

# SRP NewsLink

A NEWSLETTER FOR NYSUT'S SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONALS LOCAL LEADERS

## SRPs fight for change at NYS Capitol

More than 80 School-Related Professionals descended upon the state Capitol and Legislative Office Building recently to bring NYSUT's Support School Staff initiative to life.

The group, comprising SRPs from Potsdam to Buffalo to Suffolk County, spearheaded this special lobby day on issues impacting SRPs, other educators, students and the community.

The work of our SRP lobbyists helped secure passage of multiple bills, including the school violence prevention bill, Civil Service Law Section 80 and implementing procedures for the school bus stop arm cameras.

These issues had been adopted as resolutions at previous NYSUT Repre-

sentative Assemblies. NYSUT's SRP Advisory Committee set these as priorities in their recommendations to the statewide union.

"Taking part in the SRP Lobby Day was a powerful experience," said Billy Coleman, New Rochelle FUSE. Coleman is a member of the Political Action Subcommittee of the advisory committee, and said it was gratifying to "speak to legislators about these important issues."

Visit [flickr.com/nysut](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nysut) for photos of SRP Lobby Day.

For information on the Support School Staff initiative visit <https://SupportSchoolStaff.org>.



PHOTO: ANDREW WATSON

Billy Coleman, New Rochelle FUSE, speaks with a legislator.



ANDREW WATSON

EL-WISE NOISETTE

Photos (clockwise from above): Debra Paulin, Alden CSEA addresses press as NYSUT President Andy Pallotta looks on; Health & Safety Specialist Wendy Hord with UFT members (from left) Yona Adika, Shelvy Young Abrams, Priscilla Castro and Reggie Colvin; workplace safety flier; and a group of activists meet and speak with Assemblyman Phil Steck.



EL-WISE NOISETTE

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# Union honors SRPs at 2019 RA

Thousands of NYSUT delegates visited downtown Albany May 3-4 for the first Representative Assembly held in the capital city in more than 30 years.

Delegates honored the 2019 SRP Members of the Year, Pricilla Castro and Colleen Condolora.

Castro is a borough advocate for the United Federation of Teachers in New York City. She previously spent 15 years providing instructional support to students with autism and medically fragile students.

Condolora has been a special education teaching assistant for 29 years. She is a member of Capital Region BOCES and serves on the NYSUT Health and Safety Committee.

Both Castro and Condolora participated in the June 4 SRP Lobby Day (see page 1 story).

The SRP Advisory Committee staffed the SRP booth, where they greeted delegates, answered questions and handed out the *SRP NewsLink* and other helpful brochures and pamphlets.



Pricilla Castro



Colleen Condolora



@ArthmannLee speaks to a resolution about school safety and violence prevention  
@nysut Representative Assembly.  
@NYSUTWomensComm

Delegates considered 48 resolutions, including many specific to SRP concerns. Visit [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) for complete RA coverage.



Karen Lee Arthman addresses delegates.



SRP AC members (from left) Kim McEvoy, Andre Mathis, Laura Haas, and Pat Speech staff the SRP booth.

## IMPORTANT DATES:

### SRP Leadership Conference

Oct. 4-6, Saratoga Springs

### National School Lunch Week

Oct. 14-18, nationwide

### National School Bus Safety Week

Oct. 21-25

### American Education Week

Nov. 17-22, nationwide

### SRP Recognition Day

Nov. 19, statewide

## SRP Recognition Day is Nov. 19

For celebration ideas visit [www.nysut.org/srpd](http://www.nysut.org/srpd). Local leaders may use the link to order free SRP Recognition Day celebration packets, including "Proud Union SRP" stickers.

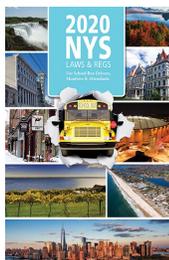


## PTSI booklet available for locals

Do you have school bus drivers, monitors or attendants in your local? The new **2020 NYS Laws & Regs for School Bus Drivers, Monitors & Attendants** booklet is available now.

NYSUT will send the booklets to your local at no cost. Supplies are limited, order now and be up to date on the current regulations.

Contact Tammie Waldenmaier at [twaldenm@nysutmail.org](mailto:twaldenm@nysutmail.org).



## Celebrate School Lunch Week

National School Lunch Week is Oct. 14-18 and this year's theme "School Lunch: What's on your Playlist?" highlights the way today's school cafeteria's serve healthy menu items, with increased choice and customization, that students want to eat.

Visit [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org) for more information and to download a free toolkit, including infographics and memes to announce this important week in your school district.



## 'The Safest Form of Student Transportation'



National School Bus Safety Week is Oct. 21-25 and this year's theme is "My School Bus, The Safest Form of Student Transportation."

Designed to promote school bus safety, school districts across the nation observe School Bus Safety Week.

Visit [www.napt.org](http://www.napt.org) for school bus safety tips and to order this year's winning theme-based, student-drawn poster.

# Starting your local union's year off right

Now is the perfect time for locals to plan how to welcome back their members for the start of the school year.

SRP locals and units may have to be creative when planning to welcome school employees back, since SRP schedules may not align. Here are some ideas of how locals around the state welcome back their members at the start of the school year, celebrate new hires, helping those in need, and build union solidarity.

Some SRP locals have time to meet with their members as part of Superintendent's Conference Day or as part of staff training day, just before schools begin. But not every local has unencumbered meeting time at the beginning of the school year. Other locals welcome their SRP members back with a pot luck supper or a picnic, where they play team building games, or spend time getting to know new members and getting re-acquainted with old friends. Some locals raise money for a good cause.

Cheryl Rockhill, president of the Brushton-Moira Support Staff Association wanted to make the most of the half

hour she was allocated to meet with her members on the second Superintendent's Conference Day at the beginning of the 2018 school year, she combined showing support for a member struggling with a health issues with showing all members the power of the union.

Rockhill invited NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale, who spoke to the local about unionism and NYSUT. "The one-to-one conversations we have with our members, and with members of other unions, are the best way to share our message now and in the future," said Pecorale.

To support BMSSA member Charleen Cummings who is battling breast cancer, the local began planning weeks before, by secretly holding a T-shirt sale, with 185 of its membership purchasing "Team Charleen" T-shirts.

"Almost everyone wore the shirts and we presented Charleen a check for



Photos: (Left) Charleen Cummings. (Above) NYSUT 2nd VP Paul Pecorale, with Brushton-Moira SSA members (from left) Susan Winters, Brenda Dabiew and Connie Ghostlaw, in the school cafeteria.

\$2,300," said Rockhill. "She was very surprised. It was an emotional moment." The local's members also donated many sick days to Cummings, who travels several hours each way for treatments.

The local members also wore their shirts each Friday during October, Breast Cancer Awareness month, to honor Cummings, who continues to do well in treatment.



Register by Sept. 12:  
[www.nysut.org/srp](http://www.nysut.org/srp)

1st Time Attendee Discount

\*Only one discount per person



1st Time Attendee Discount

Register at:  
[www.nysut.org/srp](http://www.nysut.org/srp)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE — SEPT. 12

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**41<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL**

**NYSUT**

**SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONALS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

**OCT. 4-6, 2019**

**Hilton Hotel, Saratoga Springs, NY**

*Conference Highlights*

- SRP 2.0 — Elevate Your Career!
- 4-Hour First-Aid Certification
- How to Pass Your Civil Service Exam — Custodian/Janitor
- Dealing with Difficult Students on the Bus
- Demystifying Local Union Finances
- Understanding Emotional and Behavioral Emergencies

*Don't miss NYSUT's largest SRP professional development opportunity of the year! Meet and network with colleagues from around the state, and celebrate union solidarity and activism.*



## Maximize member engagement with community events

SRPs have a wide variety of interests and often participate in many community activities and in social and religious groups. Creating a community activity for your local to participate in — such as a food or clothing drive, service at a soup kitchen or a holiday lights event — can be a great, low-stakes way of increasing member involvement. New members may be skittish about participating in a union rally (especially if it is their first exposure to union activities), but will likely respond well to community, service-based involvement.

It will also give the community a chance to see the members of your local, not just as education professionals but also as members of the community.

This can go a long way in garnering “yes” votes on the May budget vote and backing on other important issues.

The beginning of the school year is the perfect time to plan for late fall and winter activities for your local. Successful locals follow the four steps below to engage their new and younger members in union activities.

### Survey, select, tasks and ask

**Step 1. Survey the entire membership in the fall.** Begin the year with a member

survey to help determine what activities would garner the most membership support. To ensure maximum response, consider printing out copies of the survey and distributing them at a mandatory staff meeting. Give out pens with the survey and collect the survey when participants are done.

Alternatively, you may use an online survey tool, such as Survey Monkey.

**Step 2. Select an event from the survey and divide the tasks.** Use the survey responses to assemble a team of veterans and young members to plan, coordinate and host the planned event.

**Step 3. Tasks: Divide tasks into two-hour pieces.** The team works to find ways to make a positive impact on the community and membership while engaging new and younger members from the union’s various work sites.

Make a simple timeline that outlines duties and deadlines.

**Step 4. Ask for volunteers.** Use the sample sign-up form online to create your own sign-up sheet. Have your building leaders use it to sign up volunteers. Creating a late fall or winter event is a great way to both engage members and have a positive impact on the community.



To do so effectively involves event planning that starts in September. Create a culture of involvement within your local, and remember: Every event you create engages new members and creates stronger union ties.

Available online through the NYSUT Leader Access site, the New Member Engagement toolkit is a helpful resource. You will find videos, fliers, fact sheets and many other materials. Visit the resource section of the New Member Engagement section on Leader Access at [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org).

(Excerpted and updated from *The Insider*.)

## NYSUT SRPs: Thank you for all that you do

NYSUT Member Benefits is proud to offer our SRP members access to a variety of union-endorsed benefits. And unlike with purchasing products available to the general public, participation in Member Benefits-endorsed programs offers the “Power of the Union.” Member Benefits is here as your advocate for any issues or concerns you may have with our endorsed programs.

Whether it’s protecting your family through our endorsed insurance programs, planning for the future with our legal or financial plans, or just saving money on everyday purchases, Member Benefits offers quality benefits to both NYSUT SRPs and their families.

We understand no one likes to consider the possibility of major life issues such as getting sick, injured or even worse. However, the peace of mind of knowing your family is protected with

crucial insurance, legal or financial programs if something were to happen to you is worth it. These programs are often not as expensive as you may think, and there is no cost to inquire about them.

NYSUT SRP members can also participate in union-endorsed shopping, entertainment and travel benefits. Save money on routine and special purchases, including shopping at your favorite retail locations, renting a vehicle for a day trip or making last-minute travel plans.

Whether your summer or fall plans include taking in a professional sporting event, spending the day with family at a world-class museum or simply enjoying the latest hit film, we encourage you to look to Member Benefits before making any purchasing decisions.

The value that your union membership provides cannot be overstated. Learn more about the union-endorsed



benefits available to you by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

The **SRP NewsLink** is published periodically by NYSUT Program Services.

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