

Hawthorne High School

11/16/2009 Faculty Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting notes taken by D. Barnes. Minutes written by Daniel Barnes.
CVSTA Representatives Present: D. Barnes, P. Martinez (S. Anderson unable to attend due to BTSA meeting)
Administrators Present: E. Hirata, M. Martinez, M. Newell, K. Nicolis
Special Guest: M. Knapp

1. ODE TO A SELDOM-SWEPT FLOOR:

As Dr. Newell predicted last month, a site-specific "physical plant manager" was hired for Hawthorne. (Plant managers were also hired for other sites, but ours is ours alone.) Our site's plant manager, Mark Knapp, was physically present at the FAC meeting, and told us plenty, much of it very encouraging. (The FAC chair shook Mr. Knapp's hand, so it's clear that he isn't just a hologram.) In a further manifestation of dreams and prophecies coming true, Mr. Knapp provided FAC with the official custodial job description used at the district level. Although it does list several duties that custodians can be expected to do, the job description does not list the minimum *frequency* with which any of the tasks is to be done. Since frequency of sweeping, liner changing, mopping, etc., has been a serious issue in the eyes of the many teachers who have complained to FAC over the years, Mr. Knapp said that he would come up with a list of frequencies for the various custodial tasks, but that it would not be 100% binding, at least at first. Mr. Knapp will communicate with district-level authorities to help codify just how often each custodial task must be done, and, if all goes well, a district-backed, binding list of task frequencies will be developed and enforced. Mr. Knapp also provided the FAC chair with a run list, showing which custodians are in charge of which buildings. This long-awaited and much-appreciated document will help FAC give maximum anonymity to teachers who complain about specific custodians, thereby minimizing the ability of a custodian to determine the identity of his detractor and exact focused revenge.

2. WE STILL GOT COOTIES:

Plant Manager Knapp mentioned having seen firsthand some of the startling evidence of our various arthropod infestations, specifically the cockroaches in building 23. Echoing the concerns of the English department head, Dr. Nicolis bemoaned the disgusting state of the English department storage closet at the east end of the 19 building, besmirched as it is by legions of crickets and what their food turns into. Mr. Knapp said that since this storage closet is not a student-frequented area, he can and will use some over-the-counter aerosol bombs to kill the crickets there in short order. Classrooms, on the other hand, are a more complicated matter, since, truancy levels notwithstanding, students do frequent them in large numbers. Therefore, greater care must be taken to make sure that any insecticides used in classrooms do not leave behind toxic/carcinogenic residues that would significantly endanger the health of our students, not to mention the biologically delicate future clients some of them carry in their abdomens. There are unanswered, district-level questions regarding both procedures and financial wherewithal for classroom fumigation, but Mr. Knapp will pursue clarification at the district level so that we can fumigate as soon as the money and policy are made available to us. It seems that expecting immediate results

would be unrealistic, but Mr. Knapp has recognized the urgency of the problem and will expedite its solution to the best of his ability.

3. [INTERNAL BUSINESS: WRITE-UP OMITTED]

4. FIELD TRIPS DURING TESTING:

Several teachers complained about field trips that took place during benchmark exam time. Dr. Newell and E. Hirata said that, in the future, from now on, they would monitor field trip requests more closely, checking the school's master calendar to see if the requested dates coincide with district-mandated or state-mandated testing. In the future, field trip requests that would create conflict with testing will be denied.

5. FACULTY RESTROOMS:

Regarding faculty restroom towel shortages, M. Knapp said that the district is in the process of changing its towel-ordering/towel-dispensing paradigm. Right now, faculty restrooms have Z-fold towels, but the district is phasing these out. Until the new style of dispensers are universally installed, Mr. Knapp will request that orders of Z-fold towels be made to keep our faculty bathrooms entoweled in the meantime. M. Knapp also mentioned that student restrooms that do not have electric blowers would be equipped with heavy-duty, military grade, stainless steel towel dispensers that even a yeti on steroids couldn't destroy.

6. PA XS:

One teacher this month formally complained to FAC about PA interruptions. Mr. Newell had previously promised that period 6 announcements would occur only during the last three minutes of class, but the teacher complained that this promise has not been adhered to. Also, excessive repetition has been noticed by both teachers and students. One other teacher thought that the PA announcements had actually gotten a little better. In response to complaints about the morning announcements coming later than previously, Dr. Newell said that the girls have been starting them later to allow more stragglers to trickle in before beginning. D. Barnes said that consistency/predictability would help.

7. WHAT HAPPENS TO A CONFISCATION DEFERRED?

In this year's electronic device confiscation policy, the penalty for a first offense is rather light, but the penalty escalates in severity with each subsequent confiscation for any given student. M. Martinez clarified that when a student refuses to surrender a device for confiscation, it does, in fact, count as an offense in regard to penalty escalation. To make sure that this occurs, teachers who attempt to confiscate but are resisted by an obstinate

student need to document in sufficient detail the refusal to surrender the device when writing the referral about the incident. When the dean who receives the referral processes it, that dean will inform Lorri Peterson that the student refused to surrender a confiscatable device, and L. Peterson will then log the refusal in the same list where successful confiscations are listed. FAC chair's afterthought:: a refusal to surrender a device should actually count as *two* instances of contraband abuse, not just one, since it's actually two crimes in one: device abuse AND refusal to surrender. Perpetrating a more severe crime should always result in a more severe penalty.

8. TEACHERS' PROPERTY :

M. Knapp would like to be informed of any thefts of teacher possessions occurring in your classrooms. Mr. Knapp will maintain and develop paper trails on all reported thefts. However, he cautions us that classrooms are not safe places to store personal possessions. For instance, if you are collecting money as part of a fundraiser, do not let money linger in your room. Instead, deposit the money immediately with the student store. In general, don't leave anything valuable in your classroom.

If you have any complaints, suggestions, or praise that you would like added to the next FAC meeting's agenda, please email misterbarneshhs@social.rr.com , or, if you want to remain anonymous, leave a note in Dan Barnes' box. Also, please let Mr. Barnes know your observations of how well the promises made in these minutes are being enacted.