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President, PHILIP RUMORE

April 7, 2020

MEMO TO: Dr. Kriner Cash, Superintendent, BPS
FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF
RE: Teacher Concerns/Suggestions

As we all work together during these difficult and unprecedented times, most administrators are treating their staff with gratitude and respect.

However, some don't understand or apparently care about the tremendous stress and difficulties teachers are working through to serve their students.

In addition to the lack of students' and teachers' equipment and materials, many teachers have their own children at home. Indeed, parents are also under great stress as they try to help their children.

A few examples:

The principal at City Honors has told parents who indicated they may not have heard from a teacher "to contact one of our CHS administrators." Why not have them attempt to contact the teacher?

This Big Brother tactic has angered and insulted teachers (pg. 2 of 4).

In addition, as stated in this City Honors correspondence to teachers, where are the "recommended guidelines" (pg. 2 of 4)?

They have apparently been circulated in the District by reference to this document.

Please provide us with a copy of these!! e.g. 10th – 12th grade students, "5-7 hours per day" !?

Kindergarten – 2nd grade students, "1.5-2 hours per day"!?

If these are not District guidelines, as this document has been widely circulated and teachers have inquired about it, the District must advise parents, teachers and administrators that this is incorrect.

If this is correct, please advise and provide a copy of said District directive/document.

Also, teachers at City Honors are being asked by the Assistant Principal to report how often they have been in contact with students' families and how many families they have not reached ([Click Here](#) for enclosed memo from Carla McDow). If the link is not clickable, copy and paste the following link into your web browser.

http://www.btfny.org/email/2020/hilltop_notes.pdf

As stated below, parents are complaining about being deluged with 6-7 emails per day from teachers, plus those from the District.

Some schools are still demanding lesson plans from teachers during this difficult time. That seems particularly inappropriate during this time, when learning methods are so different. Please clarify that lessons plans should not be required to be submitted to administrators and if teachers choose, only need to be as detailed as “the teacher needs them to be” – (Approved Lesson Plan Document).

Security Concerns

As per our recent, March 30, 2020 correspondence, teachers remain very concerned with using non-FERPA and HIPPA compliant programs and procedures that are not in compliance with NYSED regulations.

A school district on Long Island has forbidden the use of Zoom and advised teachers to use a Microsoft program.

One social worker informed me that she uses a program called Doxy.me which apparently is HIPPA compliant.

Please advise us and teachers in writing of all the programs/procedures that are FERPA and HIPPA complaint.

For those that are not, teachers should obviously be advised in writing to not use them.

As per NYSED Special Education guidance from Christopher Suriano, Assistant Commissioner, dated March 27, 2020, parents must agree to and have signed off on virtual conferences ([attached](#)). If the link is not clickable, copy and paste the following link into your web browser.

http://www.btfny.org/email/2020/consent_form_NYSED.pdf.

Such signed agreement may be digital signatures.

Please inform us and teachers in writing of the procedures, forms, etc. that have been distributed to affected teachers. **Also, please provide copies of all parent executed agreement to the teachers involved.**

We are confident that the District shares our concerns relating to privacy and parental rights. There are always those who are eager to bring legal charges against the District and teachers.

Other Important Issues

As per our March 19, 2020 correspondence:

- Many students still do not have access to computers.
Many parents and students are upset because they were unable to pick up their laptop or work.
Please advise parents and teachers of when and how they can arrange to pick up necessary materials/electronics.
Just as food is being distributed, there must be a way to pick up materials/supplies for schools/distribution sites.

- Teachers are being told to add building administrators to their Schoology and Class Dojo. Some teachers don't use Schoology and haven't been trained in it. Some teachers feel they are being spied on and micro managed (School 80).
- Teachers have personal computers, laptops with no camera/microphones. The District needs to survey teachers to determine the equipment and educational materials they need.
- Parents are complaining to teachers that they are overwhelmed with the emails from teachers and the District. e.g. if your child is in 7-12, you could be receiving 6-8 emails per day just from teachers. The District must stop requiring teachers to communicate with parents daily – only when necessary.

We have forwarded concerns for the District but as yet had no response on almost all issues.

So much for working together. Hopefully, there will be some response to your teachers who are providing for their students and their own families under oppressive conditions.