

High School Council Meeting Minutes from Tuesday, March 4, 2014

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

Bill Meyer, Bronxville Voices

Bronxville Voices began three years ago to create a way for high school students to share experiences that other students may not know about. There are 3-4 assemblies per year and there are usually three students and one teacher who present at each assembly. Topics have included travel, service projects, independent research and the arts. The next Voices assembly will be "How To." Moving forward, Voices will use a web interface (like Ted Talks) to broadcast through a Voices website with interactive comments. A group of eight students comprise the core of the committee and those students identify speakers and topics. Each time someone speaks at a Voices assembly, they are invited to join the committee. Speeches take 3-4 weeks of intensive work to be ready to present.

Recent presentations have included ice climbing, working with autistic students, opera, traveling to Tanzania, athletics (football, ballet, etc). Going forward, we hope to bring in alumni in the community to participate in the series. The students love it and would like to see Voices more often but it is very time-consuming, requiring about three months to prepare a presentation. Last year a group of seniors did reflections for the final assembly. Students often surprise themselves during the rigorous process of preparing. Voices assemblies help to build a sense of community.

Dr. Quattrone added that there are many things beyond grades that create excellence in the school community. Assemblies like Bronxville Voices create opportunities to succeed in school beyond just grades. Students may know a trip or experience they had was special, but need faculty and peer support to push their understanding of the meaning to present to the greater school community.

Ruth Wood, School Board Report

The second budget meeting took place and the Board is looking at a 1.9% increase/cap on next year's budget and would like to tweak it down a bit more without cutting programs. In April, the Board will move to adopt the budget and will vote on it in May. The Elementary School Principal Search is underway and they are interviewing candidates beginning today. Auditorium construction began over winter break and they are making plans for the FEMA-backed flood remediation.

Dr. David Quattrone, Superintendent's Report

The Board adopted the 2014/15 calendar and it is posted on the school website. We have another two-week vacation in December 2014. The Mayor is moving November elections off site because of security risks in having the school open for voting. We have one snow day left and if there are more than one more it will begin to affect spring break. We are working on technology planning with BOCES representatives to make improvements. The search for a Curriculum Leader is underway and the person will handle Common Core changes, testing changes, etc., and we hope to have someone in place before year-end. We have received a lot of interest and will evaluate the best candidates.

Dr. John Kehoe, Assistant Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kehoe is working to ensure a smooth transition in his absence full time. He encourages everyone to focus on the great things students are doing, like Voices, and not to get too anxious about construction and other tertiary things.

Anne Abbatecola, Guidance Department Report

Course planning conferences are moving along and grades 9-10th are starting soon. Current juniors have been given Brag Sheets and students and parents are encouraged to fill them out thoughtfully. Brag Sheets gives guidance counselors a great opportunity to get to know students beyond transcripts.

Eighth grade parents will see a presentation next Monday, March 10th, at 7pm to introduce families to high school. There will be a panel of students and guidance counselors speaking and there will be a display of student artwork. Counselors will follow up with 8th grade students on March 17th during advisories to discuss high school curriculum and subsequent presentations for 8th grade students will take place in April.

Freshman Transition interviews just concluded and the program will be limited to current juniors (rising seniors). There is significant interest, speaking to the value of the program. There was a lunch last week to end the Freshman Transition Program for this year and there will be a final trip to Sharp Reservation, sponsored by the Bronxville School Foundation, to do community building among Freshman Transition groups and leaders. The trip will take place on 5/28.

Progress reports are due this Friday and will be posted on 3/14, a week from Friday. Many teachers send interim reports and often receiving no comments implies that there are no issues with a student's performance.

Tenth graders have sample SAT/ACT testing by Kaplan coming up on 3/15 at 9am. It is a chance to let kids experience both tests to see which they like best. A Kaplan representative will follow up with each family the next Tuesday evening in the multi-purpose room.

Mid-year grades were sent to colleges for seniors. There are still outstanding AP exam registrations so please get your payments in ASAP.

SAT subject tests are one-hour tests in 20 areas that students use to demonstrate particular areas of strength. Many competitive colleges require 2 -3 SAT subject tests. They are roughly 90 multiple-choice questions and generally are taken after an AP class. SAT subject tests are given at most SAT dates and many Bronxville students choose to take them in May and June. In math, students should ask their teachers which test, Math 1 or Math 2, they are prepared to take.

Karen Peterson, Athletic Department Report

There are parent/player meetings tonight in the cafeteria for spring sports. There will be interest meetings for a girls' varsity softball team, in conjunction with Tuckahoe, where the two schools will field one team with a tryout. There will also be a meeting for a girls' volleyball club for 6-12th graders. Teams play in the evening given they are club teams.

The Harlem Wizard's event was successful once again and the student athletes on the Athletic Council did an amazing job, planning the whole event with help from Matt Fisher. Over 500 people were in attendance.

Awards for winter sports will be next Wednesday, March 12th, in the Main Gym at 6:45pm. Spring sports start next Monday and we are working on alternative facilities given the snow may not melt for tryouts. Schedules will be posted on the athletic website when they are available. They are trying to put together a College Recruiting seminar for athletes who are interested playing sports in college. There is a new assistant, Debbie, in the athletic office so please stop by and say hello.

Ann Meyer, Principal's Report

The first Common Core English workshop is tomorrow night at 7pm in the multi-purpose room for 6-12th grade families. Andrea Lowenkopf will be here to help give an overview of Common Core English curriculum and what major changes happen in the classroom, homework and testing. The workshops are meant to be an introduction and overview for parents. Questions can be submitted and will be addressed at a follow up meeting. The same meeting for Math will be held on 3/19 for 6-12th grade parents. Eleanor Livesy, a consultant, will address Common Core changes in Math curriculum. Both meetings are the start of a conversation about Common Core changes.

Tomorrow is the One Love assembly that was rescheduled from the snow day before Valentine's. The One Love Foundation was founded by the family of Yeardley Love, a UVA lacrosse player who was murdered by her boyfriend. The session will focus on relationship violence, warning signs and responses.

The Bronxville School Foundation funding a trip by John Heiss to come and work with our band students in April. We are working with technology consultants to think about how we should be incorporating technology into our curriculum and what technical skills students need to be successful moving forward. The PTA is supporting a program to look at revamping our library – its design, technology and necessary resources – to provide students with the best support moving forward. There is a big technology component given students are doing more and more research. The Board recently accepted a gift from the PTA to begin the process.

Grade Reports

9th Grade: no new report.

10th Grade: bag sale ongoing for two more months.

11th Grade: no new report.

12th Grade: Senior Parent meeting is 3/18 from 7-9pm in multi-purpose room.

Susan Bettino, B Well (former Health and Wellness)

B Well is sponsoring the One Love seminar. On April 1st they will host Don't Be Fooled, a presentation to parents about marijuana. On April 10th at 9am, Catherine Steiner-Adair will be back to speak about the Big Disconnect and how technology is affecting teens. She is a great speaker so please attend if possible. B Well purchased a copy of the film, Haze, addressing binge drinking. They are working on a venue to show it to high school students.

Other News

- The next PTA meeting will be March 11th.
- 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.
- The dodge ball tournament is this Thursday night and is a fundraiser that will support the Zoe Klimley scholarship fund.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 1st.