

THE BENTE INFORMER

Vol. 22 Edition 1 "Official publication for the Board of Education Non Teaching Employees" February 2025



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

TIME CHANGE

Our membership meetings will now take place at **4:30 PM.** They will be held at the BENTE office located at 1956 Lyell Avenue, Suite B. 14606. The dates for the remainder of the year are:

February 12

March 12

April 9

May 14

SAVE THE DATE:

Membership meeting/
picnic 6/5/25

Seneca Park—Details to
follow

**SILENT DISCO IS
BACK! 4/26/25**

Details on back!

www.bentelocal2419.org

BENTE MEMBERS RALLY AT BOARD MEETING AFTER WAITING 4 MONTHS FOR RETRO PAY



The new BENTE contract was approved by the School Board in August, and new rates were effective in October, so our members were hopeful that they would have received their retro pay shortly after. Unfortunately, every pay period we were told "We might be able to get it entered into the next paycheck". This went on for two months, until President Palmerini decided to take action. "We got to a point where we felt there was no urgency on the District's part to pay our members, and we knew we needed to take action".

President Palmerini let members know that we would be attending the 12/19 Board meeting to express our frustration to the for members to show up and they did! BENTE members meeting to fight for what was

"It's not just about the retro pay. It is about our members deserving respect and feeling valued for the work that they do every day".

President Palmerini, Vice President Rinebold all the BENTE members. They they have with the lack of communication between the union and the district. "It is not just the retro pay" Vice President Rinebold stated. "The retro pay is a symptom of a bigger problem. Lack of communication, and more specifically, lack of follow-through, is a constant concern we have. Everyone knows perception matters, and this lack of follow-through is perceived by our members as a lack of respect".

Secretary Treasurer Kuhn, and spoke to the Board on behalf of discussed the ongoing concern

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Thankfully, most of our members received their retro pay on 12/27. The remainder received their pay on January 10th. Thank you to everyone who came out to support us!



CONTRACT BOOK UPDATES

The new contract books are being finalized and signed by all parties, and will be going to print shortly. Once they are received, our office will label and ship them to each member. In the meantime, the new contract can now be found on the BENTE website.

BENTE MERCH STORE

We opened an online store with BENTE merchandise available. Although the store was only open for a limited amount of time, we still have short and long sleeve shirts available for purchase at the Union office. Please call the office for details.

A Spring store will be opened with new merchandise and color options. Stay tuned!

BENTE DAY REMINDER

Don't forget that the 1st Friday of every month is BENTE day. Call the office and let them know you are sporting your BENTE merch (shirt, lunchbox, lanyard, etc) and you will be entered to win a prize!

INCREASE IN CAR BREAK INS

Car break ins continue to be a concern across the city. There have been recent break-ins at several school, as well as the Central Office parking lot.

As a reminder, please be sure you are securing your vehicle, and removing anything valuable from inside.

President Palmerini has been in contact with the District regarding an extension of the MOA that was in place regarding reimbursing members for their insurance deductibles. Once details are finalized, a communication will be sent out to all members regarding this matter.

STAY UP TO DATE ON UNION NEWS

Be sure to check your District email for updates from President Palmerini. All updates that are sent through email will also be posted on the BENTE website: Bentelocal2419.org

Follow our Facebook page: BENTE2419



SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCES PLANS TO CLOSE MIDDLE SCHOOL AMONG OTHER FACILITY UPDATE PROJECTS

In an email sent to all staff on January 24th, Superintendent Strickland announced his recommendation to the Board to close Northwest at the Douglass campus. Andrew Langston Middle school, currently located at the Jefferson campus, would move to Douglass. The vote on this will take place at the February 27th Board meeting. Please remember, this is not final until it is voted on by the Board, and that the language in the BENTE contract is different than other bargaining units regarding school closings and displacements.

“There is not much we can speculate on until we have all the details” states President Palmerini. Once the Board votes, and staffing takes place in the Spring, we will have a better picture for our members, but we are not anticipating any significant cuts at this time”.

Superintendent Strickland also announced the District is entering phase III of the Facilities Modernization Program.

ASK THE UNION

Member: We had two snow days, in January, how do I record my time?

When the District calls for an emergency closing, such as a snow or cold day, you should be entering your time as REG, just as if you were working. This is also the case for any paid holidays.

Member: I was required to work on the snow day, do I get paid overtime?

The inclement weather provision in our contract states that members who work their regularly scheduled hours when schools are closed due to inclement weather, will receive a full day's pay at straight time, in addition to hourly compensation at straight time for hours worked.

Member: But I worked outside of my normal work hours.

Members who work outside of their regularly scheduled hours when schools are closed due to inclement weather, will be paid at one and one half (1 1/2) times their regular hourly rate for all hours worked outside of their regularly scheduled shift.

DISTRICT UPDATES ON COVID PAY

The District has sent communication regarding Covid pay, that includes when you should stay home, if you will receive Covid pay, and what requirements you need to meet. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the Benefits department.

What is the process to receive COVID Pay?

1. Notify your supervisor that you are going to be out of work.
2. Follow the normal process for reporting your absence. Your supervisor will put illness or unpaid illness on your timecard as the absence will be assumed to be illness initially.
3. Get tested for COVID:
 - a. If you have never used COVID pay before, you can use a home test.
 - b. If you have used COVID pay before, you will need to have a positive test from a lab or a note from your doctor that you are positive for COVID.
4. Complete the [NYS COVID Attestation form](#). You can also scan the QR code to the right once you have returned to work.
5. If your absence is 4 or more working days, you must submit a [Certificate of Personal Illness](#) (CPI). You can use the CPI form OR you can submit a note from your doctor as long as it states you were unable to work due to your own COVID infection and subsequent symptoms and includes the date you are cleared to return to work. If you were out less than 4 days – you can skip this step.
 - a. Please note this requirement for a CPI for 4 absences or more is required for instances of COVID only and applies to all staff and in all unions. For non-COVID illness absences, refer to your union contract for requirements.
6. Email benefits@rcsdk12.org or fax 585-295-2614 the positive test, completed attestation form, and the CPI if you were out 4 or more days.



If I have COVID – How long do I remain home?

You should stay home while you are sick. Specifically, you are permitted to return to work when both items below are true:

- You are fever free for 24 hours without medication **AND**
- Any symptoms you have are improving

Example 1: if you tested because you have family members in your house who are sick and you tested positive but are not sick yourself. You DO NOT have to isolate – we ask that you wear a mask for 10 days while at school.

Example 2: You are not feeling well and test Monday evening and it comes back positive for COVID. On Tuesday you stay home because you have a fever, have a cough, and chills. Tuesday night, you check your temperature before you go to bed and it is back to normal (98.6F). You should remain home Wednesday because you need to be fever free for 24 hours before returning to work.

Example 3: You do not have a fever but have had a cough for 2 days. You test for COVID on Wednesday before you come into work, and it comes back positive. While you never had a fever, you have a cough until Friday afternoon. You would remain home through Friday because your COVID Symptom did not improve until Friday.

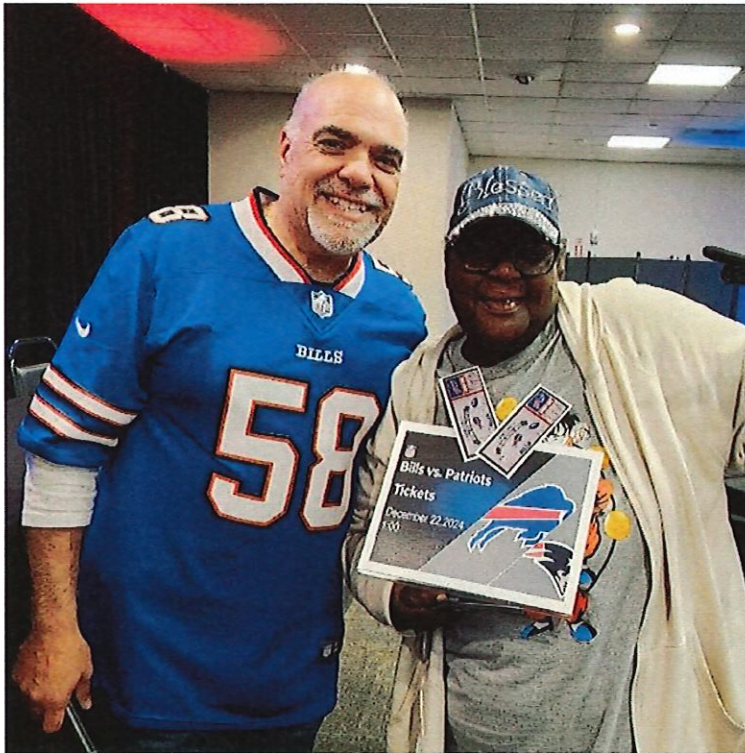
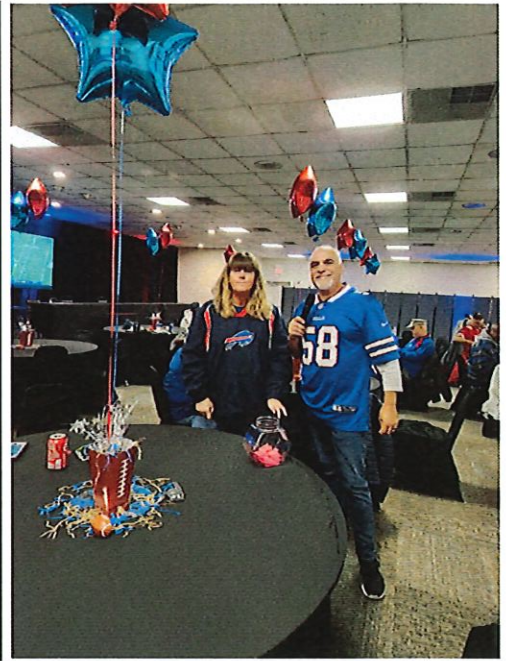
How many times can I be paid NYS COVID Pay?

New York State allows for a person to be paid up to 3 times per person. Each instance does not have to be a minimum number of days. If you feel you may only be out one or two days and do not want to use one of your 3 instances for that, you are not required to submit for COVID pay and can use your personal illness days. But any use of COVID, regardless of the number of days, will be considered one of your 3 instances.

BENTE TAILGATE AT THE UNION HALL



BENTE members gathered in November for a fun afternoon at the Union Hall for some food, football, and raffles! Be on the look out for other events throughout the year, including the Silent Disco, our end of year picnic, and Bingo.



SAVE THE DATE: MEMBERSHIP MEETING/PICNIC

The end of year membership meeting/picnic has been scheduled for 6/5/25 at the Longhouse shelter at Seneca Park. We will hold our monthly meeting, along with our 25 year award ceremony, and announce the recipients of this year's scholarship. Since this is a membership meeting, it is for dues paying BENTE members only.



HOLIDAY GIFTS

BENTE officers made their rounds throughout the buildings to deliver holiday gifts. If you did not receive your gift card, please call the BENTE office.

10 Year Keychains

"I have been working here for 15 years, why am I just getting a keychain now?"

You may have noticed while we were delivering holiday gifts, some received a 10 year keychain as well. We just started offering them this year, so in addition to distributing them to members who just made 10 years, we caught up on those who have surpassed this milestone as well!

NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS APPOINTED



Dan Strassner, Custodian Engineer at Monroe High School, has been appointed the Unit Chairperson for Custodial. Dan has been a BENTE member for 27 years. He has previously held the Custodial Steward title, and more recently the Vice Chair position. In addition to being the Custodian Engineer at Monroe, he also oversees the Custodial operations at School Without Walls. Dan brings a wealth of knowledge to the Board regarding the needs of our Custodial staff.



Stacia Goldberg, School Secretary at #23, has been appointed the Unit Chairperson for Elementary Clerical. Stacia has been a BENTE member since 2018. She has previously held the trustee title. Stacia attends all union functions, and is a helpful volunteer at our annual Labor Day event. Stacia's role as Unit Chairperson will allow her to have a voice for the Elementary Clerical members throughout the district.

UNIT OFFICERS

ATTENDANCE

Unit Chair	Kenneth Davis
Vice Chair	Leslie Hunter
Unit Secretary	Vacant
Unit Steward	Anthony Padilla

Central Office

Unit Chair	Weezy Landry
Vice Chair	Robert Kwiecien
Unit Secretary	Ana Burgos
Unit Steward	Jessica Rinebold

CUSTODIAL

Unit Chair	Dan Strassner
Vice Chair	Joe Jackson III
Unit Secretary	Curtis Skinner
Unit Steward	Victor Wilson

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Unit Chair	Stacia Goldberg
Vice Chair	Rosanna DeCastro
Unit Secretary	Laura Stam

FOOD SERVICES

Unit Chair	Debra Bowen
Vice Chair	Vacant
Unit Secretary	Vacant
Unit Steward	Leonela Malinao

OT/PT

Unit Chair	Ana Yager
Vice Chair	Heather Monette
Unit Secretary	Stephanie Malone

PLANT MAINTENANCE

Unit Chair	Patrick Soto
Vice Chair	Miguel Gonzalez
Unit Secretary	Vacant
Unit Steward	Marty Piccone

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Unit Chair	Michelle Steele
Vice Chair	Vacant
Unit Secretary	Kimberly Montana

SECURITY

Unit Chair	Roosevelt Murray
Vice Chair	Jushawn Rucker
Unit Secretary	Sandra Beasley
Unit Steward	Darrick Blue

TRANSPORTATION

Unit Chair	Jehlen Hunt
Vice Chair	Edith Cray
Unit Secretary	Vacant
Unit Steward	AJ Williams

Chair Officers

Angelo Palmerini	President
Jessica Rinebold	Vice President
Laura Kuhn	Sec./treasurer
Sonia Alvarado	Rec. Secretary
Zelder Bice	Sgt.-at-Arms
Wayne Collom	Sgt.-at-Arms

Executive Board

Kenneth Davis	Attendance
Weezy Landry	Central Office
Dan Strassner	Custodial
Stacia Goldberg	Elementary
Debra Bowen	Food Service
Patrick Soto	Maintenance
Ana Yager	OT/PT
Michelle Steele	Secondary
Roosevelt Murray	Security
Jehlen Hunt	Transportation

Trustees

Pete DiBenedetto
Noelia Garcia

Stewards

Anthony Padilla	Attendance
Victor Wilson	Custodial
Leonela Malinao	Food Service
Marty Piccone	Maintenance
Darrick Blue	Security
AJ Williams	Transportation

Educational Coordinator,

EAP and Steward Coordinator

Weezy Landry

Orientation Coordinator

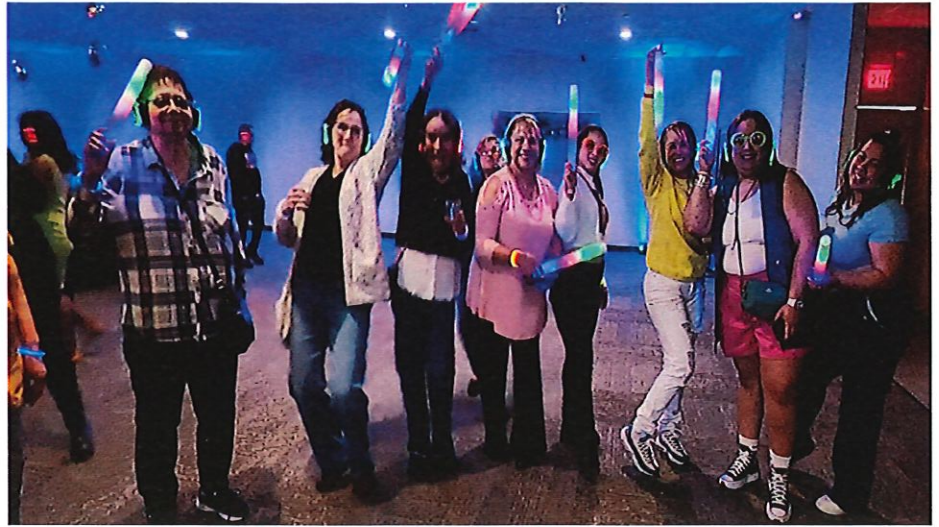
Veldra Simmons

Website Coordinator

Laura Kuhn



THE SILENT DISCO IS BACK!



WHEN: SATURDAY APRIL 26, 2025

TIME: 5:30—10:00 PM

COST: \$15.00 for members

member can bring one guest for \$25.00



What's Included: There will be food, open bar, and raffle prizes. Show up at 5:30 to get checked in, and get your raffle tickets entered for the drawings that will happen throughout the night. Each member will receive a raffle ticket to be entered for prizes. Members and guests will have the opportunity to purchase 50/50 raffle tickets for a separate chance to walk away with CASH!

SPACE IS LIMITED! To reserve your spot you must pay for your ticket and any guest ticket by April 1, 2025.

TWO WAYS TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT: You can come to the office and pay in cash, or sign up by paying through cash app: **\$BENTE2419**. If paying through Cash App, please be sure your name and "silent disco" is in the notes.



**Reserve your
spot today!**