



Happenings

Affiliated with NYSUT, AFT #2937, AFL-CIO

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Message from the President

It is hard to believe that the holiday season is behind us and we are into a New Year. I hope everyone is keeping warm through these freezing cold temperatures!

Officers

President:

Regis Foster

1st Vice President:

Jenny McElroy

2nd Vice President:

Carol Brown

Recording Secretary:

Debra Cassara

**Corresponding/
Social Secretary:**

Claire Dillon

Treasurer:

Joseph Becker

**Grievance
Chairperson:**

Dawn Higgins

Retirement Letter

If you are planning to retire this year, you need to submit your letter to Mr. Rydell by February 1.

PJTA Dues

PJTA dues that you paid in 2018 were \$759.36

Salary Adjustment Form

Once you have completed an approved graduate course or 45 hours of an approved in-service course(s), you must submit a salary adjustment claim form and an official college transcript to the business office by the end of February. There are two official months for submission. One is at the end of October and the other is at the end of February of each year.

Holiday Toy Drive

I want to thank you all for your generosity in contributing to the Holiday Toy Drive.

Food Drive

Our post-holiday food drive is coming to a close. Please be generous! Jenny McElroy will be collecting everything on February 8.

Political Action Committee

Mike Grubiak, NYSUT Regional Political Organizer, spoke to our members on January 23 in the PJTA Office. Mike spoke about how to organize this committee. The purpose of this committee is for our members to be actively involved and voice the issues to the community, by getting community support, of the issues that challenges us as professionals. We will be setting up another meeting at a later time.

APPR Legislation Update

The APPR legislation has been introduced by both houses in Albany and is likely to pass soon. This is the same legislation NYSUT advocated last year.

As you will recall, this bill will eliminate the mandate that school districts use state test scores in teacher ratings. This legislation would return the decision back to local school districts and make sure that any teacher evaluation system is a subject of collective bargaining. The bill would also keep these test scores from being included on students' permanent records. NYSUT believes if the bill is adopted, students and teachers will be better protected from high stakes tests.

This past weekend, an organization launched an action alert encouraging legislators to vote against this legislation. NYSUT supports this legislation and believes this bill is a major step forward. NYSUT certainly understands the desire for full repeal of the original legislation. However, it must be put into the context of what is possible to get through the legislature and signed by the Governor when many groups, including the Commissioner, will be on the other side. That is why NYSUT worked on getting a bill that could become law this year and before the moratorium expires.

Last year, senators stood in our way of this bill's passage. Now NYSUT has the opportunity to get a bill done early in this legislative session that corrects the biggest problems with the APPR law. With this in mind, it is important to take a very clear look at what the bill does and does not do. Here are the main points from the bill:

- The bill eliminates the state growth model from the law. The growth scores will no longer be calculated by the state.

- It eliminates the requirement to use state tests in APPR. This change includes Regents exams, 4th and 8th grade science tests, The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESSESLAT) and the Alternative Assessment for students with disabilities.

- The bill places the decision about student performance at the bargaining table. This means all of APPR will be subject to collective bargaining. Districts will not be making these decisions. The State School Boards Association and Council of School Superintendents strongly oppose this change.

- The bill ensures every local can continue their current APPR being used in transition. It also allows all teachers to be covered by group measures removing the high stakes nature of individual SLOs. We believe most locals will use this approach, which will actually reduce testing by eliminating pre-tests. No one will have to increase testing to comply with this law. Given the approach that most locals used for transition, we expect testing will go down, not up.

What the bill does not do:

- The bill does not give any new authority to the Commissioner, and it makes sure she cannot back track on any of the measures she has already approved. A repeal of the law would give her full authority to put in place a new system. Given her interest in preserving the state growth model, and including a percentage of state tests in the evaluation system, we expect any system designed by the Commissioner will be much worse than the system included in the bill.

2. The Commissioner does not have the authority to mandate a new test.
3. Districts do not choose the performance measures under the bill. Performance measures will be collectively bargained.

Once the bill is adopted, NYSUT will continue to advocate for a meaningful assessment system for

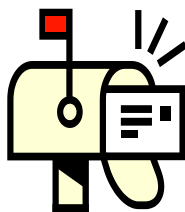
NYS students that will measure student progress more accurately and address the concerns raised by teachers and parents alike.

Audit Committee

The audit committee met, reviewed the books and found no mistakes. I would like to thank Carol Brown, Austin Carroll and Lindsay Wylie for taking their time reviewing the books. Thanks goes to Joe Becker for doing a fantastic job as our Treasurer.

Happy New Year!

Regis Foster



Correspondence

Sympathy

Jackie Behnke, on the loss of her grandfather, Kenneth March.

Ilene Valentine, on the loss of her husband, George.

Jennifer Kowal, on the loss of her uncle, Patrick Reilly.

Anne Parker, on the loss of her mother, H. Nadine Healy.

The family of Dave Bird, retired PJTA teacher.

Get Well

Amy Hoverstock

Congratulations

Jack Higgins and Michaela Rannestad, on the birth of their daughter, Maeve.

Michele and Doug Grabiec, on the birth of their daughter, Madison.

Cards Received

Thank you from Special Olympics for a donation made in memory of Edward Polanis.
