

RTA news February 24, 2009

1. At the next RTA meeting, March 24, we will receive the RTA contract proposal to the district. The first meeting to exchange proposals with the district will be March 26.
2. District has **hired a consultant** to study the **local retirement incentive proposal** presented by RTA. Adam Urbanski said that the “buzz” on the state retirement incentive is that it is unlikely because of the economy.
3. **Site based budgeting** -- Adam Urbanski responded to the question about principals “selling off” special subject teachers for other positions. The District has not met with the union or discussed this idea. He had not heard of it. RTA positions should not be trading off positions, one for another. He asked that we let the union know of such practices. (We, at 9, will forward the information we have received.) Urbanski said that such decisions should be going through School Based Planning Committees and not decided by the principal independently. There should be a discussion of programs that are valuable and what should be kept or lost. The Superintendent is recommending 10% budget cut in all buildings. John Pavone said that they heard that it was in supplies and non personnel areas. Urbanski said that even with the stimulus Brizard feels that the student population has decreased and feels that the teacher population should too. Urbanski said that the fear of layoffs that the principals are telling the non tenured teachers is too premature. He feels that with retirement, the stimulus and natural attrition, principals should not have scared the vulnerable new teachers. Martha Keating said that she spoke to Michelle Hancock, Human Relations, to call back the dictate to tell the non tenured teachers. Martha Keating said that principals can get the seniority number from Human Relations and is asking that teachers not call RTA because all of the calls is hindering them from getting their daily work done. The seniority lists had been updated (though they found errors) to include the new September hires.
4. There was a question of the increase of the number of teachers in the **rubber room** being reprimanded. Adam Urbanski said that there seems to be more this year than any other.
5. Urbanski said that the union is getting information and keeping statistics about the **increase of administrators and their salaries** that can be used throughout negotiations.
6. Urbanski wanted teachers to be aware that there will be a United Way public announcement that will look like they are very “chummy”. He wanted to say that they were asked to do this for the charity and he said that he was only smiling on the outside for the charity’s sake.
7. **Omni Memo**-- IRS changed the rules for 403b and 401k’s, as I have been telling you about. The district said that there was too much paperwork to be responsible and hired a 3rd party administrator. (Omni has the contract for 90% of the Monroe County school districts.) Martha Keating said to send in the paperwork, don’t worry about the deadline. If you threw out the form and need another, let me know and I’ll pick you one up at RTA. If you didn’t get a form and you have a 403b through the district, let me know immediately. M. Keating is taking names and phone numbers to give to the district. If you are going to withdraw any money, the new rule says that your employer has to sign off. It

has been taking 3 weeks to get your money (the chief accountant is signing the forms when "she has time"). The union will be discussing this with them.

New regulations are making it more difficult to borrow on your 403b. If you are in the habit of doing this you may want to look into what the changes are by speaking to your agent.

If you were in the middle of transferring to another company when all of this went through, you may want to call Zach at Omni. He seems to be the "expert" on RCSD accounts.

All providers were kept the same, though some smaller companies are choosing not to continue with offering 403b's. You should have been contacted by your agent if there is a change.

8. Remember to sign your Personnel Activity Report (**PAR**) and send in each month so the district does not lose the \$150M of federal money. When asked about the mistakes, Martha Keating said that the errors are not as important as handing in the paperwork.

9. **Masters Reimbursement** -- The next payout will be April 9. If you want to know if your name is on this list, call after April 2. It won't be until after April 2 that RTA will have the list.

9. **Vote Cope** -- RTA has received an award for Vote Cope -- the average per member is \$13.10. Are you doing your share? Vote Cope is a professional insurance to keep jobs. Brizard has gone to Albany to ask to suspend Triborough Amendment (guarantee step increases and minimal pay increases if no new contract has been met). Vote Cope needs you to support them so that they can lobby for this. Also working to stop mayoral control of the school board.

11. On the RTA board in the lounge is the list of politicians whom you are being asked to contact to help **auto workers**. Write to them to support these local industries. Martha Keating said that public employees are in a better situation than these private employees.

12. Nominations and Elections are holding the elections for RTA officers in April and May. If you have moved recently, let them know so that you can receive the ballot. Less than 1/2 of teachers return their ballots. RTA would like to see 100% participation to show the district that you support the union. (Don't forget to sign the envelope across the label and flap as shown to validate the ballot.)

There will be 2 RTA night that you will see posted in the Rochester Teacher, on a fan out by e mail and on fliers. March 22 family night at the Razorsharks and March 28 adults only (alcohol is provided) at the Knighthawks. Information to get the tickets will be on the ads. After there is a "meeting" at Nathaniels in Corn Hill.