

RTA news from Rep meeting, November 27, 2007

1. A moment of silence was observed for Isabel Hernandez.
2. New Board Certified Teachers were recognized with plaques and flowers. Teachers who have completed the work came from schools 6, 33, 50, 58, East, SOTA and Wilson. If anyone wants information, contact Steve O'Hara.
3. Allocation for RTA Conference Days was confirmed by CO. The school will receive the allocation for sub days and money later this week from John Pavone. If there is a difference from our original list, Mike Rogala will notify you.
4. **Benefits** - on line enrollment closes on November 30 for changes in plans or the yearly applying of FSA. People Soft has been down for some schools this week and RTA will ask for a extension. The Open Forum meeting will be held again on Thursday, Nov. 29 from 3 - 5 at CO because the original meeting was held the same day most staff received their notice when they got home from school. Manual open enrollment has been extended until Friday, December 14 at 4:00. (that means to go down to Benefits Office and fill out the forms.) Martha Keating suggested getting a written confirmation from CO with the name of the person who gave you the confirmation because of problems in the past when CO said they never received benefit changes.
5. **Disability Insurance** -- First Unum through RCSD is ending on November 30. If you have disability insurance from them you should have received a letter from a company called Unimerica who is having an open enrollment rollover (meaning you do not have to have a physical to be accepted). The enrollment closes November 30, so if you are applying for that, our advice is send certified mail with return receipt requested. The letters had an 800 number for questions. If you do not want this company, you may go to your own, however, it would not be by payroll deduction and you would probably have to get a physical.
6. RTA Dinner Seminars -- RTA has money set aside for Professional Development of its members and have organized 5 dinner seminars with speakers. In January they are hoping to have the new Superintendent Brizard; March 31 an expert speaking on Closing the Achievement Gap; May 1, Dr. Grant Wiggins on Authentic Education and 2 others in the planning. The presentation would be from 4- 6 with dinner following. Margaret Sergent is working with R. Boyle about receiving 2 hours PD for 250 - 500 participants per session. Location to be announced. They will be posted on AVATAR.
7. RTA will adopt a family for the holidays. Check with RTA representative for more information.
8. Court of Appeals would not review the **Masters awards**. Martha Keating is working with Central Office for the monetary awards. **If**

**you entered the district after August, 2000 without a masters and have subsequently received one, copy and send your Masters diploma to Martha Keating.** Or you can call RTA and ask to speak to Tanya to see if your name is on the list with the correct date. Your pay raise began the semester after receiving the Masters.

9. Rochester Teachers Academy still has seats for 3 of their Saturday sessions that are posted on AVATAR.

10. February 5 is the New York State Primary Day. NYSUT is supporting Hillary Clinton. If not registered, you need to do so by January 11 to vote in the primary, or if you moved. If you want to change political parties, it is too late to vote in the February primaries.

11. Vote Cope -- Please join.

12. Human Relations -- Martin Luther King student name needs to be in to RTA by December 7. January 15 celebrates the 25th anniversary of the award. Malik Evans (Board VP) will receive an adult, friend of RTA award. As a student in the RCSD, he received the award 3 times, once in elementary, twice from Wilson HS.

13. Special Ed Forum -- Thursday, December 6 at East High Forum room from 4 - 5:30 to discuss issues and ask questions.

14. Junior/Secondary High School Forum -- December 11 from 3:00 - 4:30 at RTA office.

15. Freebies --- Community helpers coloring book for grades k - 3 and some secondary world to work materials are available by contacting Margaret Sergent at the RTA office.

16. President's Report: Adam Urbanski spoke about Jean Claude Brizard. Said he would be voted in at this Thursday's Board meeting. Should begin in January with a transition period with Cala. Brizard spoke to AU and Adam says he is strong in secondary ed, occupational ed, student safety and discipline, putting resources where they most make a difference -- early ed and 6 - 8, wants to collaborate with all unions especially RTA. AU contacted UFT (NYC district) and received positive opinions about Brizard. The new superintendent will be invited to some RTA gatherings: the Holiday party on December 7, RTA meetings, Martin Luther King night, etc.

17. RTA is trying to get more members involved in the union. Adam Urbanski is looking for teachers interested in joining committees. The 3 reps have lists of committees and a form to send in. I'll put one on the lunch table to look over. It's a great way to meet new people, learn what's happening in other schools, develop leadership skills, etc. You can give as much time as you want. If you have a question about a committee, ask me, and I will find out if I don't know. Most committees are short term for a purpose, such as Human Relations (MLK student), school calendar, sabbaticals, etc.

18. Contract for Excellence --- Money from NYS for education (in the paper last Wednesday). Background -- last April when Rivera was leaving and Cala was coming in an application for the money needed to be written. People from CO wrote what each school needed without input from buildings or teachers. The union wants to work with the Superintendent to adjust what was written and may file improper practices for educational services being given out by contracted services (not union or teachers).

19. RTA lost arbitration to reimburse those working on their doctorates. Will appeal.

20. Problems with suspensions brought up by Edison teachers. Urbanski said that Cala is reviewing each long-term suspension personally. If he finds that there is no documentation of previously bad behavior, he is turning over suspension. Cala is looking for where problems are and wants to see evidence of continual problems. If you have a particular case that has been overturned and you have documentation of problems, call RTA and they will intervene.

UNOFFICIAL REP ASSEMBLY NOTES