

## **High School Council Meeting Minutes**

### **October 1, 2013**

The minutes from the June 4, 2013 meeting were approved.

We'd like to welcome our new principal, Ann Meyer.

#### **Superintendent's Report, Dr. David Quattrone**

Enrollment in the high school increased to 509 students this year. Total enrollment surpassed 1,700 students for first time, a 5% increase over last year. In anticipation of growing numbers the District added one elementary school teacher and one middle school math teacher. There will be tough budget decisions to make to balance staffing, costs and additional students. Dr. Quattrone and the high school staff have enjoyed working with Ann Meyer, who began in late June. Anne is setting a great tone in the high school in terms of focus and direction.

Last June, the faculty met in the auditorium and looked at a high school transcript. Two video clips of Bronxville Voices were then shown and you could see transcript come alive. We are focusing together not just on tests scores and grades, but also on what KIND of person comes out of Bronxville. We are focused on helping students to find their own voices and grow as both students and individuals.

A question was raised about the effect of increased enrollment on class sizes. Dr. Quattrone said that class sizes average around 20 and 25% of classes are 24-30 students.

#### **Assistant Superintendent's Report, John Kehoe**

Operations were very active this summer with the ceiling collapse and bathrooms/concession construction. There will be budget challenges to managing an older building. A question was raised about the concession stand and when it will be ready and we hope to have concessions operational by homecoming and bathrooms will come on line later. The delay was caused by sewer connections from the village to the school that needed to be improved before plumbing could be connected. There will be port-o-potties for homecoming weekend.

#### **Guidance Department Report, Anne Abbatecola**

There are 30 new families in the high school this year and a reception took place this summer to welcome new families to the school. There is a new group to welcome students that was organized and is run by students who were new at some point in high school. Feedback on this new program from students is positive and they are actively joining clubs and sports teams to help assimilate quickly.

The kickoff of this year's Freshman Transition program was successful. We have 35 seniors who are leaders and have met with the freshmen several times. The 9th grade picnic was a

success. It was held the first week of school and had an activities fair to introduce kids to various clubs and club leaders. Also, there was an assembly on the first day of school for 10-12<sup>th</sup> grades moderated by Ann Meyer. She had the freshmen file in to the auditorium to a standing ovation to welcome them to high school.

Seniors and parents attended a college planning session where parents/students learned more about applications and managing the process. There is a new common application this year and there have been many technical challenges that are being resolved. Bronxville linked Naviance to the Common App this year to make the process more efficient.

Class enrollment has fluctuated with students dropping/changing classes. Students who need to drop should see their counselors ASAP before it is too late to make schedule changes.

The 11<sup>th</sup> grade planning meeting will be held November 20<sup>th</sup> this year instead of in January. Also, on November 21<sup>st</sup> there will be a jointly-sponsored financial aid meeting at Eastchester High School.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> the PSAT for sophomores and juniors will take place at 8am. Please submit your check for \$28 and your form to the high school office if your student wants to take the PSAT. For juniors, the PSAT is entered into the National Merit Scholarship process and Bronxville has finalists and semi finalists in the competition currently.

If you are having issues with cafeteria registration please contact David De Nuzzo.

### **Principal's Report, Anne Meyer**

It was an interesting start to the school year with the ceiling collapse but the teachers were flexible and are back in their rooms. Patrick Miele's class was held in the boardroom until last week. He reorganized all of the boardroom's class pictures to be in chronological order. All displaced teachers are back in their rooms now and final details will be completed in the next week or so. Ceiling heights are now 4' higher than before without the old dropped ceilings. The space feels larger and brighter now.

Other than the ceilings things have gone smoothly. SFL students put together a 6 minute video where they asked students/teachers to send a photo or blurb about what they did this summer. It ended up as a collage of varied and amazing experiences. Students were then asked, "What would you like to accomplish this year?" The goal of the exercise was setting a tone of community and support for each other and they hope to make it a tradition.

Also new this year the 10-12<sup>th</sup> graders welcomed the 9<sup>th</sup> graders into auditorium, literally, with a standing ovation. SFL said at the senior awards ceremony they would like to do the same thing as seniors leave for the last time.

At the next council meeting, Ann would like to have some of the members to talk about what they do on SFL. Also, SFL day is held between first and second semester and SFL is

already planning the day so they can speak about their ideas at the council meeting. SFL Day is completely student planned and executed and is a meaningful experience for the students involved in planning.

The high school is focused on developing individuals, not just a transcript. This goal evolves from the Character Counts initiative in elementary school and middle school but is different in high school. Ann is trying to define what characteristics a Bronxville graduate should have including perseverance, integrity, etc. She would like to define a Learner Profile and ensure that the school is doing everything it can to develop these characteristics in students. At Bard College, they are now asking students to submit a piece of independent work or research instead of transcripts and test scores. Their belief is that it would be a better indicator of what a student is capable of doing in college. There is a change starting to take place that is pushing us away from a 'list' of things to represent students (number of AP's, GPA, etc). Ann will be thinking about what this change means in Bronxville and how it is implemented.

A question was raised about the schedule change. The high school schedule was changed minimally to that middle and high school schedules like up because there are some joint MS/HS faculty members. There were inconsistencies in the length of some periods so the changes alleviate those issues. There is a 10-minute break between classes, a welcomed change for students. Morning classes start at 7:50am now on the new schedule.

### **Peter Royal, Drama**

There will be a performance of The Heidi Chronicles on November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Anna Leempute stars as Heidi and the play was written Wendy Wasserstein, now deceased, in 1990. Mr. Royal is trying to put together a group of Wasserstein's friends to come and talk about her life and work. The play has very modern themes about the lives of Heidi and her three closest friends. It focuses on their experiences from high school into adulthood from 1965 to 1990. There is a lot of pop culture woven into the play.

There will be a performance coming up of The Rimers of Eldritch, the play performed at Edinburgh this summer. It will take place this Sunday, Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, at 3pm in the auditorium. Lanford Wilson was the playwright and died 10 years ago. Bronxville's group received a great review from one of the Edinburgh papers. Bronxville was one of 49 high schools in North America selected to go. There were 2900 performance groups from around the world in Scotland. There are 17 students in the Heidi production and 18 students went to Scotland. Heidi is not for children because of some language – it is considered a PG-13 production.

### **Athletic Council, Rose Crawford**

Karen Peterson has been busy this fall with 8 varsity teams and the same number of JV and modified teams in preseason and not official seasons. The new bleachers are in and ready for homecoming weekend October 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. Karen has a new assistant who started yesterday, Andrea, from the Somers school district. Andrea has a strong technology background so she will be helpful in managing the athletic website. The sound system will

be ready for homecoming as will the new press box. Thanks to the Bronxville School Foundation for its patience and support of the concession stand project. Karen also would like to thank the Athletic Council students and the parents who support them. They are starting monthly meetings to involve more athletes in the Athletic Council this year. Any athletes, new or old are welcome to come.

The girls swim team raised \$1,000 for ovarian cancer awareness. The Bronco Fest soccer tournament raised over \$1,000 for breast cancer awareness and both the varsity and JV Bronco teams won their tournaments. Varsity athletes attended a workshop in preseason that focused on leadership and teamwork and was led by a professional. We will also be repeating a similar workshop for coaches in the fall and spring.

The Athletic Council sells spirit items at homecoming and items will be advertised soon. There will be a Bronco blue fan shirt, a long-sleeved dry fit, a blanket and bleacher seats. They also made up some Bronco water bottles for our teachers and fans to thank them for their support. Homecoming weekend is October 17-19<sup>th</sup> and they will be selling program ads again this year to raise money for the Athletic Council. Parents and families are invited to buy spirit ads and they are due no later than Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Emails will be coming soon to solicit volunteer support on Homecoming weekend so please sign up to help if you can.

### **Grade Reports**

9<sup>th</sup> Grade: (Nina Richter and Ashley Hanrahan) Held a successful 9<sup>th</sup> grade picnic and activities fair; dessert sale will be at Thanksgiving.

10<sup>th</sup> Grade: (Elisabeth Duncan and Susan Bettino) No fruit sale this year. Instead, they are selling reusable tote bags and will be selling them at games and events all year. There is a 10<sup>th</sup> grade carwash this Sunday from 10:30-2:30.

11<sup>th</sup> Grade: (Tara Dougherty and Molly Hendrick) Junior car wash will be Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>; Poinsettia sale will take place again at Christmas.

12<sup>th</sup> Grade: (Janet Brashear and Mary Walsh) Had a successful college planning night; made \$950 at the senior car wash; Halloween community service day is coming up so seniors need to see Joanne Dalsimer about.

### **Other Announcements**

Sarah Kraemer volunteered to run Health and Wellness this year.

The Teacher Appreciation Lunch is 10/24 and sponsored by the PTA. There will be another lunch in December and we will need food donations so please contribute! Please remember to join the PTA this year!

*The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>.*