E. THS looking at becoming a Fair Trade high school. This move would require Board approval.

II. HSPA

- A. Saturday HSPA prep class open to all 11th graders.
- B. 325 juniors at THS. 187 students enrolled in HSPA prep. First session went well
- C. The criteria used to identify students needing help were the PSAT math scores
- D. Special Ed and ESL students were also identified
- E. Guidance Counselors contacted the parents and students
- F. To increase math performance the new math supervisor is aligning the curriculum to the end of course exam. Everything is more streamlined and efficient.
- F. Motivational assembly challenged the students to do well. The goal is to obtain over 80% in math.
- H. 51% of students taking honors and AP courses. Need to determine why more students are not scoring Advance Proficiency on the HSPA.

III. Guidance Counselor Meetings

- A. Guidance was able to meet with every student doing poorly. With the second set of meetings the goal is meet with every student. Parents will get a notice about the meeting.
- B. Guidance will look at mid year average and see how students are doing
- C. Concern was raised about organization of meetings with guidance.

- D. Recommendation was given to ensure all guidance counselors have an agenda when they sit down to meet with the parent and student so that the meetings are more productive.
- E. There is an I&RS committee made up of teachers and counselors that work with students having difficulty

Level of escalation

- 1st level – Teacher
- 2nd level – Dean
- 3rd level – AP
- 4th level – Principal
- 5th level –I & RS

IV. Strategies and Goals for Math/English/Science Department Chairs

- A. Science Department aligning curriculum with end of course exam
Science department also signed grant for new engineering course
- B. English department plans unknown at this time

V. Mid-Term Preparation

- A. No homework study groups in place this year. Primarily in classroom preparation for mid-term.

VI. Book Club Update

- A. DEAR program will pick up after mid-terms
- B. Planning Literacy Day which would encompass the Book Fair
- C. Need to identify vendors for event

VII. New Business

- A. We made district wide AMAO. AMAO (Annual Measurable Achievement Objective) is a statewide exam for ELL students in ESL program
- B. Recommendation made to place SAT schedule on school website. Randy can gather information and Gerri can upload onto site.

Next BQMT meeting Thursday, February 21