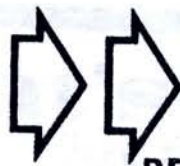




LOCAL 2514



IMPACT

BRENTWOOD TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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January 19, 1977

Teachers and Community

Concern for the educational needs of the children of Brentwood is the thread which should link many members of the Brentwood community together with the BTA. Yet, if you think about it, the feelings between teachers and community are often disquieting, to say the least.

What can be done to improve relations between these two groups? Teachers, at some of our schools, have already begun work

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Counseling Service

Lou Cairo, a Ross guidance counselor, is in the process of developing a counseling service for the Union membership. This would be a first in our State for this type of service.

This service will not be therapeutic in scope. It is designed for short term counseling and possible referral, if need be.

The following categories are to be incorporated into this recommendation:

JOB COUNSELING: Job counseling can be initiated for any one of a number of reasons. In particular, it can be utilized when a BTA member is about to lose his job, loses his job, or is unhappy with his present teaching assignment.

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SABBATICAL DEADLINE NEAR

Applications for sabbaticals should be obtained from the Office of the Superintendent. Applicants may stop in and pick one up or call Ext. 2403 and have one sent to you. The deadline for filing applications is February 7, 1977.

In addition to submitting an application, each candidate must be interviewed by the Sabbatical Leave Committee. Messrs. John Finan and George Mann

will represent Central Administration this year, and the B.T.A. representatives are Ms. Madeleine Dwyer (North Elem. - Ext. 2275), Mr. Joseph Hogan (West Jr. Ext. 2371), and Mr. Vincent McDonough (Sonderling - Ext. 2391).

To explain the requirements and to assist the applicants with the preparation of their applications and interviews, the B.T.A. will hold information and question and answer meetings at the following times and locations: Elementary candidates - Monday, January 24th 4:00 P.M. - BTA Office; Junior High applicants - Tuesday, January 25th 3:00 P.M. - BTA Office; High School applicants - Wednesday, January 26th - 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. in the Ross Auditorium.

WHAT CONSTITUTES AN
ADEQUATE NUMBER OF
TEACHING SPECIALISTS?
SEE PAGE 3.

President's Desk

Jack Zuckerman

"Why a Union?" is still a question asked by some in Brentwood. The question implies that somehow we are less complete as teachers, that we lack the status that being a teacher should command, if we are part of the trade labor movement.

If you have taught long enough, you remember the time (less than ten years ago, in fact) when teachers were "professional". This meant that they had the respect of the community and being a teacher really meant something. But teachers were also the lowest paid professionals with the possible exception of the clergy. I remember going into the shops in Bay Shore and having been given a ten percent discount by the merchants, because teachers don't make much money.

The Brentwood teachers as well as other locals didn't have any clout. We were consulted on issues if the Administration wished. Salaries were sought by a "Salary Committee" which made a presentation each year to the Board of Education as to why we deserved more money. The Board of Education then decided how much to give us.

In 1968 the Taylor Law was passed. It said that Districts and their teachers now began to bargain for a contract. The old method of going out for a drink was replaced by collective bargaining. It isn't as much fun, but it is less subject to private deals and secret agreements. Today, both sides have become skilled in negotiations and would consider the older method bush-league.

Grievances were not processed in a systematic way. There was no grievance machinery as such. If an administrator chose to ignore a complaint, he could do so. One could go "over his head" but this was rarely a dependable procedure. There was no "third party" outside the District available for binding arbitration, unless both sides agreed to this step. Today teacher unions consider the grievance machinery as we know it - basic to the maintenance of teacher rights.

Working conditions in Brentwood relied ultimately upon the building principal. This accounts for the wide variety of building policy and past practice which exists today. Some of our difficulties stem from the need for uniform procedures and standards district wide.

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Teachers

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to improve their relationship with their building PTA. In these schools, a teacher has been given a position on the building PTA Board. The teacher helps to convey the feelings, ideas and concerns of the teachers in that building to the PTA and likewise, reports back to the teachers, the feelings and ideas of the PTA. As a result, improved understanding of mutual problems and a closer unity have been expressed by both parents and teachers in those buildings. Having a teacher on the individual PTA Boards is a good beginning in trying to improve relations between the community and the BTA.

Many organizations, besides the PTA, have been working for education in Brentwood. The time has come to bring these separate groups together for serious discussion on "The Future of Education in Brentwood." The people of the community, as well as the teachers, should take note of this idea and help in its development. Only when we realize that, by working together, can we achieve the kind of education we want so much for the children of Brentwood.

This idea is particularly important now

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Know Your Contract

What is an adequate number of teaching specialists? This question has been raised by the Union through a number of separate grievances heard during this school year.

Article 6 states "The Board and the Association recognize the fact that an adequate number of competent certified specialists is essential to the operation of an effective education program."

It is the Union's contention that as the District eliminates specialist positions or fails to replace specialists who are on leave, the educational program suffers severely enough to be no longer termed "effective."

Cutbacks and non-replacements of positions have resulted in the cutback of services to students and the total and/or partial elimination of programs.

On November 1, 1976, George Mann, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Hearing Officer, wrote in response to a Level II grievance: "We can all acknowledge the fact that excessive excessing may damage the educational opportunities afforded our students." This is precisely the concern the Union has expressed on numerous occasions. Has the educational program been damaged by excessive excessing?

The District, through Mr. Mann, claims that "...what is to be considered an adequate

number of specialists must. . . remain within the judgemental authority of the Board of Education," since the Board has complete authority over the policies and administration of the school system.

In a December 20th response to another grievance hearing, Mr. Mann went on to state "It should be fully understood that the collective bargaining agreement signed by the Union and the District (1975-78) only pertains to compensation and working conditions of the professional staff and it doesn't pertain to the services rendered to students."

Therefore, according to the District's reasoning, the Union has no business concerning itself with the education of the students we teach. Rather, by law and by contract, the Board of Education claims the sole responsibility for educational regression. The logical extension of this premise can only lead us to further questions:

Does the Board accept the full responsibility for the results of its actions? Does the Board fully accept the implications of excessing upon the education of the Brentwood students?

On November 29, 1976, I addressed a letter to Mr. Mann raising these questions as well as the following:

1. Is an average caseload of 550 pupils per junior high guidance counselor, an adequate number?
2. Is an average caseload of 420 pupils per high school guidance counselor an adequate number?
3. Is a caseload of one psychologist per 2,000 students an adequate number?
4. Do no elementary school librarians constitute an adequate number?
5. Are fewer than one S.N.T. per building an adequate number?

To date, there has been no response nor formal acknowledgement.

Perhaps, it is now necessary to ask our questions to the Board directly and to the community whose students are receiving the questionable results of the Board's actions. If you are able to help us document further abuses of effective education within your department or your school, please contact us in writing. There is need to document our position strongly.

Dot Zuckerman

Counseling

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RETIREMENT COUNSELING: This would include the following areas:

The right out look on retirement.

Planning for retirement:

assets

liabilities

Retirement options:

one full time job to another

part-time employment

pursuit of personal interests

leisure time

Social security:

how to apply

when

where

how much will be received

Medicare:

how to apply

when

where

Pension:

how much

options available

when to apply

PERSONAL COUNSELING: Personal counseling can run the gamut from marital problems to job related problems.

A possible outcome of this service might be the preparation of the client for referral to an outside agency, psychiatrist or psychoanalyst.

The House of Delegates will consider this proposal at its January 20th meeting. If approved by the House, specific details of the plan, application forms, etc. will be made available to all members.

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when schools are being closed. Some of our teachers are faced with the loss of their positions, and programs, such as the Bilingual Program, are being threatened. There comes a breaking point when educational cutbacks can no longer be the solution to economic problems. The educational system in Brentwood has certainly come to that point.

Resolutions on these ideas have been passed by the BTA Executive Council and will be presented at the next meeting of the House of Delegates for their approval. Each teacher should urge his building committee to support such positive moves, when the delegates vote at the House meeting on January 20th.

President's Desk . . .

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Thus before teacher unionism arrived here, the teachers were ill-paid professionals who lacked the ability to effect change. Today we are still working towards our goals, but we know that bread on the table and gasoline in the tank are as important to us as they are to other workers. A person who stands for antiunionism wants to bring back the old days...and they were not good.

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