



# Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central Schools *Board Highlights*

A summary of  
Board of Education  
meetings published  
by Superintendent  
of Schools Jim Schultz

Meeting of January 22, 2008

## Staff present "Instructional Technology Update" for Board of Education members

### Program Review

BH-BL Technology Curriculum Committee co-chairs JOHN CAPANO and JASON LASKY and several teachers and librarians on the committee presented sample lessons and activities for the Board of Education. They focused on activities that demonstrated the power of new technology and/or new procedures to improve instruction.

The position of Technology Integration Specialist has been in effect for three months now at each of our elementary schools with a focus on designing and collecting "best practice" classroom uses of technology. The three elementary library media specialists are being freed up a couple days a month to fill this position. Charlton Heights library media specialist SUE TOMLINSON gave a demonstration of how she has been using a Smartboard to teach children how books are arranged on library shelves. "These digital whiteboards take the computer from being a teacher presentation station to being a true interactive tool for students," noted Mr. Capano.

ALISON CUYLER, the Stevens library media specialist, showed a "Lesson Template" form that has been created so that teachers can share effective technology-based lessons and techniques. One weakness up to now is that no one has been compiling samples of tech-based lessons. All these forms will be automatically emailed to Ms. Cuyler, who will use them to create a database of grade-level, tech-based lessons for all teachers to use. "We are really hoping to encourage a lot of collegiality and sharing through this," she said.

Pashley library media specialist KRISSY NEDDO has been learning about and working on the collaborative features of Web 2.0. For instance, some of her pupils have been making "voice threads" as part of a science project. The student had to write a narrative script, which was recorded as they read it to make a podcast available on the web. Another group wrote daily web logs (blogs). Parents can enjoy seeing these and other lessons through links on the Pashley library webpages.

High school teacher JASON LASKY reminded the board and audience that students and teachers need 21st century skills NOW because the 21st century has arrived. Technology integration doesn't just happen, he noted. First you need the infrastructure, then you need tech support (to make sure the equipment is truly operational when teachers need it), then you need professional development.

Mr. Lasky described some of the current stumbling blocks across the district. "Our biggest issue is electricity," he said. Teachers need more access to outlets and power to fully utilize our current equipment. The school buildings have had power upgrades, thanks to recent renovation projects, but it's not distributed throughout the building yet. Classrooms need more power outlets, and the district needs more electrician time to run power to some ceilings, for instance, so that we can mount and utilize projectors, etc.

Another issue is server space, Mr. Capano said. More advanced computer files take more space, especially audio and video files. School computers are aging too, of course. Some of the original carts of laptop computers are six or seven years old. He has been able to extend the life of some computer labs by buying additional memory. This year he was also particularly excited to find a way to buy 30 one-year-old computers for \$300 each and use these to upgrade the high school math lab. Many classroom computers are being leased through the BOCES since that currently seems to be most cost-effective.

Mr. Capano showed the school board slides with projected technology spending needs through 2011-12. He also informed them that the total networking infrastructure of BH-BL will need to be upgraded soon. Network problems are already occurring when people attempt to access large files (such as educational videos from the internet) and when the schools attempt to use standardized server-based applications (such as the need for all schools to use ClassXP to take attendance every morning). Upgrading the district networking infrastructure will also enable BH-BL to take advantage of "Internet2," a collaborative, high bandwidth education-only branch of the internet.

## Action items

Board of Education members approved three grant awards from the Saratoga County Arts Council: \$900 each for Ellen Sinapoli Dance Company residencies at Stevens and at Pashley Elementary Schools and \$1,800 for a Study of Canada through the Arts residency with CHRIS HOLDER. Eight grant awards from the BH-BL Education Foundation were accepted as follows:

- \$433 for five Kodak Easy Share digital cameras for use by BRETTON ADAMS and Stevens 5th grade special education students;
- \$1,250 for six global positioning systems for use by ED HANLON and middle school technology classes;
- \$680 for a sound system requested by BETH LARSON to go with the DVD projector funded by the foundation last year and improve the sound quality of presentations made in the high school Red Room;
- \$730 for an Elmo document camera requested by ROSINE LELOIR for high school classrooms;
- \$1,302 for a Gateway E 295-C tablet computer for use by REGINA REALS and the high school science research program;
- \$400 to frame six Edward Sutphen oil paintings that are used in middle school local history units and depict life 75 years ago in Ballston Lake, as requested by MARGE RIZZO;
- \$220 for frames to showcase student artwork in the high school library, as requested by SUE SCHULTZ; and
- \$691 for a lockout buzzer system so that BRIAN WATTS and other high school teachers can use this to help students practice for the Regional Science Bowl competitions and prepare for tests in other subjects as well.

Changes were approved to 16 policies in the 7000 series of the Board's policy manual to update them.

Also approved were: attendance of the CAPSBA dinner meeting on January 24 by four Board members and Superintendent JIM SCHULTZ, an overnight trip for the high school science research class to attend the Upstate Junior Science & Humanities Symposium in Albany in March, recommendations from the Committee on Special Education, and a contract with the North Greenbush school district to provide health and welfare services for BH-BL residents attending private schools in North Greenbush.

## Discussion Items

Board members JOE PERICONE and BOB SPECK and Mr. Schultz met with Glenville Town Supervisor FRANK QUINN last week. Topics of discussion with Mr. Quinn included future uses and access points to the Hostetter Building property and town's adjoining Indian Meadows Park. The town owns a second strip of land from Droms Road into the park and is planning to build a road on this in the future to improve park services.

Mr. Schultz also met with Ballston Town Supervisor PATTI SOUTHWORTH at her request, which he was happy to do. They discussed ways in which the town and school district can work more closely together in the future. One example is a proposal to improve pupil safety on Lakehill Road at the high school's main entrance. Proposals for a flashing traffic light at this spot have been vetoed by the county highway department. The district is now seeking funds to install solar-powered "school zone" lights, which are estimated to cost \$30,000. Ms. Southworth offered to forward a grant request for this to Congresswoman Gillibrand's office.

Mr. Schultz also reviewed the status of the Pashley DARE program and his recent conversations with town of Glenville police chief Michael Ranalli. The town had informed the school district in November that, due to cut-backs in the police budget, it would be unable to provide a DARE officer and DARE program at Pashley for 5th graders this spring. This was a cause of concern by Pashley parents and administrators, particularly since Charlton Heights and Stevens fifth graders would be receiving the program as usual through the Saratoga County sheriff's department. In the past week Chief Ranalli offered the compromise that the town could provide the program at Pashley if the district was willing to pay \$2,000 of its \$4,000 cost. Board of Education members agreed that the program was important enough for them to pay this. Mr. Schultz said that the district would go ahead with the DARE program and at the same time conduct an assessment of its place in the BH-BL health curriculum.

Board members also began discussing the possible impact that proposals in Governor ELIOT SPITZER's budget speech today could have on our district and budget in 2008-09.

## Personnel Action

### RESIGNATION

ELENI TASHJIAN

Special Ed Bus Monitor  
effective 1/22/08

**APPOINTMENTS**

CHELSEA CONNOR	Pashley Grade 3 Teacher effective 2/25 - 6/26/08
NANCY COUSINS	High School Teacher Assistant effective 1/23/08
DANIELLE CURRAN	High School FACS Teacher effective 3/11/08
MEG GILGALLON	Middle School English Teacher effective 1/2 - 6/26/08
SUSAN LaFOUNTAIN	School Bus Driver effective 1/23/08

Also tenure was approved for: Principal JILL BONACIO,  
Dean of Students NANCY PEARSE, and Special Education  
teacher KIM BRUNSON.