

Happenings

Affiliated with NYSUT, AFT #2937, AFL-CIO

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Message from the Editor

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At yesterday's building representatives' meeting, it was requested that a special edition of the PJTA newsletter be published immediately in order to provide all members a hard copy of a letter sent by PJTA to all school board members. Please peruse the attached letter and contact your head building representative if you have any questions.

Have a wonderful holiday!

In solidarity,

TML

December 18, 2017

Dear Members of the School Board,

The PJTA would like to bring points to your attention regarding the memos our members received on Friday, November 17th and December 14th, 2017. It has been a long-standing past practice and agreement between the district and PJTA that children of teachers may remain in their parents' classrooms for the 15 minutes between dismissal and the end of the work day (3:05-3:20).

This long-standing agreement has been abruptly changed by our current administration mid-year. The PJTA has since filed a past-practice claim against the district. According to our contract, teachers' work day is defined as seven consecutive hours, six of which are instructional, one half hour of prep, and one half hour available to students for assistance. At the elementary level, our members' prep or meeting time has always been designated during mornings from 8:20 until student arrival at 8:50.

PJTA has offered several creative solutions to this disagreement until the claim is resolved. One such solution was for Elementary teachers to work from 8:05-3:05. This would allow both the district to receive the same amount of hours on instruction and prep according to contract, as well as the teachers to be able to not have to rearrange child care that was already in place for the 2017-2018 school year. This request was denied.

Another solution was to hold a structured homework activity after school where said children were supervised and receiving assistance, as outlined in our PJTA contract. This also aligns with policy in place at the middle and high school levels. High school and middle school level teachers did not receive this memo which is arbitrary and capricious. It is unfair to allow one group of teachers a consideration, and not all. When brought to Ms. Case that we are following our contractual agreement by offering assistance to students, she responded that it is at the Superintendent's discretion to deem the 3:05-3:20 time as a prep period for Elementary teachers. This is a new policy brought to the PJTA's attention on December 14th, 2017, the same day that the memo was received. In the memo received, Ms. Case referred to such teachers as insubordinate.

Another solution was to hold a structured homework activity after school open to the entire student population from 3:05-3:20. Ms. Case's response was that no students may be able to be in the building after 3:05. [This new policy as of December 14th also creates issues for after-](#)

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school activities for students including, but not limited to, AIS, Odyssey of the Mind, Girls on the Run and Musical Productions. What will be the district's plan for supervision of these students during this time? Are teachers not working within the parameters of their duties by volunteering their time to facilitate these activities for students? Does the school board approve of the removal of this direct contact time with students for enrichment activities? This is a loss of time for our students and programs. Furthermore, what is the district's plan for duties after 3:05 such as bus duty, RTI meetings, parent meetings and other such meetings since this is now deemed a prep time according to Ms. Case? If we are no longer allowed to do anything but prep from 3:05-3:20, then we can no longer perform those duties. Also, if this is now considered our prep time, when are our elementary teachers available for student assistance? In the past, there was a late bus available for elementary students who needed after school assistance, but Ms. Case has cut those buses from the budget.

It was also requested by the PJTA that Ms. Zuclich meet with all teachers affected and PJTA representatives to discuss this and see if we could find a temporary resolution until the claim was resolved. Ms. Zuclich declined to meet with members at this time.

In addition, Ms. Case has also directed Elementary teachers who serve as coaches that they are no longer able to be with their team members until 3:20. In the past, elementary teachers were able to leave their building after their teaching duties were met to transfer to another building in order to supervise and coach our district's teams. What is the district's plan for those athletes between their dismissal time and when their coaches can arrive? Does the Board approve of the removal of this direct contact time with students for enrichment activities?

We feel as a union, that the administration's sudden policy changes will impact our members' ability to provide many opportunities for after-school activities for our students. Many of these activities are coached by unpaid volunteers and go well beyond the 8:20-3:20 work day. The members would also like to know the reasons for the sudden, mid-year changes to these policies.

The PJTA is also concerned that these memos and discussions are being directed by Ms. Case, our Assistant Superintendent of Business. Directives, memos and discussion should be coming from our Interim Superintendent.

We feel as a union that our members continue to go above and beyond to enhance our students' educational program and extracurricular activities. We believe that the admin-

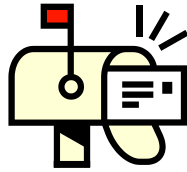
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istration is not working with our members to allow this to happen and are, in fact, inhibiting our best efforts to do so.

Sincerely,

Port Jervis Teachers' Association



Correspondence

Sympathy

Janet Prundl, on the loss of her aunt, Robyn Onofry.

Judy Dawson, on the loss of her uncle.

Valerie Ricciardi, on the loss of her father, Michael Soletio.

Julie Campbell, on the loss of her father-in-law, Edward.

Get Well

Ray Holyk

Jessica Eli

Anne Parker

Congratulations

Lauren and Dan Eckerson, on the birth of their daughter, Charlotte.

Kim and Dan Eichele, on the birth of their son, Cooper.

Karen and Nick Gessner, on the birth of their twins, Charlotte and Ronan.

Cards Received

Thank you from Grace Episcopal Church for the donation made in memory of Rich Samek.

Thank you from the City of Port Jervis Recreation Department for our sponsorship of the Summer Concert Series.

Thank you from the NYSUT Fundraising Committee for our American Red Cross donation.