

BTA Retirement Committee Report June 19, 2014

Here we are at the end of another school year! Is it just me or did this year seem to fly by for everyone? We will soon be saying our good byes to our retiring colleagues and bidding them a long, healthy, and happy life in retirement. This year, we have lost a fairly small number of excellent dedicated teachers to retirement. As you may know, teachers have (although I do not recommend they to so) until June 30 to announce their retirements to begin collecting the TRS pension on July 1.

Even though the above noted retiring teachers have reached that point in their careers, remember that we all have gained one more year of service credit and are **one year closer** to our own well deserved retirement.

I have said the following for the last couple of years but it is important so I will say it yet again: "I cannot get away from the concept that we who remain working, stand on the shoulders of all those who have come before us. The reputation that Bedford has earned over the decades, the culture of excellence and professionalism that exists today, and even many aspects of our future, are due to the tireless work of our retired predecessors. These are the true "heroes" of the BCSD. They were the ones (and YOU will someday be "them") who day in and day out over the years and decades, did the often unglamorous work in the classrooms while administrations and Boards of Education came and went. The teaching professionals always remained. Let us all honor them by remembering and making sure to say "Thanks" for everything they have done for us and the BCSD."

When I wrote the paragraph above I was mainly speaking about the teaching environment and only partially about the union leadership activities of our predecessors. Due to the hard work and hard fought battles unionists waged in the past, thankfully, we have excellent working conditions, decent salaries, and strong contracts. **FOR THE MOMENT!** It seems our profession is under attack all over the nation. Recently, tenure laws in California were thrown out as **UNCONSTITUTIONAL!!! REALLY!** **Responding to present challenges along these lines is where the fight will be in the future as antiunion forces mobilize their power and money to negate the gains labor has fairly negotiated over past decades. That is why everyone NEEDS to get involved in the BTA, NYSUT, and the AFT on some level.** This is our profession and we cannot sit idly by and let others erode our careers.

With nearly half of 2014 already in the books, the economy holding at a fairly high level, unemployment continuing to drop, housing starts rising, and an overall feeling that we are emerging from the Great Recession, there is much to look forward to. I wish for all of you to have a GREAT summer vacation. Recharge your batteries, travel, read several good books, maybe attend a conference or two, but most of all ENJOY! You certainly deserve it!

Any retirement questions, please call Kevin J. Crowley at home (203) 454-9545 or E-mail at kcrowley0245 at the Bedford School address. You may also feel free to call me at my FLHS number 241-6178. I will be checking e-mail/voice mail frequently over the summer.

See you all in September!!! Have a Great Summer!!! Kevin.