High School Council Meeting
Minutes from Tuesday, April 1, 2014

The minutes from the meeting on March 4, 2014, were approved.

Dr. Victor Maxwell, (Guest Elizabeth Cory) Poetry Out Loud
Elizabeth Cory performed an incredible poem by Emily Bronte for the audience. Dr. Maxwell talked about Poetry Out Loud, a national competition where 300,000 kids compete. There are 13,000 competitors in NY alone. It starts with in-class competitions where kids choose poems that speak to them personally. Students study poems in-depth, each comma and each word. It also progresses public speaking skills at a high level. Students find that it's intimidating but incredibly rewarding. BXV started with seven kids in the competition years ago and now have 67 involved in the contest. The competition progresses from the classroom, school level, regional competition, state and national. Bronxville places 1st or 2nd in regionals. Elizabeth was 2nd at the state competition last year with 13,000+ competitors. In tenth grade, students are writing their own poems so it has been built into the curriculum starting in 10th but competition runs 9-12th. There is also a poetry club so students who are interested can develop skills outside of class.

Elizabeth explained that she selects poems by first looking at an anthology website with hundreds of choices. She selects a poem that she feels she would have written because she can connect to the meaning. Once she selects a poem, she breaks it into a few small pieces until she's down to commas and semi-colons to understand small nuances in the meaning. She practices it over and over until she can convey its meaning to an audience through her recitation. She doesn't consider herself a performer but has become one through her love of poetry recitation. Competitors are judged on appropriate level of emotion, level of difficulty, etc. Elizabeth performed a second poem that was equally impressive.

Dr. David Quattrone, Superintendent's Report
The next Board meeting is coming up where a candidate for ES principal will be nominated. There will also be a vote on tenure recommendations and the first technology report will be presented. The next budget is settled at a 1.7% tax increase. The Board is focused on upgrading our technology to give students the skills they need to be successful now and well into the future.

Dr. John Kehoe, Assistant Superintendent's Report
Teacher negotiations are ongoing and are productive. Two meetings are set for April and we are hopeful that we will reach a resolution. Construction on the auditorium is up and running and our team of architects and construction managers are keeping the District's goals in mind. So far everything is running smoothly.

Searches are going on for a number of positions in the ES, HS and special education due to retirements. There are a number of teachers up for tenure and information about the process is posted on the school website. Send letters of input about tenure to Dr. Quattrone. The process is coming to a close so please submit input ASAP.

Ruth Wood, School Board Report

The budget will be voted on and adopted at the next meeting and the Board believes the new budget is responsible both fiscally and strategically. They are working on the flood mitigation project and the reconfiguration of Hayes field to address some of our field space issues in conjunction with the construction. A plan has not been adopted yet but the Board is evaluating options so please take a look at the plans on the school board website.

A question was raised about health risks and the environmental impact of using synthetic turf versus a high-end natural surface once the flood mitigation project allows for a new surface. Ruth Wood addressed the issue and said it was something the Board considered. They concluded that our fields have no recovery time between events because they are so heavily used throughout the school day, after school, evenings and on weekends. Our surfaces are over-used because we have so little space so they do not feel we can maintain a natural surface and maximize usage. A decision on the surface we ultimately use will likely be in the fall.

Anne Abbatecola, Guidance Department Report

Tomorrow evening we have a speaker from the University of Rochester who will talk about college admissions and how the process works. Two seniors will also speak about their college search experience tomorrow night at 7pm in the multi-purpose room.

College acceptances are in full swing and parents/students are encouraged to let guidance know their final decisions. Letters went out to seniors' homes about the formal process of accepting.

My Road workshops are coming up for 10th graders and are sponsored by the College Board. At the same time, tenth graders will be opening a College Board account. My Road Workshops will take place right after spring break.

The new freshman transition leaders are already working with 8th grade students to welcome them into high school. Any parents who haven't had a course planning meeting with their students and counselor should call guidance ASAP.

AP exams will be the weeks of May 5th and May 12th. Students will not attend their AP classes the week of exams but do attend non-AP classes. On April 8th, Kaplan meetings will take place for sophomores who took the sample SAT/ACT. The final exam schedule is being developed and is in draft form now.

Karen Peterson, Athletic Department Report
The weather has hampered the start of spring sports but we are slowly getting there. Hayes field is closed because of the core borings that were done for flood mitigation. As soon as it dries up we will get them up and running. On April 25th our spring spirit week will start. The week has been well planned and there will be a charity focus for various teams and games. Scout Field has been upgraded considerably, led by baseball parents, Eastchester and the school. On May 3rd there will be an opening ceremony. Scout Field houses our varsity, JV and modified baseball programs.

Ann Meyer, Principal's Report
Mike Nerney will speak tonight at 7pm in multi purpose on Don't Be Fooled, a discussion on drugs and alcohol in teens. Mr. Nerney is running small groups tomorrow and Thursday with high school students and faculty. He is a very powerful speaker and effective in small groups with students. His focus is on the long-term impact of pot on the adolescent brain.

The next Bronxville Voices assembly is planned for May and the topic is "How To." Speakers will talk about how to bake, rebuilding a car and building Tesla coils.

John Heiss, a Bronxville alumni, is coming to work with our band and orchestra thanks to the Bronxville School Foundation who are funding his trip. He will also be speaking to our seniors about his experience at BHS and what he's done since in the field of music.

The awards ceremony will be done differently this year because of construction in the auditorium. It is not feasible to have the entire high school sitting on gym bleachers for 2+ hours so we are giving grade-level awards by grade and national awards will be a collective gathering in the gym for a shorter ceremony. Some of the senior awards will be moved to the scholastic achievement dinner.

On May 28th the entire ninth grade will go to Sharp Reservation for a final Freshman Transition exercise. The trip will be funded by the Bronxville School Foundation.

Grade Reports
<u>9th Grade</u>: The Andrus dance is this Friday, 4-6pm; Their fundraiser will be selling Bronco socks for $10/pair after spring break.
<u>10th Grade</u>: Making a final push for reusable bag sale at end of year when the weather is good and they can set up tables at school events.
<u>11th Grade</u>: Promenade planning is ongoing.
<u>12th Grade</u>: The faculty appreciation lunch last week was well attended. Gearing up for Senior Week, Baccalaureate and Graduation.

Susan Bettino, B Well (former Health and Wellness)
Reefer Sanity, a book, is out and a great tool to read and talk to your kids about. Next week, April 10th, Katharine Steiner-Adair is back to speak on the Big Disconnect after being cancelled by snow. There will be another town hall soon with local police, ER doctors and the local DA office.

Annette Adamiyatt, SFL
We had a successful dance last Friday night and raised $3400 that will largely help sponsor JBFC girls coming to the US. SFL will subsidize the prom $2000 to help bring the entry fee down for each student. No incidents at the SFL dance ☺

Other News

- The Memorial Day committee needs a high school family to host a cocktail party on the Friday night of Memorial Day weekend. If you are interested, please contact Suzanne Davis, the Memorial Day Chair.
- We need volunteers for next year's HS Council positions.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 6th.