

The Pipeline

Volume 3, Issue 2

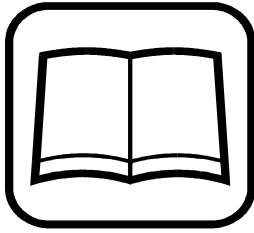
December 2008

Don't forget to check out our website at www.otaonline.org for contacts, contract information, and more!

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No Contract: Day 165



President's Corner

Dear OTA Members,

I hope this issue of our PIPELINE finds you happily preparing for the coming holidays in creative ways which will help you stay within your budgets. I know your priorities will include the things that make your families function at their best levels. These priorities would never neglect the very things that are the core of their well-being. We faculty deserve to become a priority to the Ossining School Board. It is their job to ensure that the children of Ossining have everything in place to be provided the best possible public education. This includes a fair & equitable contract for its teachers and staff. We can't just be overlooked because there are hard, economic times ahead! We continue to work as diligently as ever, and we deserve the respect of working under a contract which treats us fairly.

I attend many school board meetings, but the meeting on November 25, 2008 where the Principals of AMD, Ms. Regina Cellio and OHS, Mr. Josh Mandel, made presentations about their school's "Student Achievement Action Plans, Goals 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3.", took on great significance. At this meeting, both administrators often praised their faculties for the successes the students continually achieve. Ms. Cellio said that "Ossining teachers stand out, but she was not surprised". Mr. Mandel referred to the "professionalism by our staff and desire for our students to achieve" as a main factor to be considered while discussing student's goals being met. I have also heard elementary principals exclaim that their student's growth is determined by a highly dedicated group of teachers and faculty. It is a shame that their reports were pushed to the end of the program during their presentations.

It is true, that the school board must have priorities. Determining these priorities is an extremely difficult balancing act; especially during times of economic duress. I would hope, however, that the Board might recognize that we are the very core, the very base upon which progress is made. Part of the school board's fiscal responsibility is to recognize that Ossining's teachers and faculty should be one of its priorities and not be used to solve the economic situation of the district, the town, the country, the world. The longer this goes on, the more demoralizing it becomes..... Try to enjoy the holidays as best you can and give thanks for all we have.....

In Solidarity,

Terry Bartok

Know Your Contract

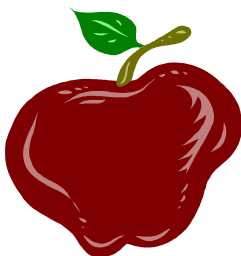
Article VII. A. states:

2. If a teacher, by reason of illness, fails to complete a work day, the following procedure shall be applied: a teacher leaving work during the morning session shall be charged for one-half day of sick leave; a teacher leaving work during the afternoon session shall not be charged sick leave.
3. After a total of ten (10) days' absence due to illness, the Superintendent may require a doctor's certificate upon a teacher's return to duty.
4. Sick days may be used for family illness as it relates to the spouse and children of OTA members of up to twelve weeks of accumulated sick time.
5. For family sick leave purposes (care of mother or father), a teacher shall be allowed to use accumulated sick days up to ten. After ten, the teacher would be required to pay the cost of the substitute.

Remember, doctor's appointments, whether for emergent care or appointments that are previously scheduled, are not personal days. They should come from your accumulated sick time. This also includes the care of your spouse, children, and parents.

"The most difficult thing in any negotiation is making sure that you strip it of the emotion and deal with the facts."

-Howard Baker



OTA Store

The OTA Store has announced that a new shipment of long sleeve t-shirts has been received. These shirts are 100% cotton, American made, black, crew neck T-shirts. They are printed with OTA on the front and Ossining Teachers Association on the back, just like our short sleeve version. If you ordered, but were told your size was out of stock, it's time to reorder! Your size is in. Even morth the USA. The cut of the hoodies is "fitted", so keep that in mind when selecting your size. Only e exciting... HOODIES have arrived! Like the t-shirts, these are made of 100% cotton here in a very limited number of hoodies are available, so order yours soon. Sizes run from Small to XXL; long sleeve T's are \$15.00, hoodies are \$40.00.

When ordering any OTA merchandise, please send a check (no cash, please) made out to OTA in a large inter-office envelope (so your shirt can be "jeeped" back to you) to Laurie West at AMD. Or you can order online from your home computer at ota_store@yahoo.com. You'll still need to send a check in a large envelope to Laurie West.

Please allow at least 4 business days to receive your order. Note: DO NOT order or request information regarding OTA merchandise via Groupwise!



Ossining Staff Development Center

The Ossining Staff Development Center will be offering the following in-service winter courses for all teachers and staff members. We still have room in all courses. If you would like to register, please send your registration form and checks to Carole Ernest c/o OHS as soon as possible. Your early registration can prevent a course from being canceled due to low enrollment. All courses are for one inservice credit. For more information and registration forms please go to the Ossining Staff Development site: <http://www.osdconline.org/>

Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement (all grade levels)

Thursdays, January 15, 22, 29 and February 5, 2009 (snow date: February 12, 2009)

Integrating Electronic Resources with SmartBoards for Secondary Teachers

Tuesdays, January 20, 27, February 10, 24 and March 3, 2009 (snow date: March 10, 2008)

Classroom Management: What Really Counts? (for Elementary Teachers)

Tuesdays, January 20, 27, February 3, and February 10, 2009 (snow date: February 24, 2009)


eChalk Teacher Web Pages for Secondary Teachers

Thursdays, January 22, 29, February 5, 12, and 26, 2009 (snow date: March 5, 2009)

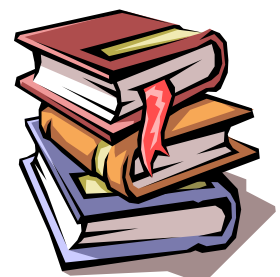
Full information on all courses will soon be on our website: <http://www.osdconline.org/> or email Joan LaRusso at: jarusso@ossining.k12.ny.us

Candlelight Vigil

On Monday, December 1st the Ossining Teachers Association held a candlelight vigil outside Roosevelt School to support our negotiating team on their first night of mediation. It was an encouraging sight to see so many of our colleagues out in support of a fair and equitable contract. With nearly one hundred OTA members lining the streets, holding candles, flashlights, and signs, the community has been made more aware of our situation and their support could be heard and seen from their honking of horns and waves. We, as a union, showed our strength and unity on Monday night.



*"Negotiation in the classic diplomatic sense assumes parties more anxious to agree than disagree."
-Dean Acheson*





Mentor Program

The mentor program is thriving, and we are eager to share with you the pride we have in all of our district mentors. In addition to spending their own time to receive weekend training before becoming mentors, our mentors have also spent many hours working with our newest teachers. They have helped their interns set up their classrooms, become acclimated to their new teaching environments, plan conferences with parents, and plan lessons that would engage and differentiate student learning. It is gratifying to note that at the last new teacher meeting, our interns shared with us that the mentor program has made a very positive impact on their teaching experience. We run training sessions throughout the year, and most recently we discussed coaching and observation strategies with regard to planning conferences, classroom observations, and the reflecting conferences. Mentors had a chance to view a professional videotape of a new teacher's lesson, reflect, and practice scripting techniques. Our next meeting will be on the topic of Critical Friends where mentors will use skills that support reflection and decision making. We believe it is important to provide professional development so that the mentor program will continue to thrive.

It is our hope to add more teachers to our mentor pool for next year, and we would appreciate any teachers who would be interested in attending training contacting us. We would like to expand our mentor pool with even more special education teachers, special area teachers, dual language teachers, as well as all subject areas in middle school and high school. If you are interested in becoming a mentor please contact either Carole Ernest or Micki Lockwood.

"Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity, a greater."
-William Hazlitt

NYSUT Recognizes Sarah Arbitrio

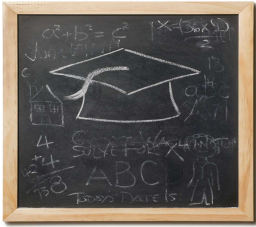
In October, some colleagues may have been surprised to see a familiar face looking back at them from the back page of the New York Teacher magazine, published by NYSUT. A full-column article titled "A Leader in Training" featured OTA 1st Vice-President Sarah Arbitrio, complete with photo! Sarah was recognized for her "union summer"; not only did she participate in the week long Local Action Project (LAP) conference (for the third time) in July, she also attended, as one of only 68 selected participants, a Leadership Institute for six days at Cornell, followed by a summer leadership conference. Sarah's energy and leadership ability are vital to the OTA, where she serves on the executive board as Vice President, is a member of the local's LAP team, and currently is working to resolve the negotiations impasse as a member of the OTA's negotiation team. Oh, and she's also a full time 6th grade math and science teacher at AMD! OTA members already know that Sarah is an asset to her students, her local, and to unionism in general; it's good that others are noticing as well!

403(b) Meeting

When the school district's business office sent out an email announcing changes to some of our 403b tax-deferred accounts, the OTA Executive Board did not wait for our members to start calling with questions. Instead, they immediately sought the assistance of Robert Lamoureux, NYSUT's Coordinator of Financial Services in our region. Rob agreed to come to Ossining to give a workshop outlining the changes to the IRS rules governing 403b accounts. In two separate one-hour sessions, timed to fit the dismissal times of our different buildings, Rob provided a thorough explanation of the upcoming changes and fielded questions. Approximately 35 members of OTA attended the two sessions. Their feedback was so overwhelmingly positive that the Exec. Board is looking to schedule a date when Rob can return to give a more general investment workshop.

Anyone who is interested in receiving a summary of the meetings and/or PowerPoint outline should contact Sarah Arbitrio at arbitrio@aol.com





School News

Park

For the past 10 years, Park School staff members have been raising money to send park School students to summer camp. During the school year, committee members prepare holiday raffles, run tag sales, sell homemade crafts and do just about anything to make a "buck"!!!! This is a true win/win situation!! "Send A Kid To Camp" activities generate staff camaraderie and enthusiasm and our students reap the benefits. Last summer, 16 students had a great vacation due to the generosity and volunteerism of Park's teachers and staff. Way to go Park School! We do make a difference!!

Brookside

Brookside School students are keeping busy in their Art and Music classes this fall. Second Graders are preparing for Arts Night, which is on January 29, 2009, at AMD Middle School's Cafetorium. Second and Third Grade artists will demonstrate techniques learned in Ms. Daniels' Art Classes, and the Second Grade Chorus will perform with Ms. Shaw. The festivities begin at 7PM.

Third Grade Chorus members will sing for Ossining's First Fridays Celebration, which begins on December 5, 2008. Residents are encouraged to come out and meet neighbors and friends, shop, dine, and hear our wonderful students perform in Market Square, at the corner of Main and Spring Streets. The tree and dreydl lighting begins at 5:45 PM, and Santa is expected to arrive afterwards. Third Graders are also preparing for their upcoming Winter Concert on February 10, 2009, at Ossining High School, at 7PM. The orchestra, band and chorus will perform, lead by Ms. Honore, Mr. Kahn, and Ms. Shaw.

*"Our first teacher is
our own heart."
-Cheyenne proverb*

HELP WANTED

The OTA needs your support!
The following positions need to be filled.

Building – level Positions:

IDP - Information Distribution Person
(AKA Mailbox Stuffer!)

Spirit Ambassador – Do you know how to make friends and influence people? OTA is looking for you to spread the word! Bring in the crowds to build membership involvement in OTA activities.

Photographer – OTA camera will be made available to the paparazzi in you!

District – wide positions:

Formatter – Make us look good! We are looking for a creative person for page layouts and format design!

Sports and Entertainment Agent – You're all about fun! Your job, should you choose to accept it, will be to organize opportunities for camaraderie, such as softball games, bowling, golf outings....let us know your ideas. OTA Olympics anyone?



Interested parties, please send no resume!

Just contact
Valerie Weinstein at AMD,
762-5740, extension 317.

Feeding Kid's Minds (and Bellies!)

The Ossining Teachers Association's Instructional Council meets monthly with the Superintendent of Schools to address issues that affect our students. During the October meeting, the Council addressed the problem of students who could not get lunch due to a negative balance on their lunch card. The District's contingency plan was for the students to go to the school office to receive three cheese crackers and a juice box, provided by the PTA. However, teachers felt that this did not provide enough sustenance for some of our youngest students. "Students were having



trouble concentrating and getting through the day" said Park School teacher Barbara Rink. This situation continued into November, so the Instructional Council launched a campaign to collect money from OTA members to supply some food for the kids in need. Teachers contributed almost \$1000 to the cause. OTA Secretary and Instructional Council Coordinator Bob Rosenbaum was joined by OHS building Vice-President Emerly Martinez and together they went shopping for non-perishable food that the teachers could store in their classrooms. They purchased fruit cups, pudding packs, cheese and crackers, and cranberries and raisins. Then, joined by the Rosenbaum family, they packaged the food, including plastic utensils, and delivered them to the elementary schools. Rosenbaum said, "This was a great moment for the OTA. We stepped up and directly helped students who were hungry." To date, almost 75 lunches have been given out to Ossining students! Rosenbaum goes on to say, "This really demonstrates what we already knew, Ossining teachers make the children a priority in so many ways." This program was favorably covered by *The Journal News*, receiving front page coverage.

Congratulations!

The Ossining Teachers Association would like to congratulate the following members and their families on the birth of their children:

Kristin Friscoe and her husband welcomed Mikaela Hope Friscoe in November. This is their third child.

Barbara Rizzo and her husband Ian welcomed their baby boy, Andrew Alberto, in November. Frank Candulo and his wife welcomed a baby girl, Jaimie. This is their first baby.



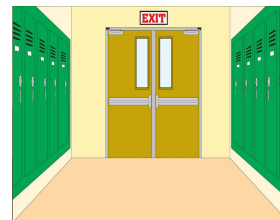
"Teachers open the door, but you must enter by yourself."
-Chinese proverb



Calendar of Events

OTA Calendar of Events

For information about any of these events, contact your
Building level OTA representative



December

- Dec. 12 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Dec. 17 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Dec. 19 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt

January

- Jan. 7 -Walk-in Wed District-wide entry
- Jan. 9 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
-“First Friday” Social at 44 Tapas, Croton
(Contribution: OTA Food Drive)
- Jan. 14 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
-Arrive before **7:10** to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 16 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 21 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Jan. 23 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 28 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
-Arrive before 7:10 to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 30 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt

February

- Feb. 4 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Feb. 6 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
-“First Friday” Social at Horsefeathers, Tarrytown
(Contribution/Cause to be announced)
- Feb. 11 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
-Arrive before **7:10** to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Feb. 13 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Feb. 25 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
-Arrive before **7:10** to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Feb. 27 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt



**Ossining Teachers
Association**

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Email: mail@otaonline.org

OTA
Executive
Board

Terry Bartok- President
Sara Arbitrio- 1st Vice President
Gregg Ninos- 2nd Vice President
Bob Rosenbaum- Secretary
Pat Carforo- Treasurer
Jen Hamel- Executive Intern

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Gina Hoffman
Park- Lisa Fitzgerald
Barbara Rink
Brookside- Maria Carlson
Vanessa Vetrano
Claremont- Pamela Alvarez
Brenda Hunter
AMD- Erik Block
Walter Thut
Linda Whitney
OHS- Dawn Bayer
Emerly Martinez
Nancy Variano

**Pipeline
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Andrea Nardella- coordinator, Brookside
Bill Casey- coordinator, Claremont
Kim Harter- coordinator, Claremont
Yvette Wilde- coordinator, AMD
Rachel Wile- coordinator, OHS

ONE TOGETHER ALWAYS!