

# NYSUT UNITED

A UNION OF PROFESSIONALS

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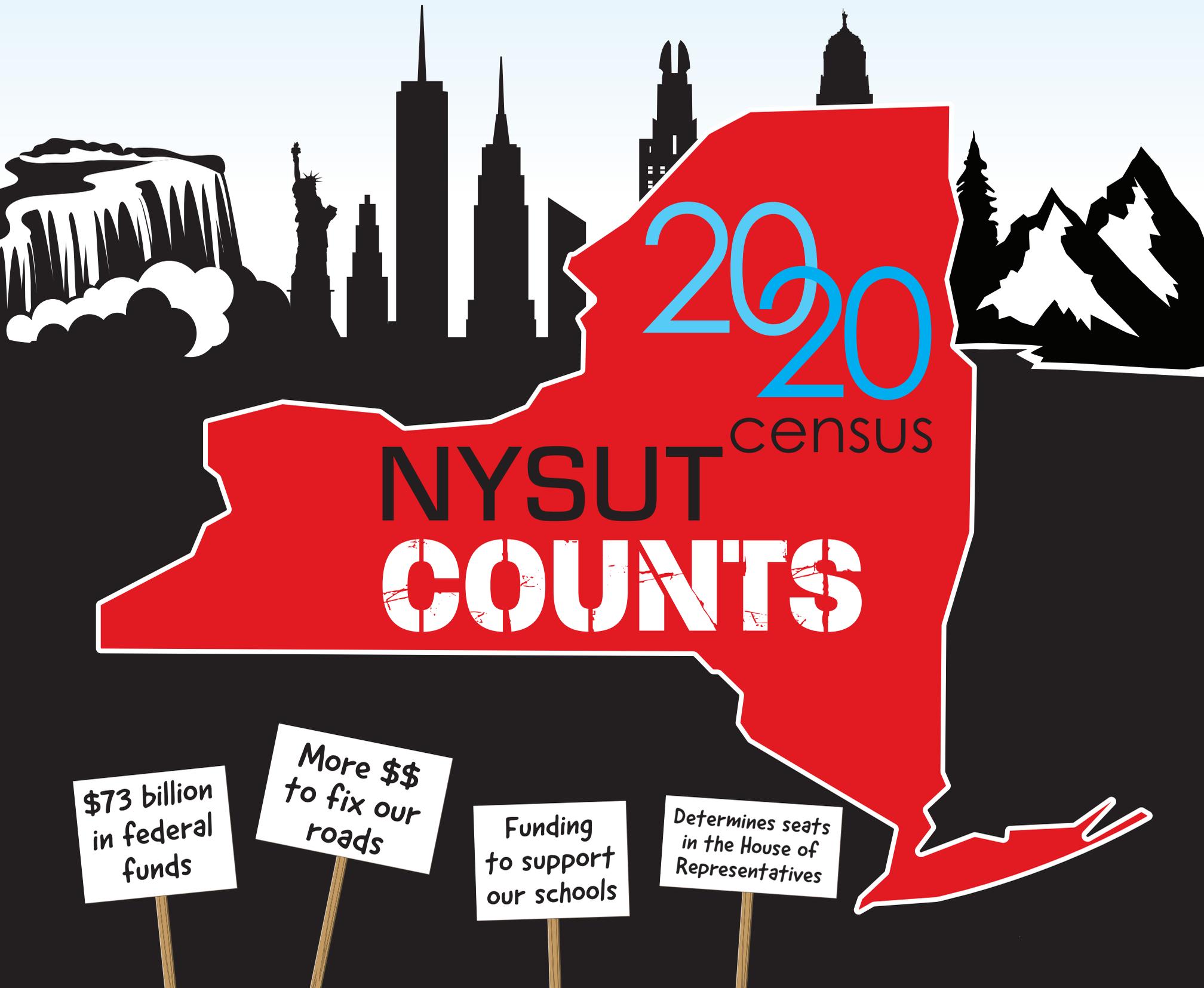
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2020

census

NYSUT  
COUNTS

\$73 billion  
in federal  
funds

More \$\$  
to fix our  
roads

Funding  
to support  
our schools

Determines seats  
in the House of  
Representatives

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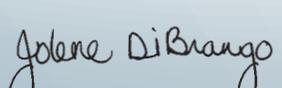
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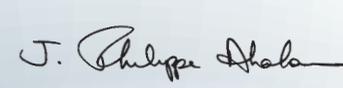
  
 A Union of Professionals  
**HOLIDAY GREETINGS**  
 AND  
**BEST WISHES IN THE NEW YEAR**

**FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT NEW YORK STATE UNITED TEACHERS**

  
**Andrew Pallotta**  
 President

  
**Jolene T. DiBrango**  
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**Paul Pecorale**  
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**J. Philippe Abraham**  
 Secretary-Treasurer

# NYSUT 2020 COUNTS census

**N**YSUT Counts is our union's initiative to ensure every resident of the state is reported in the 2020 Census.

The results affect the allocation of \$700 billion in federal funding to schools, hospitals, municipalities and needy families.

"Much like our drive to defeat the state constitutional convention referendum a couple of years ago and our successful outreach to union members after the U.S. Supreme Court's *Janus* decision in 2018, this crucial initiative is an opportunity to engage the power of our union," said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta.

NYSUT is committed to holding one-to-one conversations with NYSUT members about the importance of being counted; providing curriculum resources to use with students; using direct mail and digital advertising; and working in coalition with other unions, community groups and like-minded organizations.

"For equity, fairness and justice, everyone must be counted," Pallotta said. "The census begins April 1, but it's not too early to begin to organize, educate and prepare communities for full participation."

The George Washington University Institute of Public Policy

reports that the state receives \$73.3 billion from federal programs guided by 2010 census data. That's an average of \$3,700 per person, and nearly \$10,000 per household.

Only 76 percent of households responded to that 2010 survey. If we can help raise the census response rate to 85 percent, it would mean an additional \$9.1 billion in federal funds. At 95 percent, it would mean \$18.8 billion more.

U.S. Census officials have launched a program that will use schools to encourage everyone to fill out their questionnaires. NYSUT members will help by doing what they do best: teaching kids.

Go to the NYSUT Counts 2020 website at [nysutcounts.org](http://nysutcounts.org) for links to census resources, including the AFT's Share My Lesson and materials from *NEA Today*.

## The Census, what you need to know!

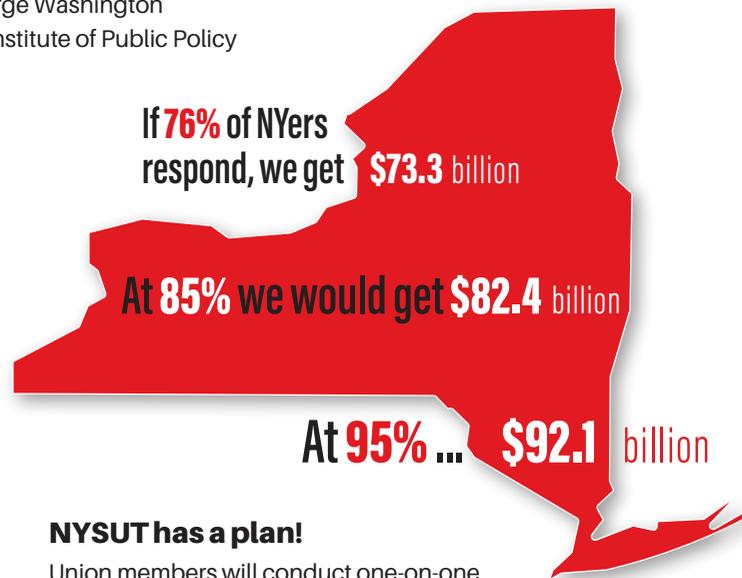
- The U.S. Constitution requires a count of every resident of the United States once every **10** years.
- Every** resident counts, including children and non-citizens.

## When?

- The 2020 Census officially starts **April 1**.
- In mid-**March**, the Census Bureau will send letters instructing people to take the survey online.
- In **April**, the bureau will send a letter and a PAPER questionnaire to nonrespondents.
- In **May** and **June**, the bureau will attempt to conduct in-person interviews with remaining nonrespondents.

## Why?

- Based on the 2010 census, New York state receives more than **\$73** billion in federal funds.
- It determines the **number of seats** each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Right now, New York is projected to **lose one** seat in the House. If we are not all counted, we may **lose two**.



## NYSUT has a plan!

Union members will conduct one-on-one conversations with other NYSUT members about the importance of being counted.



The union will develop and distribute curriculum resources for members to use in their classrooms. NYSUT will also send direct mail and digital ads to members.

## How YOU can get involved



Fill out the "Count Me In" form online, [nysutcounts.org](http://nysutcounts.org), and engage members about the importance of the census and being counted.

Encourage people to work for the census. [2020census.gov/jobs](http://2020census.gov/jobs).



## COMING UP

### Jan. 7-30

Regional union conversations on 2020 presidential election

### Jan. 8

Governor's State of the State address; 2020 NYS legislative session convenes

### Jan. 10-11

NYSUT Board of Directors meets, Latham

### Jan. 13-14

Board of Regents meets, Albany

### Jan. 20

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

### Feb 3-4

Higher Ed Lobby Day, Albany

### Feb. 10-27

Regional union conversations on 2020 presidential election

### Feb. 10-11

Board of Regents meets, Albany

### Feb. 11

Special Schools Lobby Day, Albany

### Feb. 14-16

NYS Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators annual legislative conference, Albany

### Feb. 26

Boces Lobby Day, Albany

### March 2-3

NYSUT Committee of 100 legislative meetings, Albany

## ON THE COVER

Designed by Nicole Clayton

# Lace up your sneakers for legislative session

## Politics and primaries frontload the schedule

By Ned Hoskin  
nhoskin@nysutmail.org

**T**he legislative session in New York will be more like a sprint than a marathon this year, as leaders have moved the finish line up three weeks to June 2.

That means the bulk of the debate will occur between January and April 1, when the next fiscal year begins and the 2020–21 budget is supposed to be done.

“Because of the schedule, the primaries (April 28 and June 23) and the November elections, it’s going to be a tough year to get lawmakers to focus on much after the budget is done,” said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta. “But we will focus on the issue of inequality in education as a result of a lack of funding, from pre-K through graduate school, throughout the session.”

It’s not just about funding for pre-K–12 schools, he said. (See



NYSUT President Andy Pallotta and UFT President Michael Mulgrew testify in Manhattan.

BECKY MILLER

article on Foundation Aid, page 6.) “Higher education funding remains a priority. We must have long overdue investments in CUNY, SUNY and the SUNY hospitals, and the community colleges.”

The governor’s budget office has already launched what seems like an annual plea of poverty in advance of budget negotiations. It issued its “midyear” report just

before Thanksgiving that outlined a projected \$6.1 billion budget gap, which the office attributes to increasing Medicaid costs.

Not surprisingly, “this will become a debate about revenue,” Pallotta said.

NYSUT advocates legislation that would generate new revenues by demanding that the ultrawealthy — who have been afforded multiple

ways to reduce or eliminate their tax liability — finally pay their fair share in taxes.

In addition, although the state tax cap is now permanent, NYSUT will continue to push for modifications to the law.

Most importantly, because the cap is set annually at 2 percent or the previous year’s rate of inflation, whichever is lower, the allowable levy growth factor has actually been below 2 percent for five of the nine years since the law was enacted.

The Legislature approved two union-backed changes to improve the tax cap law this year, although they await enactment. NYSUT advocates further amendments to make the cap 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is greater, Pallotta said. This model has been more workable in Massachusetts.

The union also will advocate to eliminate the 60 percent supermajority required to pass a budget proposal that exceeds the cap. That’s an unreasonable burden, Pallotta said, and it violates the democratic principle of “one person, one vote.”

# Union leader to run for state Senate, again

**J**ohn Mannion, president of the West Genesee Teachers Association, lost a close race for the 50th state Senate District in 2018, but he is getting another chance. After winning the hotly contested, \$3 million race, Sen. Bob Antonacci is leaving the Senate seat for a bench on the state Supreme Court.

“I ran for state Senate because our communities deserve to get our fair share of state aid, investment and

focus,” Mannion said as he threw his hat in the ring again. “We deserve real leadership and a dedicated public servant who will work to strengthen our schools, invest in job training programs, and protect our water and natural resources.”

“A teacher for 27 years, John Mannion is one of the best and the brightest to come out of NYSUT’s Pipeline program,” said President Andy Pallotta. The Pipeline provides training and resources for union

members and supporters who step up to run for office.

The statewide union has already endorsed Mannion for election.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has until April 1 to set a date for a special election, and could schedule it for as soon as April 28, the date of the state’s presidential primary. Whoever wins the special will have to hit the ground running; the seat will be contested in the general election again in November.



John Mannion

PROVIDED

# Union fought for many winners in Elections 2019

By Ned Hoskin

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In the early morning hours after the polls closed on Election Day, NYSUT's leadership team tweeted thanks to "all who did the right thing at the polls," and gave a shout out to those who took advantage of the new, NYSUT-backed early voting law.

"Extra special thanks goes to the many candidates who came through NYSUT's Pipeline training to run for local office," said President Andy Pallotta. "You truly make a difference!"

NYSUT's Regional Political Organizers, in collaboration with field staff, PAC Coordinators and retirees, were involved in dozens of races across the state and elected at least 25 NYSUT members to office.

Dedicated union members and staff worked vigorously for weeks — phone banking, walking, knocking on doors — to help elect pro-education candidates who will work to advance the priorities of the labor movement across the state.

According to NYSUT's post-election analysis, in the districts where the union was most active, union-backed candidates had a very good night. Here are some highlights from across the state:

## CAPITAL DISTRICT/NORTH COUNTRY

Second-time candidate Matt Miller, president of the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk TA, was elected to the Albany County Legislature. Miller is a graduate of NYSUT's Pipeline program and received support from the Albany Central Labor Council.

## NEW YORK CITY

Our members in NYC saw victories in several priority races. United



Federation of Teachers members worked tirelessly to help elect Melinda Katz in a contested race for Queens County District Attorney. Other victories included electing Farah Louis to the New York City Council.

The UFT and Professional Staff Congress at CUNY also assisted in Jumaane Williams' victory in the special election for public advocate.

## TARRYTOWN/MID-HUDSON

Seven NYSUT members were elected to various levels of office in the Tarrytown and Mid-Hudson regions. Longtime former local president Ralph Smith was elected to the Putnam Valley Town Council by a five-point margin. Pat Carroll, an American Federation of Teachers member, received support from the Clarkstown TA and secured a spot on the Clarkstown Town Board.

Three additional victories went to graduates of NYSUT's successful Pipeline program — Jenn Puja, White Plains Common Council; Ruth Walter,

Westchester County Legislature and Virginia Scott, Cornwall Town Council. Patricia Riley, a Lakeland FT retiree, won re-election to the Peekskill Common Council, besting her challenger by close to 700 votes.

## SYRACUSE/UTICA/VESTAL

United University Professions member Angela Riley succeeded in her bid for Binghamton City Council. Running with the support of the Binghamton TA, Riley garnered more than 74 percent of the vote in a decisive victory.

## LONG ISLAND

The Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College issued endorsements in 17 county legislative races and 16 of their endorsed candidates were successful.

NYSUT Board member Barbara Hafner should also be commended for her hard work and commitment despite her unsuccessful bid for Nassau County Legislature.

## ROCHESTER/ELMIRA

The FA of Monroe CC was deeply invested in several races for county legislature. With a goal of transforming the Monroe County Legislature, they fell one seat short of victory, picking up only two of the three seats needed. Congratulations to NYSUT member John Baynes who was one of the winners. The entire Rochester region mobilized in support of Adam Bello's election as county executive, the first Democrat to hold the position in nearly 30 years.

## WESTERN/SOUTHWESTERN

Western New York members worked tirelessly to elect several NYSUT members to various levels of office. NYSUT Board member Joe Cantafio was elected to the West Seneca Town Council.

Congratulations are also in order for members of the FA of Erie CC. The local's *SUNY ECC Students Deserve* campaign helped elect NYSUT member Lisa Chimera to the county legislature, as well as Kevin Hardwick and John Gilmour.

In Niagara County, NYSUT members running for office had a successful night. Christopher Robins and Anita Mullane were both elected to the county legislature, and Michelle Roman was elected as Lockport mayor. For Mullane, the mobilization of 106 NYSUT members secured her 93 vote margin of victory.

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who volunteered for our candidates by phone banking and walking, and thank you to everyone who came out to vote and supported all of our union-endorsed candidates.

Additional election results are available on the Board of Elections website: [nyenr.elections.ny.gov](http://nyenr.elections.ny.gov).

# Pallotta: We're gonna need a bigger pie

By Ned Hoskin  
nhoskin@nysutmail.org

**A** true kid from Brooklyn, President Andy Pallotta described the debate over state budget gaps and choices as a pizza.

"It is not just about cutting a pie into smaller slices," he told a joint hearing of the state Senate committees on education and budget and revenues. "We need a bigger pie!"

Foundation Aid — a formula for quantifying how much districts need to provide a sound, basic education, as required by the state constitution — was a significant public policy achievement when it was created in 2007. "We believe the formula should

remain the underpinning of school aid policy in New York," he said.

However, Pallotta said, since the recession of 2008, it has never been funded.

The hearing in New York City — where schools are owed \$1.1 billion — culminated a series of regional roundtable discussions convened in every corner of the state over the past two months by Senate education Chair Shelley Mayer, D-Yonkers.

The lack of funding is the primary driver of educational inequality in our state, Pallotta testified. From Long Island to Buffalo, roughly 400 school districts statewide are owed more than \$3.4 billion in Foundation Aid, according to calculations done by NYSUT and the New York State

Educational Conference Board. Sixty-eight percent of that amount, or \$2.3 billion, is owed to high-need schools.

In the roundtables, stakeholders heard over and over how the current amount of Foundation Aid funding is insufficient to serve the needs of New York's school districts.

■ In Yonkers, schools are underfunded by \$38 million in Foundation Aid, shortchanging mental health services.

■ In Buffalo, schools are underfunded by \$76 million, delaying services for students with disabilities and slashing music and art programs.

■ Owed \$85 million, high-need schools in Rochester face a fiscal crisis that could cut nearly 200 positions by January.

Pallotta said tackling inequality starts with re-establishing a three-year phase-in for funding the Foundation Aid formula. NYSUT and its coalition partners on the ECB recommend an increase of \$1.6 billion in Foundation Aid and full funding for expense-based aid in the 2020-21 state budget as part of at least \$2.1 billion in new school aid.

"Addressing inequality in education should be part of addressing the vast income inequality between the haves and the have nots here in New York," Pallotta said, and that requires more revenue.

"It's time to balance out that picture by demanding that the ultra-wealthy finally pay their fair share," he said.

## Job one on campus: Membership

By Ned Hoskin  
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**L**ike a stray dog on campus ... that's how I felt," said Laurel Morton, describing the early years of her time as an adjunct faculty member at Syracuse University.

The time she lost her course load at the last minute, she had no re-course, no standing and no union.

"I literally spent the semester on the floor of my living room, with my cat," she said.

Now the president of the 11-year-old Adjuncts United local union at SU, Morton found that sharing these kinds of personal experiences was crucial to organizing and engaging members who were used to feeling alienated and alone.

"Playing up that personal story, and finding people who could



Verlaine Quinney of the Faculty Federation of Erie CC (left) and Kathy Baxter of Monroe CC FA at the 41st NYSUT Community College Leadership Conference last weekend in Cooperstown.

EL-WISE NOISSETTE

understand that, was really huge. It builds trust," she said.

"You have to find and share your members' stories," said Cyndi Riedi, of the Mohawk Valley CC Adjuncts and Part-timers Association. "The

stories of why people are still members are very powerful."

With the labor movement energized after the U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 decision in *Janus*, connecting with members and potential

members is a priority.

"Membership drives are now 24-hours a day, 365 days a year," Riedi said. "This is our job one!"

In short, "Membership Matters" like never before, and it was the main theme of the 2019 NYSUT Community College Leadership Conference in November.

Roberta Elins, the president of the United College Employees of Fashion Institute of Technology and chair of the NYSUT Higher Ed Policy Council, said the 41st annual conference attracted more than 180 members from 30 local unions, both record numbers.

"We're going to continue to work together to mobilize and engage members to build a strong union," Elins said.

Visit [nysut.org](http://nysut.org) to read more, including a successful union solidarity effort at Monroe CC.

# Sisterhood grants will **EMPOWER** union women



By Kara Smith  
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The NYSUT Women's Committee rolled out the NYSUT Mosaics of Sisterhood Grant, which offers up to \$500 for members to start local women's committee chapters, to fund specific short-term projects or for professional learning opportunities to move the women's agenda forward.

Introduced at the committee's annual meeting in November, the grant program is made possible by a generous donation from former NYSUT Vice President Catalina Fortino. Its goals include connecting women from diverse backgrounds and different generations, and creating mentorship opportunities.

"Catalina embodies what a sister

is every single day," said Jolene DiBrango, NYSUT executive vice president, who chairs the committee. "We are blessed to have a little part of her legacy."

The meeting shined a light on the fieldwork members have done to grow NYSUT's women's movement. A year ago, only 12 local women's committee chapters existed; now there are 24 and counting. Members shared tools to create regional empowerment events and learned how to accelerate the movement. They also received a new mentoring toolkit to help nurture the next generation of female union leaders.

"I'm inspired each day, by the NYSUT women I meet, to be a better woman, activist and to never stop fighting for true gender equality," said DiBrango in welcome remarks to attendees. "We're striving to include,

and reach out to as many women as possible — you don't have to be a NYSUT leader to be inclusive and supportive of other women, or to start a local women's committee chapter."

In an institutional bias activity, committee members learned about subtle ways women face gender discrimination in the workplace, and brainstormed strategies to overcome them. These include mothers being overlooked for leadership positions; men interrupting and talking over women in business meetings; and women getting less credit for their accomplishments and more blame for their mistakes.

The meeting included workshops on a range of other issues, from how to form local and regional women's committees, to coalition building with other organizations, to political activism in upcoming elections.



PHOTOS: BECKY MILLER

NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango

Representatives from NYSUT's legal department provided an overview of legal issues impacting women, including the Family and Medical Leave Act and workplace discrimination. Committee members also discussed resolutions for the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly in May.

The NYSUT Women's Committee is a permanent, standing committee with four main goals: encourage more locals to develop in-house women's committees; educate female members about the work of the union; highlight women-specific issues, including inequalities in pay, health care and education; and involve more union women in leadership roles.

Visit [nysut.org/women](https://nysut.org/women) for more information about NYSUT's women's movement.



The 70-member NYSUT Women's Committee collected a truck full of feminine hygiene products as #HappyPeriod ambassadors. The supplies were donated to the Homeless and Travelers Aid Society in Albany. HATAS has been dedicated to combating, reducing and preventing homelessness in the Capital Region since 1927.

# Union fights 'shameful' Rochester layoffs

By Ned Hoskin

nhoskin@nysutmail.org

Despite the impassioned pleas of more than 1,000 Rochester educators, parents and students marching in single-digit temperatures, the city school board voted last month to enact midyear cuts that NYSUT President Andy Pallotta labeled “a disaster” and “a national disgrace.”

Local union leaders had been successful in reducing the projected layoffs from the nearly 300 initially proposed. After hearing testimony from 92 people, all of whom pleaded for a reprieve, the school board still went ahead with 155 layoffs, including 109 teachers and 10 paraprofessionals, effective Jan. 1.

“It’s shameful what this board did tonight,” said Rochester Teachers Association President Adam Urbanski after the Dec. 19 vote.

“There is no reason to have confidence in this board of education or in this superintendent. They had time. Christmas break is coming,” Urbanski added. “We could have worked together to try to work something out.

## Resources for laid-off members

Few events are as devastating as losing a job. NYSUT will waive state-wide union dues for at least two years for laid-off members. That membership ensures eligibility to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits and NYSUT Social Services. It also entitles laid-off members to free legal consultation. Resources are also available from the American Federation of Teachers ([unionplus.org/hardship](http://unionplus.org/hardship)) and the National Education Association ([neamb.com/assistance](http://neamb.com/assistance)).



More than 1,000 activists braved the cold to voice strong opposition to the Rochester board of education's proposed midyear layoffs. Right, RTA President Adam Urbanski. Below, first-year teacher Madeline Grandon, RTA, shares a sentiment felt by many.



PHOTOS: BECKY MILLER

We didn't break off discussions.”

If the board waited, Urbanski said, the state Legislature could have taken action to resolve the budget deficit when it returns in January. At the very least, the school board should have waited until the end of the school year to enact brutal layoffs and reductions in services, he said.

“There was the opportunity to do all that,” Urbanski said, “and to make cuts to this central office, which this superintendent refuses to make — and this board is too scared to stand up to him.”

Pallotta said NYSUT, the RTA and the Rochester Association of Paraprofessionals, led by President Angie Rivera, would participate in a locally driven event in Albany Jan. 14 to highlight the plight of the district.

In his testimony, Pallotta told the board that if the state had met its obligation to provide the \$85 million in Foundation Aid it owes RCSD, this would never have happened.

When the layoffs were proposed in November, RTA and RAP members told the district that cutting teachers

and support staff would disrupt the relationships they've built with their students.

Students were so upset after layoffs were proposed that thousands walked out of schools to protest. “Cut your salary, not our teachers,” read one sign targeting district administrators. “My biggest concern should be grades, not losing my teachers,” read another.

Students rendered heartfelt testimony at the late-December meeting before the cuts were finalized. Said one girl: “You’re saving money, but at what cost? Our education? When I heard the news, I cried my eyes out. Please don’t take my teachers.”

In recent weeks, parents, educators and community members, along with allies across the country, took to wearing red, repeating the “Red for Ed” demonstration of solidarity that has become so common in this era of teacher uprisings.

Rochester has become a national story, with presidential candidates weighing in. The day before the board vote, Sen. Bernie Sanders,



NED HOSKIN

I-Vt., tweeted, “I stand with Rochester students!” On the day of the rally, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and former Vice President Joe Biden tweeted in support, too.

NYSUT and the RTA have tried to help laid-off educators make a smooth transition. NYSUT field and certification experts have provided information and consults. The RTA has hosted job recruiters from districts in Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, Newark, Niagara Falls and more, who conducted interviews with members who received notices.

# Union win for long-term substitutes

By **Jacquelyn Hadam**  
NYSUT Office of General Counsel

**N**YSUT's legal department scored a significant win for members who serve as long-term substitutes — after more than six years and hearings in four different forums.

Amanda DeRosa was laid off by the Minisink Valley Central School District when her position was eliminated. From 2007 through 2011, the Minisink Valley Teachers Association member had worked a total of four years (minus 20 days of unpaid child care leave) in the district — two years as a long-term substitute and two years as an elementary teacher. After her layoff, she was placed on an elementary Preferred Eligible List.

However, when an elementary teaching position became available, the district only granted her credit for the elementary teaching service, which pushed her down the recall list.

NYSUT's Office of General Counsel argued that DeRosa's long-term substitute position should be included in the calculation of "service in the system" for purposes of recall. Then-State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia agreed. She ordered the district to recall DeRosa to an elementary teaching position.

The district unsuccessfully appealed the Commissioner's decision to the NYS Supreme Court and the state Appellate Division, Third Department. In its decision, the Appellate Division noted the Commissioner's ruling "avoids the

negative policy outcome of deterring teachers from accepting long-term substitute work if it falls outside of their preferred tenure area."

The district also sought permission to appeal the decision to the Court of Appeals (the state's highest court), but was unsuccessful.

DeRosa was recalled from the Preferred Eligible List in 2014 and has been working in the district ever since. Consistent with the court orders, DeRosa will be awarded the salary, seniority and benefits she should have received in 2013.

If you are on a Preferred Eligible List and have questions about your recall rights, contact your local union rep who can connect you with the appropriate NYSUT staff.

# Court rejects certification scheme

By **Sylvia Saunders**  
ssaunders@nysutmail.org

**A**fter the union fought back against "fake" certification for some charter school teachers, a mid-level appeals court ruled the State University of New York exceeded its authority when it created an alternative teacher certification program to circumvent the state's rigorous requirements for all other public school teachers.

NYSUT President Andy Pallotta said the court ruling is a big win for the union and the profession. "This is about preserving what it means to be a teacher in New York State," Pallotta said. "This would have created a two-tiered certification system and allowed unqualified educators to practice in some charter schools."

The state Appellate Division, Third Department, unanimously rejected SUNY's argument that Education

Law, which granted it limited authority to enact regulations related to the "governance, structure and operation" of its charter schools, permitted SUNY to regulate teacher certification. SUNY argued that teacher certifications are part of the operations of a school, comparing certification to hiring and supervision of teachers.

The Court disagreed, noting that the customary meaning of "operations" pertains to practical functions, not wholesale public policy determinations like establishing teacher certification requirements.

The court made it clear that it's up to the State Education Commissioner and Board of Regents to set regulations governing the certification of all public school teachers.

The court action stems from a number of separate legal challenges filed by NYSUT, the United Federation of Teachers, the NAACP, the State Education Department, the

Board of Regents and charter school teachers and parents.

The SUNY Committee's regulations would have allowed charter schools to self-certify their teachers with only 160 hours of classroom instruction and 40 hours of practice teaching. The regulations suggested but did not mandate that charter teachers complete a certification exam and have a bachelor's degree. Initially, the SUNY committee proposed as little as 30 hours of required training, but raised the minimum standards after union members protested outside the meeting.

SUNY and Success Academy Charter Schools in New York City have sought permission to appeal to New York's highest court, the Court of Appeals.

— **Michael Del Piano**, NYSUT Office of General Counsel, contributed to this article.

## NYSUT poster celebrates Black History Month



Leticia "Tish" James, the 67th Attorney General of New York State, is featured on the 2020 NYSUT Black History Month poster. In 2018, James became the first African-American, and the first woman, elected to the position and the first African-American woman elected to statewide office in New York.

Previously, James served as the Public Advocate for the City of New York, the second highest elected official, where she became the first woman of color to hold citywide office.

She served as head of the Brooklyn Regional Office of the New York Attorney General's Office, and spent many years as a lawyer in the New York State Legislature. She began her career as a public defender at the Legal Aid Society.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, James is a graduate of Lehman College/CUNY and Howard University School of Law.

For more on the important contributions of African-Americans, or to download a printable copy of the poster, visit [nysut.org/publications](https://nysut.org/publications). Limited print quantities are free for NYSUT members and leaders.

# Poverty infiltrates growing number of families

## Local unions fighting back

By Liza Frenette  
lfrenett@nysutmail.org

**A** North Country teacher recalls how a student was making dinner for herself and her younger brother. “She had poured a pile of dried Parmesan cheese on two paper plates,” said Ogdensburg Education Association member Mary Wills.

Witnessing the effects of hunger and homelessness has emboldened unions to take the lead in the push-back against poverty. Wills, newly retired, directs the union-driven People Project. The organization relieves some of the grit and grip of poverty in St. Lawrence County, where one-third of the population earns less than \$15,000.

The People Project, supported by NYSUT and the American Federation of Teachers, coordinates events with local unions and civic groups for community dinners, food pantries, backpack food projects, food trucks, clothes closets, book giveaways, transportation to school events, and supporting after-school and summer care programs. Recently, it hosted a standing-room only conference on Poverty and Trauma for educators and community leaders to share resources, information and strategies.

In Oneida County, unions are deepening their commitment to help impoverished families.

The number of families in need “has steadily been on the increase in Central New York,” said Rob Wood, president of the Rome Teachers Association. “Like many places across the nation, the city of Rome has lost a large percentage of its mill work and we are devoid of replacement employment opportunities.”



The union holds numerous drives to help out, and many teachers also open their wallets to feed and clothe students.

“However, the volume of need has far outgrown what the local union is capable of providing,” Wood said. “An even greater problem is that many of the families in need are unaware, or unable, to link up with service providers.”

Empowered by resources from the AFT, Wood and Rome TA colleague Joe Eurto secured Innovation Fund grants from the AFT to establish five community schools. Community schools integrate services, coordinate with partners and use existing government funding to meet students’ academic, enrichment, social and health needs. With an additional AFT grant of \$350,000 announced this fall, their goal is to create five more schools in the city and several more in surrounding small towns.

The Rome TA created the non-profit Rome Alliance for Education to oversee the community schools. The organization hires school-based staff to get students and families help with dental care, mental health care, food and housing. The staff

work to connect families with service agencies.

Resources within the community schools include computer labs for families, parenting classes and demonstrations of meal preparation. More than 200 students have taken part in summer programs.

Wood said the union-driven community schools initiative avoids a district-run structure that relies on budget and state aid; and the teacher-driven model provides “immediate dialogue between teachers and service providers.”

“Every day across New York, NYSUT members provide assistance to needy students and families dealing with the effects of generational and situational poverty which, unfortunately, are both on the rise in our state,” said NYSUT Secretary-Treasurer J. Philippe Abraham, the officer in charge of the union’s social justice efforts. “Poverty is a universal social justice issue in every community, and our members utilize information and resources provided by the union to help combat food insecurity and economic inequalities.”

Every region of New York has been affected by a growing chain

of poverty fostered by poor-paying jobs; lack of access to medical care, including mental health; unemployment and underemployment; loss of industry; racial salary inequity; and substance abuse.

The roiling effects of poverty left more than 148,000 New York students homeless last year, according to the State Education Department. That number has increased 70 percent in the last decade.

New York City had 114,085 students — that’s 1 in 10 children and teens — who were homeless in 2018-19. Of those students, more than 34,000 lived in city shelters, and more than twice that number (73,750) lived temporarily with relatives or friends. According to Advocates for Children, fewer than half of New York City students living in shelters graduate from high school.

Follow a map of the state to find more than 2,400 homeless students in Rochester; more than 250 in Binghamton; nearly 450 in Poughkeepsie; and more than 1,800 in Hempstead.

“Wages are not keeping up with the cost of living. Many of our families are working poor,” said Wills.

The drug epidemic has its own dark role. “We have an opioid addiction crisis as well as a large meth problem. These drugs do not discriminate,” Wills said.

In meaningful efforts both large and small, NYSUT local unions do their part to help.

“Social justice lies at the heart of unionism,” Abraham said. “These locals and others across the state continue to demonstrate the power of grassroots action and show how they can be vehicles for change within their communities.”

# Inspiring the next generation of activists

By Kara Smith  
ksmith@nysutmail.org

**A** child shall lead them. So the saying goes. From Buffalo, to Albany, to the Big Apple, NYSUT educators and retirees take those words seriously, helping students learn the skills and information they need to make positive change in their communities and the world.

Oksana Kulynych, a United Federation of Teachers retiree, visits New York City-area high schools to educate students about the Holodomor Famine-Genocide of Ukraine, which took place 1932–33.

“Millions were deliberately starved to death under [Joseph] Stalin’s Communist regime in an effort to terrorize the Ukrainian population into submission,” said Kulynych, noting that until 1991, when the country won its independence, citizens were afraid to discuss the tragedy for fear of persecution. “The Holocaust was taught, but no one knew about what happened in Ukraine.”

Kulynych, former chair of the U.S. Holodomor Education Committee, strives to change that by ensuring that future generations learn about



the Ukrainian genocide. “Education is key to preventing future tragedies like this from happening again,” she said.

Education — for youth and adults — is the catalyst for another human rights effort. A Western New York human rights program launched in 2008 has blossomed into a statewide initiative, thanks to the work of a committed group of Buffalo-area teachers.

The weeklong Academy for Human Rights (previously the Summer Institute for Human Rights and Genocide Studies) held at the Erie 1 BOCES Center in West Seneca, encourages high school students to become civically aware and engaged — locally, nationally and worldwide. Participants hear from human rights activists and historians, and take field

trips to venues such as the Susan B. Anthony House and local refugee centers.

“The program really lights a fire in these students — I have students going into international law because of the course,” said Williamsville Teachers Association member Tim Redmond, social studies teacher and teacher conference program coordinator for the academy. Andrew Beiter, the academy executive director, is a social studies teacher and member of the Springville Faculty Association.

Past speakers include Nobel Laureate and Holocaust survivor and activist Elie Wiesel, and Carl Wilkins, former head of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International.

Sessions on website building, speaking to school administrators and presenting ideas as short elevator pitches are important parts of the program. “We want to give students the skills they need to take action,” said Redmond. The academy also hosts teacher conferences.

A 501(c)(3) charitable education organization, the academy is a local and national award winner and has been recognized by C-SPAN.

In the decade since its founding, sister initiatives modeled after its program have started in Albany, Rochester and Pine Bush.

## FOR MORE INFO



NYSUT is committed to social justice and has several resources available online. Visit [nysut.org/socialjustice](https://nysut.org/socialjustice).

Other resources:

- Learn more about the Ukrainian Holodomor at [holodomorct.org](https://holodomorct.org). Contact Kulynych, [okul17@aol.com](mailto:okul17@aol.com)
- The Academy for Human Rights, [academyforhumanrights.org](https://academyforhumanrights.org)
- Capital Region Institute for Human Rights, [capitalregionhumanrights.org](https://capitalregionhumanrights.org)
- Rochester, [summerinstituteofrochester.org](https://summerinstituteofrochester.org)



PHOTOS: EL-WISE NOISSETTE

## Social justice work IS union work



Members of NYSUT’s Civil and Human Rights Committee had a full agenda for the November meeting. Discussions included the upcoming 2020 U.S. Census, trauma sensitive schools, the union’s student debt relief efforts, immigration, ending child detentions, restorative justice and climate change. Far left, members of the committee. Left, NYSUT Secretary-Treasurer Philippe Abraham, who oversees the union’s social justice agenda, works with Debra Rothar, Half Hollow Hills TA, and Cordelia Anthony, Farmingdale TA.

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# Getting to know ... Virginia Reime

Virginia "Ginger" Reime is a special education aide at Herricks Middle School. She was interviewed by Karen McLean, Herricks Teachers Association Secretary-Treasurer and NYSUT SRP Advisory Committee member.

## What do you do and why do you love it?

I have worked very closely with the special education population for more than 19 years. My job is to make sure each child succeeds academically as well as socially.

Each child has very different and specific needs. I find what works best is to make connections with each child to make them understand that I am here to help them in every way. I love what I do, and that's why I am so successful with each student. I can brighten a child's day with just a smile. Sometimes that is all they need — someone that is there to listen to them and to care.

I learn every day from my students.

They have taught me so much: How to be kind, how to have patience, to understand that not everyone learns at the same rate and how everyone can reach for the stars.

## How did you get involved with the union?

From my first day the union has been there for me, every step of the way. My union encouraged me to have a voice and never give up.

I currently hold the position of Vice President/SRP. I fought very hard to get a seat on the Executive Board. Some members were concerned because I am an aide. But after holding the position for an entire year, I



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was voted back in the following year. Members came to realize I represent everyone.

I have worked tirelessly to make sure everyone's needs are met and heard. Together we are strong.

## Tell me, how do you make a difference?

I make a difference by listening and caring. My members always know I am there to listen and have their

backs. I am approachable and it doesn't matter if it is late at night or on the weekend, I am there to listen and help with every situation.

## What do you do in your spare time?

I am involved in the not-for-profit Herricks Community Fund. I attend monthly meetings, and help arrange the dinners and carnivals. I was also involved with the adult community theatre group, the Community Players, volunteering backstage.

I also enjoy being with my family. I am married for more than 35 years and have three daughters. The oldest is married, and the middle daughter will be getting married this year. Arranging engagement parties, bridal showers, and weddings has become my passion. I can't wait for my youngest daughter! According to my family and friends, I have a gift of making everything look beautiful with great detail.

# 2019 NYS SRP Recognition Day



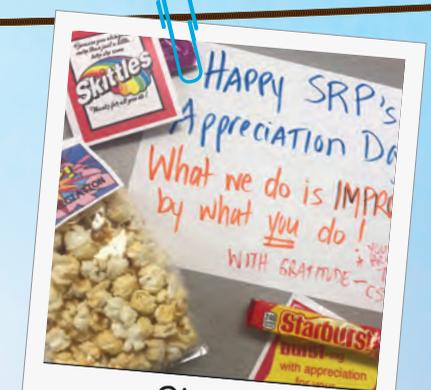
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To see more images from the 2019 New York State SRP Recognition Day, visit [twitter.com/nysut/moments](https://twitter.com/nysut/moments).

## Congrats to the state's 97 new NBCTs

NYSUT applauds New York's Class of 2019 National Board Certified Teachers, with 97 educators recently notified they have achieved the prestigious credential. In addition, 60 teachers successfully renewed their certification.

With a total of 2,115 NBCTs, New York leads the northeast. Created by teachers for teachers, National Board Certification is the profession's mark of accomplished teaching. In order to become board certified, teachers complete a performance-based, peer-reviewed process, demonstrating their proven impact on student learning and achievement. It generally takes hundreds of hours to complete the process in up to three years.

New York's 97 new NBCTs are among this year's crop of 3,831 new NBCTs across the nation.

NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango said the union strongly supports national board candidates by offering informational programs, support programs, writing retreats and professional development through its Education & Learning Trust and teacher centers.

DiBrango urged new candidates to apply for the state's Albert Shanker grants that cover application costs for National Board Certification, plus funding for districts for supportive services, such as hiring a substitute to cover classes during release time. The deadline to apply for the Shanker grants is Feb. 28.

Working with NYSUT, nearly 300 local unions have negotiated incentives recognizing National Board Certification or providing financial support for candidates. Incentives include stipends for achievement, salary step increases and release time. In addition, New York State Education Department regulations allow the board certification process to count toward Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) requirements for up to two five-year cycles.

A complete list of NBCTs will run in the next issue of *NYSUT United*. For more information on the process and districts that offer incentives, go to [nbcny.org](http://nbcny.org).

# NYSUT surveys members on state graduation requirements

By Sylvia Saunders  
ssaunder@nysutmail.org

**A**s state policy-makers launch a two-year exploration into changing graduation requirements, NYSUT is polling members both formally and informally to see what they think about Regents exams and possible alternatives.

"Our focus has been and will always be to ensure your voice is heard," NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango told members of the union's Policy Council, subject area committees and BOCES Leadership Council during December meetings. "To help guide NYSUT's advocacy, we want to have your feedback. You are our curriculum leaders — our eyes and ears in the field."

DiBrango said NYSUT's Polling Center surveyed more than 1,000 members by phone to see what they think about the state's graduation requirements. The current requirements for a New York State diploma include, at a minimum, successful completion of 22 units of credit and passing four Regents exams (English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies) plus an approved graduation pathway assessment.

DiBrango gave committee members a quick overview of polling responses and then sought their feedback. The phone survey identified several key issues:

- The majority of members, or about



Mary Tomczak of Erie 1 Professional Education Association talks about how her BOCES has had great success with its "Twilight" program that offers early evening classes to students in danger of dropping out.

ANDREW WATSON

82 percent, believe there should be greater flexibility for students to meet graduation requirements.

- More than two-thirds think all students should continue to be provided with the opportunity to take Regents exams, even if students are not required to pass Regents exams to graduate.

- More than half said there should be a statewide test like a Regents exam to determine proficiency in a specific subject.

- Respondents were split when asked if the current number of required Regents exams is on target. Forty-nine percent said it's the right number; 38 percent said there are too many; and 8 percent weren't sure.

- In addition to the Regents exam option, 90 percent said they would support an alternative to the Regents exam for students to meet graduation requirements.

- In answer to an open-ended question about what kind of alternatives

they would like to see offered, respondents suggested: portfolios, capstone and project-based assessments; local assessments; vocational and technical exams; and alternative exams for students with disabilities. Some said passing courses and attaining the credits should be sufficient; others called for a single statewide proficiency test.

In discussion with NYSUT Policy Council and subject area committee members, several noted that the current battery of tests can be frustrating for English language learners and students with special needs, especially those at a reading level far below the test. Others said school counselors are carrying such heavy caseloads that it's difficult for them to provide students the guidance and support they need to navigate the state's complex system of graduation options and take advantage of the current flexibility.

DiBrango urged committee members to take part in upcoming Regents forums to be held January through March.

"It's important for the Regents to hear about all the complexities you are talking about," she said. "They need to understand there cannot be a one-size-fits-all system."

# Summit tackles teacher shortage, diversity

By **Sylvia Saunders**  
ssaunder@nysutmail.org

**W**ith alarming figures showing the teacher shortage is getting worse, participants at NYSUT's Take a Look at Teaching summit on Long Island explored ways to open doors — and hearts — to attract more people to the teaching profession.

In the seventh in a series of statewide summits, NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango noted that the U.S. Department of Education recently identified 17 teacher shortage areas throughout New York, up from only two areas a decade ago.

"These are not just the predictable core subject areas like math, science, ELA and social studies," DiBrango said. "Many of these are areas that support our most vulnerable population of students with very specialized needs."

At the same time, enrollment in New York's teacher education programs has declined by 53 percent in the last decade — and an estimated one-third of current teachers could retire in the next five years.

NYSUT's initiative also focuses on the need for a more diverse education workforce. While 43 percent of the state's student population is Hispanic/Latinx or African-American, only 16 percent of the teacher workforce is.

DiBrango urged participants to brainstorm ways to improve the experiences of children while they are in school so they will be attracted to the profession as adults.

"We have to ensure an educational experience for children that lifts them up and doesn't mislabel them," DiBrango said. "After all, if you have a negative experience in school, why would you want to come back and make a career in education?"

The Riverhead gathering in

November included more than 150 students, teachers, administrators, college faculty, community representatives and State Education Department leaders, including Regent Roger Tilles.

SED Assistant Commissioner Anael Alston thanked NYSUT "for having the gumption" to take on the diversity issue.

"The funnel is broken when you talk about diversity in teaching," Alston said. "There are 200 school districts that don't have a single person of color in the teaching ranks."

Alston, who heads the state's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative, highlighted the Teacher Opportunity Corps program on 16 college campuses. In addition to creatively recruiting diverse candidates, the program offers a 10-month intensive experience in area school districts and ongoing support because "their professor goes with them," he said.

With \$3 million in current funding,

there are about 500 candidates in the pipeline, Alston said, but the state could do much more with additional funding. NYSUT has called for a \$10 million investment in the proven program.

Alston noted some policymakers are comfortable just blaming outside factors like poverty or disparities in educational opportunities. "We can't be courageous and comfortable at the same time," he said.

For the majority of the summit, participants worked in small groups to focus on solutions. In a group share, speakers called for recruitment efforts to start much earlier.

Roberta MacGray, a family and consumer science teacher in Riverhead, suggested offering clubs as early as fourth grade and credit-bearing high school courses to give older students some classroom experience that could spark their interest. Others called for more scholarship programs and a more supportive induction process.

Riverhead alum Griselda Sagastume, an aspiring teacher attending St. Joseph's College, made it clear there's no greater recruiter than teachers themselves.

"I look out at this audience and see so many of my former teachers," Sagastume said. "Thank you for inspiring me," she said. "Because of you, I'm standing here today."

Riverhead Central Faculty Association President Gregory Wallace and SUNY Old Westbury professor Diana Sukhram listen to a student speaking during small group conversations about ways to recruit and retain future teachers.

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# Nobel laureate waves the union flag

By Ned Hoskin

nhoskin@nysutmail.org

**M**. Stanley Whittingham wasn't totally surprised when he got the call from Stockholm. Two members of the Nobel Prize committee called him at a meeting in Germany and told him, "You've got it!" That's how it happens.

"What surprised me though, and I grumbled to the chancellor of SUNY about it, was when I learned that SUNY has had 15 Nobel prizes," he said. "They've had every single one of the prizes at some stage, and I don't think anybody knew of that. They don't market that."

This honor is indicative of the kind of people we have in our public higher education system, he said, and "you have to wave the flag!"

Since the distinguished professor of chemistry and materials science at Binghamton University and now Nobel laureate mentioned it, however, that tidbit has appeared on the SUNY website.

A warm and witty Englishman, the longtime member of United University Professions and NYSUT went to Stockholm in December to accept his award and enjoy the



Nobel laureate M. Stanley Whittingham, right, is a professor of chemistry and materials science at SUNY Binghamton.

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pageantry and ceremonies during Nobel Week.

He and two others share the 2019 prize in chemistry for pioneering research leading to the development of the lithium-ion battery. His fellow laureates are John B. Goodenough of the University of Texas and Akira Yoshino of Meijo University in Japan.

His wife, Georgina, a professor of Spanish and Latin American literature at SUNY Oswego, accompanied Whittingham on the trip.

They have been union members since they came to SUNY and, in fact, have been members of the UUP executive committees at their respective chapters. The union represents academic and professional faculty at state-operated campuses.

UUP President Fred Kowal described Whittingham as a "ground-breaking chemist and a strong unionist who understands and reflects the importance of being a union member in word and deed."

Whittingham went to Oxford University for his undergraduate and graduate education, gaining invaluable research experience on the way to his Ph.D. He continued as a post-doctoral fellow at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif.

The 1970s was an exciting time

to do industrial research and he was hired at Exxon, where he spent 16 years and came up with the idea for lithium-ion batteries. Eventually appointed division director of chemical engineering, he found he didn't like management as much as the work and decided to return to academia. "There were two reasons I moved back into academia — it was partly because you have more control over your life, but also because you get new blood in every year, a new group of students. It keeps you young."

With his record and reputation, in 1988, he could have gone almost anywhere. "I chose Binghamton because I could interact across all of the departments, and that's not the case at most universities," he said.

Upon arrival, he immediately joined the union; he also learned he was the director of a new Institute for Materials Research. In 1993, he was named vice president for research, a management position.

"After five years I came back to the faculty and got more involved in the union. I was on the executive committee for 10 years. When they gave me the 10-year pin I said, 'OK, it's time I stepped down.' Most of us on the board were in our 60s. We needed to get some younger folks involved."

So then, he helped develop the next generation of local leaders. His advice to young UUP members is pretty basic.

"Work together. As a group you are much more effective than you are fighting one-on-one. The union reps on each campus are there to help you. They can talk to you off record, rather than talking to the chair of your department or your manager. Use those folks to help you."

Whittingham has always embraced a broad approach to education. In England, he studied math, chemistry and physics, but also Latin and other languages. He fears foreign languages are getting left behind.

"My wife teaches languages and I've made the point that SUNY has got to keep teaching languages — not cut them out — so we can understand the cultures of other countries. Most of the wars we get into are because we don't understand other cultures and the way other people think," he said.

And, "it will keep my wife happy, as well."

## Laureate thanks his teacher

Gregg L. Semenza of Johns Hopkins shared the 2019 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for his work on how cells respond to low oxygen levels. But the Sleepy Hollow High grad did not forget from whence he came: "I had this fantastic biology teacher in high school, Rose Nelson, who was an unbelievably talented, beautiful person who was able to transmit the beauty of science and the thrill of scientific discovery," Semenza told *LoHud.com*. The late, longtime member of the Teachers Association of the Tarrytowns "had a Ph.D. and had worked at Woods Hole, so she knew what research was, and that was my inspiration."

NED HOSKIN

Whittingham is a proud union advocate.

# Crisis response teams a model for locals statewide



## CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

**By Matt Smith**  
msmith@nysutmail.org

**W**hen Indian River Central Schools teacher Amanda Burnard was diagnosed with breast cancer in fall 2018, she drew strength from the love and support of her family and friends while being guided through extensive treatment from her trusted team of doctors.

But Burnard also had something extra in her corner — her union — which provided not only critical assistance as she navigated the uncertainty of her harrowing experience, but also some very badly needed peace of mind.

“I was processing a lot of information and knew my treatment was

going to be hard on my body,” said Burnard, who teaches first grade. “I use a lot of energy teaching and anything less would be a disservice to my students. I knew I intended to take time off while undergoing my chemo treatments. I looked into how it works, and was overwhelmed.”

That’s when she reached out to NYSUT’s Watertown Regional Office, where labor relations specialists Carmine Inserra and Mike Cocco helped her maneuver through the intricacies of sick leave and put her in touch with Indian River Education Association Co-President Cheryl Smith. The union ensured Burnard had as much paid sick time as possible, and set up fundraisers to help cover her travel expenses associated with treatment.

“The support I received was

amazing,” said Burnard. “Being able to take the time off and come back to my position made it one less thing to worry about. I am so lucky and appreciative.”

But something else happened, too, something Burnard never imagined: She unknowingly became the inspiration for the creation of local union crisis response teams across Northern New York.

### **Organization skills kick in**

“As I processed the shock and despair of Amanda’s diagnosis, it occurred to me that this would not be the last friend or member who would be faced with a crisis,” said Cocco.

Cocco and Inserra kicked around ideas and concluded that rather than “putting fires out one at a time,” there was a need to be proactive. So,

they organized a regional meeting at which they asked every Watertown-area local to establish a crisis response team of their own.

More than 60 members attended and so, too, did Ani Shahinian from NYSUT Social Services, among others.

“The response was overwhelming,” said Cocco, adding multiple representatives from 24 of NYSUT’s 26 area locals attended. The idea behind the teams, he said, is to have in place resources in which contacts, information and services could be shared that would help members in a time of crisis.

### **A cultural change**

Pat Sheehan, president of the Carthage Teachers Association, said the establishment of a crisis response

## [ FIGHTING FOR YOU ]



Carthage TA members Danielle Carr, Pat Sheehan and Denise Rivers discuss the Crisis Response Team program at Carthage CS.

ANDREW WATSON

team has “changed the culture” in her local.

“The response has been overwhelming, and it becomes contagious,” Sheehan said. “People want to help each other. And it is comforting to know that if someone does have a problem, there are people in our own unit that can help.”

The 334-member CTA has at least three crisis team members in each of the district’s five buildings, ready to guide members in crisis by providing information on where to receive services ranging from medical, to mental health, to legal and financial. The CTA also has discovered that, in establishing its team, the definition of “crisis,” extends beyond the traditional medical emergency or health scare. Team members have provided colleagues with information on where to turn to in matters of divorce. They have helped each other deal with the passing of a student in the district, guided co-workers on how to set up health care proxies, helped families pay for the costs of travel and lodging during medical care and even advised young members on establishing a 403(b).

“We are building a cohort of self-care for our members,” said Danielle Carr, the CTA’s recording secretary and a seventh-grade social studies teacher. “We are always talking about ‘the children first.’ And, they are first. But in order to put them first, we have to be healthy in mind, body and soul.

When you are the one in crisis, you don’t necessarily have the energy to do the things that the team can do. Now, the member in crisis just has to focus their energies on their immediate family or their immediate selves.”

CTA member Denise Rivers, a school social worker and counselor, said the crisis team also helps ensure students’ needs continue to be met.

“If we are not well mentally, then we are going to bring that to our day working with our kids,” said Rivers. “We have a tremendous amount of services in this area. But there is a lack of knowledge about their existence. We are now in a position to take a look at what services there are in our community for our members. And, knowing we can talk amongst each other and gain that information of where we can go is enough to make you feel just a little bit better and allow you to perform better.”

### Many services available

Carr, who serves as the CTA’s regional representative, said what’s been particularly enlightening is the extent of crisis services available to NYSUT members, especially through Shahinian.

“There’s a Library of Congress in her brain. She is just phenomenal. If you’re in Buffalo, or Albany or Carthage, Ani can get you a resource. She is knowledgeable statewide, and if she doesn’t have the information right there, she will find the information for you and get back to you

almost immediately.”

Meanwhile, Sheehan said the CTA crisis team has also helped getting new members involved in their union.

“Some of the people on our team, this is their first so-called union commitment that they have made. This grabbed and inspired people, and it brought them on board. It’s not something that

is threatening. It draws people in because it is about people. It’s about helping others.”

Burnard — who is cancer free but still faces two surgeries — said despite never intending to be the inspiration for Watertown’s crisis response network, she was overwhelmed to learn of their existence.

“My heart was filled with love, appreciation and pride,” she said. “This is going to help a countless amount of people.”

## START YOUR OWN CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM



Interested in establishing a crisis response team in your local? Here’s the approach used in the Watertown region:

- **Gauge the interest.** Local presidents were asked if there was interest in a crisis response team to help friends and colleagues facing tragedy.
- **Establish a team.** This does not mean recreating the wheel. Locals may be able to start by adding to their existing structure. Solicit volunteers. Be sure to talk to members who faced a crisis in the past. They have a unique perspective to offer.
- **Come up with a crisis response plan.** The plan should identify necessary resources in terms of contacts and materials. Who will be the contact for each member of the bargaining unit?
- **Tap into the expertise of professionals.** Contact your NYSUT LRS, NYSUT Social Services (call 800-342-9810, ext. 6206 or email [socsvcs@nysutmail.org](mailto:socsvcs@nysutmail.org)), your health insurance provider’s representative, etc., for assistance.
- **Compile your resources.** Create a “binder” ready to be distributed face to face, emailed, or through an accessible online database.

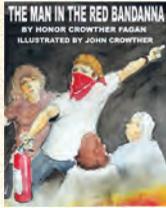
The Watertown Regional Office distributed the following resources to get local unions started:

- The local union contract. Attention should be paid to sick leave, family sick leave and the sick leave bank (if applicable).
- Family Medical Leave Act fact sheet.
- The State Teachers’ Retirement System *Guide for Disability Retirement Decisions*.
- The State Employees’ Retirement System *Applying for Disability Retirement* publication.
- The American Cancer Society *Help for Patients, Survivors, and Caregivers* guide.
- Health insurance third party administrator information.

Each team with its unique makeup of members will have different ideas on what to add. It’s a living list of resources and will surely be added to as unforeseen crises unfold.

### The Man in the Red Bandana

Written by Honor Crowther Fagan  
Illustrated by John Crowther



#### Recommended

**by:** Shelley Bartolotti, reading specialist, Myles Elementary School, New Hartford Teachers Association

**Suitable for:** grades K-6

**Why I chose it:** This book gently explains 9/11 to elementary students with accuracy and descriptions of the selfless acts of bravery amidst tragedy. It focuses on 24-year-old Welles Crowther, who sacrificed his life by saving others in the World Trade Center. Students will be spellbound by Crowther's persistence and generosity. This book teaches that in times of fear and chaos, you should "look for helpers" as Mr. Rogers would say.

**What I liked best:** I loved the symbolism of the red bandana in this children's book and how the author, (Welles' sister), depicted the significance of it. After reading this book, my students had such admiration for Welles and his heroic deed. The red bandana has become a symbol of inspiration to them.

**How teachers can use the book:** Teachers can use this book to teach about the 9/11 attacks. Teachers can have students do a character analysis of Crowther's persistence, generosity, courage, nobleness, selflessness and calm demeanor – and how these traits helped him save lives. Teachers can have students reflect and think of a time that they have helped others in need. Also, teachers could have each student bring something to school that symbolizes importance in their own lives.

"Check it Out" features books recommended to teachers and parents by school librarians and other educators. Have a recommendation? Send suggestions, along with your name and local union, to [lfrenett@nysutmail.org](mailto:lfrenett@nysutmail.org).

# Take another look at history

## 1619 Project explores U.S. history from African-American perspective

**By Kara E. Smith**  
[ksmith@nysutmail.org](mailto:ksmith@nysutmail.org)

**F**or most African-American students, classroom lessons about their heritage follow a well-worn path: slavery, freedom, the civil rights movement, the election of a black President, happily ever after.

But the history of African-Americans in the United States is much more complex. The nuances skimmed over in most classes downplay a history layered with pain, injustice, and even to the present day, inequality.



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Bellport TA President Wayne White, center, is using the 1619 Project in his AP U.S. History classes.

Wayne White, an AP U.S. History teacher at Bellport High School on Long Island, is helping his students learn the "rest of the story" by using the 1619 Project in his classes. The curriculum explores U.S. history from the perspective of African-Americans.

Begun as a series of essays, images, stories and poems in a special

issue of *The New York Times Magazine* to mark the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved Africans' arrival in Jamestown, Virginia, the project has since blossomed into a series of

curriculums, guides and activities for teachers and students developed in collaboration with the Pulitzer Center.

A major change is that 1619, the year the first enslaved Africans were brought to America, is viewed as the start of our nation's history, rather than 1776.

"It shows how in many ways our history was whitewashed," said White, president of the Bellport Teachers Association. "Telling the narrative from the point of view

of African-Americans provides a continuity check, showing that while much has changed, many issues of race in our country remain the same."

It's a history rich with traditions, and the contributions of individuals who left marks far beyond the labor they were forced to contribute. The

project shares the stories of men and women like Crispus Attucks, the first individual to die in the Revolutionary War; Hiram Revels, the first black man elected to the U.S. Senate in the reconstruction period following the Civil War; and Phillis Wheatley, a 20-year-old enslaved Boston woman who was the first African-American to



Pulitzer Center

publish a book of poetry.

The lesson plans use the *NYT Magazine* writings to explore the lasting connections between slavery and segregation with aspects of modern American society,

from Atlanta traffic jams resulting from racially segregated neighborhoods, to the Tuskegee Study which denied medical treatment to hundreds of black men suffering from syphilis, and left many African-Americans wary of the medical establishment.

Teaching the curriculum has been eye opening for some students who "always assumed that if you work hard, you could succeed," said White, a NYSUT Board member. Many never considered that African-Americans faced legal barriers to success such as red-lining, which limited their ability to secure mortgages or purchase homes and property in certain neighborhoods; or violent persecution when they did succeed, like the 1921 Tulsa race riots when mobs of white racists physically attacked and destroyed the property and businesses of wealthy black residents in what was then called "Black Wall Street."

White considers the curriculum important because for too long, historians have glossed over the horrific impact of slavery on those enslaved and their descendants. "Half of black families during that time period were physically separated — how do you separate a child from a mother?" said White. "Learning what really happened and how it affects people can help change how we look at race. Awareness is the first step to destroying racism."

Visit [pulitzercenter.org/1619](http://pulitzercenter.org/1619) for free 1619 Project curriculum guides and student activities.

# Get a jump on it: Sparking student joy with movement

By Liza Frenette  
lfrenett@nysutmail.org

**W**hether your students are visual, auditory, kinesthetic or more traditional learners, they can benefit from movement in the classroom, even during lessons.

Shelby Hosmer, a health and physical education teacher with the Clifton Fine Teachers Association, promotes simple energizers to help students improve retention and release stress. Making movement matter can begin with simple changes.

This year, Hosmer said, her school started an end of the day study hall, where students have the option of going to physical education.

Students who are active tend to see a reduction in depression and anxiety, have improved sleep, and are able to retain more information, Hosmer noted. Their attention span will be heightened and their self esteem will increase.

Hosmer presented her session on kinesthetics during a Poverty and Trauma workshop held in Canton. Conditions of



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From left, Sarah Belile, Morristown Teachers Association, and Meagan Dupuis-Fregoe, Gouverneur TA practice playing "rock-paper-scissors" as a way to incorporate math with movement in the classroom.

poverty lead many students to have limited food choices and reduced access to fresh, healthy foods.

Hosmer is concerned about obesity among the children she teaches. Helping students discover the joy of movement can include creating a walking trail on school grounds, or getting grant money to purchase equipment for students to use. Being outdoors connects physical health with the restorative powers of nature.

Using a U.S. Department of Education grant, Hosmer was able to purchase bikes, snowshoes, cross country skis and geocaching equipment. Subsequent, smaller grants have allowed for maintenance and replenishment. On weekends, fellow Clifton Fine TA member Trent Curry volunteers to teach middle and high school students how to bike.

*Continued on page 33 ...*

**MY SUBJECT IS MATH,  
AND MY BACK PAIN  
IS ANCIENT HISTORY.**

*"A year ago I couldn't think about standing in front of my classroom. Now after minimally invasive back surgery, my pain is gone and I'm introducing algebra to my eighth-graders, thanks to NSPC."*



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# RA delegates to elect officers, Board

In addition to debating resolutions that will set the union's course for the next year, delegates to the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly will elect the officers and members of the NYSUT Board of Directors to three-year terms.

This year's annual policymaking convention takes place May 1-2 at the Nelson A. Rockefeller

Empire State Plaza and Capital Center in Albany. The convention is preceded by the Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference.

"The annual convention is an exciting time for us here at NYSUT," said President Andy Pallotta. "Having



members and leaders from across the state come together in solidarity shows the strength and power of our union. That same power enables us to fight for our members — and for those in our communities who may not have a voice."

RA delegates will also be charged with electing state delegates and alternate state delegates to the American Federation of Teachers.

Local leaders should be sure to visit [nysut.org/ra](http://nysut.org/ra) for a list of important upcoming RA deadlines, including deadlines for forming a council of locals, and submitting resolutions and amendments to the NYSUT Constitution and Bylaws.

## [ 2020 NYSUT RA NOMINATION, CAMPAIGN & ELECTION PROCEDURES ]

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT AN ELECTION FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED AT 5 P.M. ON FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2020 DURING THE 2020 NYSUT REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT THE NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER EMPIRE STATE PLAZA, ALBANY, N.Y. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BELOW.**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN THAT NOMINATING PETITIONS FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH 5 P.M. FRIDAY, FEB. 7, 2020 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CRITERIA AND PROCESSES OUTLINED BELOW.**

### I. DESCRIPTION OF POSITIONS

#### **A. NYSUT Officers**

President  
Executive Vice President  
Second Vice President  
Secretary-Treasurer

#### **B. AFT State Federation Delegates and AFT Alternate State Delegates**

Total: Up to four (4) delegates and four (4) alternates

The number of AFT State delegates to which NYSUT is entitled has not yet been determined by the AFT. If NYSUT's allocation is fewer than four (4) delegates, the delegates will be determined by highest ranking based on votes received.

#### **C. NYSUT At-Large Directors**

One At-Large Director from each established cluster of two or more geographic Election Districts.

Five At-Large Directors from the statewide SRP constituency.

One At-Large Director from the statewide

health care constituency.

One At-Large Director from the statewide community college constituency.

One At-Large Director from the statewide private higher education constituency.

Two At-Large Directors from the statewide public higher education constituency.

One At-Large Director from the statewide retiree constituency.

#### **D. NYSUT Election District Directors**

One director from each geographically established Election District.

### II. TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office for the NYSUT Officers, AFT state delegates, AFT alternate state delegates, At-Large Directors and Election District Directors shall be three (3) years. That three (3) year term shall commence upon the conclusion of the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly and shall end with the conclusion of the 2023 NYSUT Representative Assembly.

### III. NOMINATION & ELECTION PROCEDURES

#### **A. General candidate qualifications & nomination procedures for all offices**

##### **1. Candidate qualifications**

A candidate is any member in good standing who meets the candidate eligibility criteria, the nomination requirements for the position, and fulfills the requirements listed below.

##### **2. Availability of Nominating Petitions**

Nominating Petitions may be obtained from the Elections Committee commencing Jan. 2, 2020 by contacting the NYSUT Elections Committee at NYSUT Headquarters either in writing (800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455); by telephone (800-342-9810, ext. 6662);

or by email ([elections@nysutmail.org](mailto:elections@nysutmail.org)).

#### **3. Acceptance of candidacy/candidate name verification**

**Acceptance of Nomination:** In order to qualify as a candidate for any position the candidate must signify his/her acceptance of the nomination by signing the Acceptance of Candidacy portion of the Nominating Petition. Candidates may withdraw their acceptance of candidacy at any time.

**Name Verification:** Each candidate is also requested to indicate on the Nominating Petition the manner in which his/her name should be printed on the election ballot.

**Contact Information:** All candidates are requested to provide on the Nominating Petition both their personal (i.e. non-employer) email address (if available) and cell telephone number (or home telephone number, if there is no cell telephone) to enable the NYSUT Elections Committee to readily contact them.

#### **4. Candidates' ability to verify Election Committee's receipt of Nominating Petition**

The Elections Committee will notify nominees either by email (if available), or by telephone, that their petition has been received and validated by the Committee. However, it is the responsibility of nominees to confirm the Election Committee's receipt of their Nominating Petition and nominees may do so by contacting the NYSUT Elections Committee at NYSUT Headquarters either in writing (800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455); by telephone (800-342-9810, ext. 6662); or by email ([elections@nysutmail.org](mailto:elections@nysutmail.org)).

#### **5. Multiple candidacies**

In addition to serving as an elected NEA State Delegate, no member may

be a nominee for more than one elected NYSUT position, except candidates for AFT State Delegate and AFT Alternate State Delegate may be a candidate for one additional elected NYSUT position.

#### **B. Candidate qualification, nomination & election procedure for each office**

##### **1. NYSUT Officer candidates**

###### **a. Eligibility Requirements for nomination and candidacy**

Any member in good standing with NYSUT, at the time of nominations, may nominate a candidate to be a NYSUT officer. Membership in NYSUT for at least two (2) years prior to the Feb. 7, 2020 deadline for the submission of nominations is a condition for being nominated as a NYSUT officer (NYSUT Constitution Art. VII §2).

###### **b. Nominating Petition requirements**

Nominating Petitions, containing signatures of at least 50 in-service or retiree NYSUT members in good standing, must be received by the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m., Feb. 7, 2020.

###### **c. Electors**

All credentialed in-service and retiree delegates to the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly shall be eligible to vote for NYSUT officers.<sup>1</sup>

###### **d. Tabulation**

NYSUT officers shall be elected by a weighted roll call vote (NYSUT Constitution Article VII §7; Article VIII

<sup>1</sup>"In-service delegates" are delegates who were nominated by, and elected by the in-service NYSUT members of a NYSUT local. "Retiree delegates" are delegates who were nominated, elected by and from the NYSUT Retiree Councils (NYSUT Bylaw C (2)(c)).

§1(c-d); NYSUT Bylaw C (1)(b-c)). The candidate with the majority of the total votes cast for each NYSUT office shall be elected to that office.

Any local wishing to avail itself of the right to cast votes in the NYSUT officer election by secret ballot (NYSUT Constitution Art. VIII §1(d)) must provide to the NYSUT Elections Committee a formal request signed by two officers of the local association, along with written verification (e.g. minutes of the local's governing board) that the local's governing body has directed its delegates to vote by secret ballot. In order to provide the NYSUT Elections Committee adequate advance time to prepare the necessary secret ballot, both the request for the secret ballot vote and the written verification must be provided to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m., March 20, 2020.

## 2. AFT State Delegate and AFT State Alternate Delegate candidates

### a. Eligibility requirements for nomination and candidacy

Any in-service member of both NYSUT and of AFT in good standing, at the time of nomination, shall be eligible to be a candidate for AFT State Delegate or AFT Alternate State Delegate. Any in-service member in good standing of both NYSUT and of the AFT may nominate a candidate to be either an AFT State Delegate or an AFT Alternate State Delegate.

### b. Nominating Petition requirements

Nominating Petitions, containing signatures of at least 50 NYSUT/AFT in-service members in good standing, must be submitted to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m., Feb. 7, 2020.

### c. Electors

All credentialed in-service and retiree delegates to the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly shall be eligible to vote for AFT State Delegates and AFT Alternate State Delegates.

### d. Tabulation

AFT State Delegates and Alternate State Delegates shall be elected by a weighted roll call vote of all ballots cast by in-service and retiree delegates to the 2020 NYSUT Representative Assembly. The four (4) candidates with the highest vote total for State Delegate and for Alternate State Delegate shall be elected AFT State Delegate and AFT Alternate State Delegate, respectively.

## 3. NYSUT At-Large Director candidates

### a. Eligibility requirements for nomination and candidacy

Any member in good standing with NYSUT, at the time of nomination, may

nominate a candidate to serve as an At-Large Director.

To be a candidate to serve as an At-Large Director from a NYSUT clustered Election District, the candidate must be a member of a local which is situated within the clustered Election District. To be a candidate to serve as an At-Large Director for a statewide constituency group, the candidate must be a member of the constituency group.

### b. Nominating Petition requirements

A Nominating Petition, containing signatures of at least eight (8) in-service or retiree NYSUT members in good standing, must be submitted to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m., Feb. 7, 2020.

### c. Electors

All credentialed in-service and retiree delegates shall be eligible to cast votes for all of the At-Large Director positions.

### d. Tabulation

At-Large Directors shall be elected by a weighted roll call vote of all ballots cast (NYSUT Constitution Article VIII §1(c-d), Article IX §4(c) and NYSUT Bylaw C (1)(b)). The candidate with the majority of the total votes cast for each of the clustered Election Districts and for the statewide constituency At-Large Election Districts shall be elected NYSUT At-Large Director.

## 4. NYSUT geographic Election District Director candidates

### a. Eligibility requirements for nomination and candidacy

Any in-service member in good standing with NYSUT at the time of nomination may nominate a candidate to serve as a Director from the NYSUT Election Districts encompassing the member's local. Any NYSUT member in good standing of a NYSUT local may be a candidate for Director from the NYSUT Election District encompassing the member's local.

Any retiree member in good standing with NYSUT at the time of nomination may nominate a candidate to serve as a Director from a NYSUT Retiree Election District encompassing the retiree member's retiree council. Any NYSUT retiree member in good standing may be a candidate for Director from the NYSUT Retiree Election District encompassing the member's retiree council.

### b. Nominating Petition requirements

A Nominating Petition, signed by at least two (2) in-service NYSUT members in good standing from NYSUT locals which are situated within the Election District which the candidate seeks to represent, must be submitted to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5

p.m., Feb. 7, 2020.

A Nominating Petition, signed by at least two (2) retiree NYSUT members in good standing from NYSUT retiree councils which are situated within the NYSUT Retiree Election District which the candidate seeks to represent, must be submitted to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m., Feb. 7, 2020.

### c. Electors

All credentialed delegates representing in-service NYSUT members from a NYSUT local who is in good standing with NYSUT, shall be eligible to cast votes in the election of the Election District Director for the Election District where the delegate's local is situated.

All credentialed retiree delegates representing NYSUT retiree members from a NYSUT retiree council shall be eligible to cast votes in the election of the NYSUT Retiree Election District Director for the Retiree Election District where the delegate's retiree council is situated.

### d. Tabulation

Directors shall be elected by a weighted roll call vote of the ballots cast by the delegates comprising the applicable constituency (NYSUT Constitution Article VIII §1(c-d), Article IX §4(a) and NYSUT Bylaw C (1)(b)). The candidate with the majority of the total votes cast in each Election District shall be elected NYSUT Director from the Election District and the NYSUT Retiree Election District Director.

## IV. PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION CAMPAIGN & ELECTION PROCEDURES

This Notice of Nomination and Election and Campaign & Election Procedures will appear in the January/February 2020 issue of *NYSUT United*.

A reminder of the January/February 2020 *NYSUT United* publication of Notice of Nomination and Election and Campaign & Election Procedures shall also be published in the January issues of the *NYSUT Leader Briefing*.

## V. CANDIDATES ACCESSING MAILING LABELS AND THE SUBMISSION OF CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS FOR THE "ELECTION ISSUE" OF NYSUT UNITED

Any candidate who completes and submits a valid Nominating Petition to the NYSUT Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020 shall be eligible: (a) to access and affix the mailing labels of eligible electors for campaign purposes at the NYSUT regional office designated by the candidate on the Nominating Petition, and/or (b) to promote his/her can-

didacy by submitting a campaign statement for publication in the March/April 2020 *NYSUT United* "Election Issue."

### A. Elector Mailing Labels

Candidates are eligible to access mailing labels of the applicable delegate constituency (electors) upon so indicating on the Nominating Petition. The applicable delegate mailing labels will be released the week of March 30, 2020. Candidates will be notified by the Elections Committee by email or by phone when the mailing labels are available in the regional office.

Mailing labels and appropriate office space in a common area will be provided to any candidate at the NYSUT regional office designated by the candidate on his or her Nominating Petition, to affix the mailing labels of eligible electors on materials for campaign purposes. There will be a NYSUT staff person present at all times during which the mailing labels are being affixed to the material. It shall be the sole responsibility of individual candidates to produce their campaign material, supply adequate postage and meet any other requirements of the U.S. Postal Service or other delivery service selected by the candidate, regarding the delivery of such materials. The designated NYSUT regional office shall take all reasonable steps to mail the material or to deliver it to such other delivery service selected by the candidate. Mailing labels shall not be taken from the regional office, reproduced or otherwise distributed. Candidates shall have the right to accompany NYSUT staff to the location where mailing or delivery to a service takes place, and to observe the mailing or delivery.

All mailing labels are confidential and privileged information and shall not be taken from the regional office, reproduced or shared with anyone. Candidates should contact the Elections Committee at [elections@nysutmail.org](mailto:elections@nysutmail.org) if they have not been contacted by the committee regarding mailing labels by March 30, 2020.

Provided, however that in lieu of accessing and affixing mailing labels at a NYSUT regional office, a candidate may use a bona fide outside mailing service to deliver campaign material to eligible electors, pursuant to the following procedures:

- (1) Such candidate shall notify the NYSUT Elections Committee of the name and contact information for the outside mailing service by listing that information on his or her Nominating Petition; and
- (2) Within 48 hours of receipt of the Nominating Petition or as soon thereafter as practicable, the NYSUT Elections Committee shall contact the candidate, and the outside mailing service using the contact information provided by the candidate, to obtain any written assur-

ance the committee may require in order to prevent the reproduction or unauthorized distribution of member data.

After the receipt of such written assurances as the NYSUT Elections Committee shall require, the committee shall arrange for the electronic delivery of data directly to the mailing service.

**B. NYSUT United “Election Issue”**

The March/April 2020 issue of *NYSUT United* shall be the “Election Issue” which may be used by a candidate to promote his/her candidacy free of charge, provided the qualified candidate submits their Campaign Statement and their Nominating Petition, both of which are to be validated by the Elections Committee, by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020.

Candidate statements along with a photo, if desired, shall be submitted to the Elections Committee. Electronic submissions are preferred and shall be sent to the Elections Committee at [elections@nysutmail.org](mailto:elections@nysutmail.org) by 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020. Candidate statements may also be sent to the Elections Committee by fax (518-213-6411) or in hard copy (photos) (NYSUT Elections Committee, c/o Office of the President, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455) provided such statements are received by 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020.

Any words that extend beyond the allowable space will be deleted and not published as part of the candidate statement. The Editor of *NYSUT United* maintains the right to alter the format, font, print style or any other formatting to ensure uniformity in the presentation of all candidate statements. Reasonable efforts shall be made to afford candidates an opportunity to review their statements prior to publication and to submit changes to their statements prior to final publication.

Please note that candidates are solely responsible for the grammar and content of their statements.

Space in the March/April 2020 “Election Issue” of *NYSUT United* for campaign statements shall be allocated as follows:

Position	Space	Photos Published	Order of Statement
President	540 Words	Yes (1.25" X 1.5" each)	Candidates will be listed alphabetically
Executive Vice President	540 Words	Yes	Candidates will be listed alphabetically
Second Vice President	230 Words	Yes	Candidates will be listed alphabetically
Secretary-Treasurer	230 Words	Yes	Candidates will be listed alphabetically
At-Large Director	100 Words	Yes	Candidates will be listed alphabetically
Election District Directors	50 Words	No	Candidates will be listed alphabetically and arranged in the numeric order of the NYSUT Election Districts
AFT State Delegate and Alternate	None	No	Candidates will be listed alphabetically

\*Photos taken with cellphones or cameras will be accepted. Photos copied from the Internet will not.

In addition to the uncharged space provided below, a full listing of candidates for the positions of NYSUT President, Executive Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, At-Large Director, Election District Director, AFT State Delegate and AFT Alternate State Delegate will also be published in the “Election Issue” of *NYSUT United*.

**C. Caucus Slate Campaign Statements**

Organizations wishing to be identified by the Election Committee as a caucus under the Campaign and Election Procedures and thereby eligible to purchase space for a caucus identified campaign statement published in the March/April 2020 “Election Issue” of *NYSUT United* shall request, and properly complete and timely return a Caucus Notification Form to the Elections Committee. That form is available from the NYSUT Elections Committee. The deadline for the submission to the Elections Committee of a completed Caucus Notification Form as well as the caucus identified campaign statement, which are to be validated by the Elections Committee, is 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, 2020.

Caucus-identified campaign page(s) or a portion of a page (if partial slate) will be assigned on the basis of a drawing by the Elections Committee; independent announced candidates will follow and will be arranged alphabetically for each position, and separately listed as described below.

**D. Option to Purchase Space in NYSUT United “Election Issue”**

In addition to a candidate being allocated uncharged space in the *NYSUT United* “Election Issue” under the above criteria (either individually or as part of a caucus statement), a candidate who has submitted a validated Nominating Petition by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020 may purchase additional space in the *NYSUT United* “Election Issue.” This space will be charged as an advertisement and printed in the advertisement portion of *NYSUT United*, separate and apart from the uncharged space provided in Subdivision B above. The cost of that purchased space will be

based upon the *NYSUT United’s* standard advertisement house rates and policy. Please note that candidates may NOT purchase additional space as part of or to extend the uncharged space provided for in Subdivision B above. In addition, any caucus that has submitted a validated Caucus Notification Form by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, 2020 may purchase one ad in the *NYSUT United* “Election Issue” at the reduced rate of 25% of the standard advertising house rates. Any additional ad or ads purchased by a caucus shall be at full cost. Any candidate interested in purchasing additional space must provide the copy to be published in the March/April 2020 *NYSUT United* “Election Issue” to NYSUT United Editor ([united@nysutmail.org](mailto:united@nysutmail.org)) by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 14, 2020. Additional information regarding the *NYSUT United’s* standard advertising house rates and policy may be obtained by telephoning the *NYSUT United* at 518-213-6090, ext. 6354 or ext. 6264.

**VI. NOMINEES’ FORUM**

**A. Statewide Offices Nominees’ Forum**

Nominees for NYSUT Officers, NYSUT At-Large Directors and AFT State Federation Delegates and AFT Alternate State Delegates to the AFT Convention (“statewide offices”) shall be given the opportunity to speak to the RA during the Nominees’ Forum which, if necessary, is to be held at 4:15 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020 or immediately after the conclusion of General Session #1. In order to be eligible to participate in a Nominees’ Forum for any of the statewide offices, a candidate must complete and return the Statewide Offices Nominees’ Forum Participant Request Form contained in the Candidate Nominating Petition to the Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m. on Feb. 7, 2020. The Elections Committee will have available at the Elections Committee Table the final Statewide Offices Nominees’ Forum participant roster (and locations) on May 1, 2020 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The time allocated shall be divided equally among the nominees for the same position. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot. Groups of nominees may pool their time. Candidates may withdraw their participation in the Nominees’ Forum at any time. The NYSUT Elections Committee will announce during the General Session, to be held on May 1, 2020 at 3:15 p.m., whether there will be a Statewide Offices Nominees’ Forum conducted at the conclusion of such General Session.

**B. Election District Director Nominees’ Forum**

All nominees for Election District Director shall have the opportunity to speak at the Election District Director Nominees’ Forum which, if necessary, is to be held at the RA

commencing at 12:15 p.m. on Friday, May 1, 2020. In order to be eligible to participate in a Nominees’ Forum for any Election District Director position, a candidate must complete and return the Election District Director Nominees’ Forum Participant Request Form contained in the Candidate Nominating Petition to the Elections Committee by no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 7, 2020. Candidates may withdraw their participation in the Nominees’ Forum at any time. The Elections Committee will have available at the Elections Committee Table at the RA the final Election District Director Nominees’ Forum participant roster (and locations) on May 1, 2020 from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. The time allocated shall be divided equally among the nominees for the same position. The order of speaking shall be determined by lot.

**VII. CAMPAIGNING AT THE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Campaign material shall not be distributed on the Representative Assembly convention floor or in or around voting areas or as otherwise limited by the Rules of Procedure for the 2020 Representative Assembly, as approved by the Board of Directors and as adopted by the delegates at the 2020 Representative Assembly.

Campaigning at the NYSUT Representative Assembly shall end on Friday, May 1, 2020 at 4:45 p.m.

Pursuant to Article VIII (1) (f) of the NYSUT Constitution, the NYSUT Elections Committee shall have the authority to resolve any and all issues or disputes involving any election.

**VIII. STAFF RESTRICTIONS, CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS & LIMITED CANDIDATE SERVICES**

NYSUT staff members are prohibited by law from campaigning for any candidate except on the staff member’s own time and provided that no union or employer funds or other resources are used for such electioneering. No candidate should request any campaign assistance from any NYSUT staff member.

No portion of dues money or union resources at the local, state or national level shall be used, directly or indirectly, to promote the candidacy of any person for any elected office.

Contributions may be received by a candidate only from individual persons or groups of individuals. No employer whatsoever (including, but not limited to, other unions, commercial firms, non-profit organizations, law firms, and businesses) may contribute money, goods, services, or anything of value, to promote directly or indirectly, the candidacy of any person for any elected office.

In conducting their election campaign, no candidate or anyone acting on behalf of a candidate shall utilize any funds, facilities, equipment, stationery, supplies or resources (including, but not limited to, computers, email systems, computer networks, electronic media, telephones, supplies, photocopiers or fax machines) which are financed by, owned or leased by NYSUT (except as provided below), or any of its national or local affiliates.

NYSUT through its Elections Committee will (subject to availability, e.g. NYSUT is not obliged to purchase equipment if not otherwise available) make limited services equally accessible to all candidates and caucuses (the cost of which incurred by NYSUT is to be paid to NYSUT). The exclusive limited services which will be made equally available by the Elections Committee to candidates and caucuses are as follows: (a) use of a table with chairs, in the vicinity of the convention hall for campaigning; (b) meeting space totaling not more than three (3) hours during the entire period of the Representative Assembly (Friday-Saturday); and (c) photocopying; provided that NYSUT is fully compensated for all costs incurred by NYSUT (as determined, in writing, by NYSUT) for the limited services utilized, and provided further that such services are available. All candidates and caucuses shall have equal access to receive all such limited services, and all reasonable requests will be honored, subject to the above qualifications. No alcohol, food, or refreshments will be permitted in any meeting space made available to candidates by the Elections Committee. Any candidate who is endorsed by a caucus shall be ineligible to receive individual candidate services under these provisions whenever the caucus receives such services. Should either a candidate or a caucus wish to utilize any of these limited services, the Services Request Form (and additionally, in the case of a caucus, a proper Caucus Notification Form) shall be completed, signed, received and validated by the NYSUT Elections Committee, all by not later than 5 p.m. April 24, 2020.

If due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. scheduling, equipment limitations or unavailability), the Elections Committee determines that any of the above described limited services need to be revised or modified, all eligible candidates and caucuses that have timely submitted the Services Request Form shall be promptly notified by the Elections Committee of the change. In such event, the Elections Committee will take reasonable means and measures to arrange comparable services so that there is no disparate treatment among any of the candidates, recognizing that if any costs are incurred by NYSUT in making alternate arrangements available, such are to be

borne by the requesting candidates and/or caucus(es).

The cost of all services received by every candidate and every political caucus shall be reimbursed to NYSUT within thirty (30) days of the candidate's or caucus's receipt of NYSUT's written statement of services.

#### **IX. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF ELECTIONS COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Article VIII (1) (f) of the NYSUT Constitution, the NYSUT Elections Committee shall have the authority to resolve any and all issues or disputes involving any election and to interpret and apply these Campaign and Election Procedures. The NYSUT Elections Committee shall be empowered to modify the foregoing procedures and timelines in the event of extenuating or unforeseen circumstances, or the requirements of either law or NYSUT's affiliates. Notification will be provided in the event there is a material change in these procedures or timelines.

#### **X. CONDUCTING ELECTIONS**

All elections shall be conducted in accordance with the following instructions, and those provided by the NYSUT Elections Committee.

##### **A. Time and date of elections**

In order to be eligible to vote at the NYSUT Representative Assembly a delegate must be registered by 4:45 p.m. on May 1, 2020 and must be present at her/his assigned voting location on May 1, 2020 at 5 p.m. Any delegate not at her/his assigned voting location by that deadline will not be able to vote. Instructions on voting, distribution of ballots and voting will begin at each voting location promptly on May 1, 2020 at 5 p.m.

##### **B. Votes allocated per local**

Upon request, each local will be apprised of the number of its votes based on membership as defined in the NYSUT Constitution.

##### **C. Election District Elections Committee**

Each Election District Director shall appoint an Elections Committee member who is a delegate from that district, none of whom shall be a candidate for any position to be filled. Said Elections Committee member, with the committee, shall be responsible for conducting elections in accordance with the following instructions and any further instruction they will receive from the Representative Assembly Elections Committee Chairperson.

Locals who are represented by multiple Election District Directors, and therefore may have multiple RA Elections Committee members, may create a Local Elections Committee comprised of the RA Elections Committee members and other members from their local as they deem necessary. The created Local Elections Committee

must have a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. Working with the RA Elections Committee, this local committee will be responsible for conducting the elections for their local at the Representative Assembly. If a local creates such an Elections Committee, the names of the committee members, chairperson and vice-chairperson must be reported to the RA Elections Committee by not later than 5 p.m. April 24, 2020.

Each Election District Elections Committee member will conduct the election according to the following procedure:

1. The Election District Elections Committee member will pick up and sign for all of the ballots for all of the locals in his/her Election District.
2. The ballots will be distributed to the Ranking Delegate (delegation chair) of each local as reported by the local on their completed Election Certification Report.
3. The Ranking Delegate of each local will distribute the ballots to each eligible voting delegate.
4. The eligible delegates will vote, sign their ballots, and return the ballots to the local's Ranking Delegate.
5. After completion of the ballots, the Ranking Delegate will collect all ballots, and return them to the Election District Elections Committee member.
6. The Election District Elections Committee member will return the ballots to the Representative Assembly Elections Committee.

##### **D. Voting tabulation & elections reporting**

The Representative Assembly Elections Committee will tabulate the results according to Article C, Section 1 (b) of NYSUT's Bylaws, which states: "The votes of a local or retiree council shall be divided evenly among the delegates present at the time of voting. Votes shall be evenly divided to four (4) decimal positions by the Elections Committee at the time of tabulation. Election results will be reported by rounding the results to zero decimal positions."

Write-in votes will not be counted nor be part of any tabulation.

The Elections Committee will use all reasonable efforts to make the certified election results available to candidates requesting such information, before any results are announced during the following General Session, provided the candidate has provided to the Elections Committee, in advance, their cell telephone number, another telephone number, or an email address.

If possible, the certified election results will be announced by the Elections Committee during the General Session held following the tabulation of votes and the Elections Committee's certification of the election. If

the final election results are not available by the close of the General Session they will be published in the final *RA Reporter*. The final election results and vote total per candidate will be reported in the next available *NYSUT United* and posted at [nysut.org](http://nysut.org).

All candidates shall receive official notification of the certified election results from the Elections Committee upon certification. The certified election results and vote total per candidate shall be reported in the next available *NYSUT United* and posted at [nysut.org](http://nysut.org). However, roll call voting by delegates shall not be released for any secret ballot elections.

Observers of the tabulation process shall be afforded the opportunity to receive the results either electronically or in writing after the candidates have been notified of the results. In the case of an uncontested election, observers may receive the results on behalf of the candidate.

##### **E. Runoff procedure**

Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the results of an election, the two nominees with the highest number of votes in the first election will be runoff nominees. In the event that there is a tie for the second highest number of votes, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes and all candidates tied for second will be placed on the second ballot. Before a runoff election is held, the number of votes cast for each candidate in the election will be announced.

In the event that the Elections Committee determines that a run-off election needs to be held, the run-off election or run-off elections will be held Saturday, May 2, 2020 at a time to be announced by the Elections Committee Chair at the beginning of the General Session held following the tabulation of votes.

##### **F. Observers**

Candidates may observe or designate an observer or observers to observe the voting and tabulation process. Observers need not be elected delegates or alternates to the Representative Assembly. Observers may observe the voting and/or tabulation process subject to the following conditions:

1. Voting: Any candidate may observe or designate an observer or observers to observe the voting process at each polling location.
2. Tabulation: Any candidate may observe or designate an observer for the tabulation process. The Chair of the NYSUT Elections Committee retains the right, based on logistical concerns, to limit the number of observers in the tabulation room; however, every candidate for election shall have the right to have at least one observer in the tabulation room.

Each candidate must register the name of each observer with the NYSUT Elections Committee before 5 p.m. on April 29, 2020. Observers are required to show photo identification to a representative of the NYSUT Elections Committee and each observer will be issued a special observer badge that must be displayed at all times during the voting and tabulation process. No observer will be allowed to observe voting or enter the tabulation room without the special observer badge.

## **XI. FORMS & INFORMATION**

Forms and information are available from: NYSUT Elections Committee, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455; phone 800-342-9810, ext. 6662; 518-213-6000, ext. 6662, or by email request to [elections@nysutmail.org](mailto:elections@nysutmail.org).

Items available as specified within the Campaign and Election Procedures from the NYSUT Elections Committee are listed below and will be available on and after Jan. 2, 2020. (This is not an order form.)

- Nominating Petition for:
  - NYSUT Officer
  - AFT State Delegate and AFT Alternate State Delegate
  - NYSUT At-Large Director
  - NYSUT Election District Director
- Candidate and Caucus Services Request Form
- Caucus Notification Form

All original signed and completed forms must be returned to the NYSUT Elections Committee, c/o Office of the President, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455.

## **XII. SPECIAL ELECTION PROCEDURES**

In the event of a vacancy in a NYSUT Officer position, in an At-Large Director position or in a geographic Election District Director office, which occurs between election-year Representative Assemblies, the following special election procedures shall apply:

### **A. Procedure to fill an Officer vacancy, or an At-Large vacancy on the NYSUT Board of Directors**

Pursuant to NYSUT Constitution, Article IX §6(o), the NYSUT Board of Directors is empowered to fill all officer and all at-large director vacancies that may occur between election-year Representative Assemblies. The following procedures shall apply in either instance:

1. Upon determination by the President that a vacancy exists, an election date shall be set for the purpose of electing a successor to serve the balance of the unexpired term.
2. A notice of vacancy will be published in the *NYSUT United*. That notice shall

provide at least twenty (20) days for the filing of nominations with the Office of the President. The election to fill the vacancy shall take place no fewer than twenty-nine (29) days and no more than ninety (90) days after the mailing of such notice.

3. Nominations must be accompanied by a petition signed by at least fifty (50) NYSUT members in the case of a statewide office position and at least eight (8) NYSUT members in the case of an At-Large Director position. The nominating petition shall include each member's name, his/her local, and his/her NYSUT identification number. Candidates must be NYSUT members in good standing at the time of their nomination.
4. The election will be by roll call vote of the members of the NYSUT Board of Directors. Each candidate shall be given an opportunity to address the Board of Directors for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes. A majority vote is required for election. Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the results of an election, the two nominees with the highest number of votes in the first election will be nominees. In the event that there is a tie for the second highest number of votes, the candidate with the highest number of votes and all candidates tied for second shall be placed on the second ballot. The meeting must remain in session until there are no more than two candidates on the ballot, and one candidate is elected by the Board.
5. If there is only one candidate, the Secretary-Treasurer shall be directed to cast a single vote on behalf of that candidate. The certified election results and vote total per candidate shall be posted at [nysut.org](http://nysut.org).
6. The person elected shall serve the unexpired term.

### **B. Procedure to fill an Election District vacancy on the NYSUT Board of Directors**

1. The President shall call a special election meeting of all duly certified delegates and alternates within the Election District for the purpose of electing a successor district director to serve the balance of the unexpired term.
2. NYSUT members who were reported as the elected delegates to the most recently conducted Representative Assembly shall be eligible to vote in the special election conducted within the Election District. Any reported elected alternate to the most recently conducted Representative Assembly may vote in the absence of a delegate from the same local or council (NYSUT Constitution,

Article IX, §(4)(b)).

NOTE: Certified delegates and alternates serve until successor delegates and alternates are certified, except that no delegate or alternate may continue to be certified if the member or local is considered in bad standing in accordance with Article IV §2(g) and Article VIII §3 (f) of the NYSUT Constitution.

3. Notice of vacancy and special Election District meeting shall be printed in the *NYSUT United*. That notice shall provide at least twenty (20) days for the filing of nominations with the Office of the President. The election to fill the vacancy shall take place no fewer than twenty-nine (29) days and no more than ninety (90) days after the mailing of such notice.
4. Notice of the special election meeting shall also be sent to all duly certified delegates and alternates of record in the Election District so that it is received by said delegates and alternates at least twenty days (20) days in advance of the scheduled election.
5. After proper notification to all members in the Election District has been completed as provided for in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this subdivision, voting may be canceled by the Elections Committee for the position of Election District Director, following the period of open nominations, provided that there is only one candidate who has filed a validated nominating petition to fill the vacant position. In such instance, the Chair of the Elections Committee shall certify that voting is unnecessary and the candidate shall then be deemed elected by the Elections Committee.
6. A list of all certified delegates and alternates within the Election District shall be printed and made available to the RA Credentials Committee member or his or her designee and the Chair of the Elections Committee or his or her designee at the special election meeting being held to elect a successor district director.
7. Notification and election procedures for handling Election District Director vacancies which occur between June and August shall be drawn up and implemented at the discretion of the NYSUT President.
8. The RA Credentials Committee member from the Election District or his or her designee shall supervise registration of certified representatives or, in his/her absence, the chairperson shall appoint a member to serve.
9. The Chairperson of the NYSUT Elections Committee or his or her designee shall serve as chairperson of the meeting and the chair shall appoint a secretary of the meeting.
10. Nominations of candidates to fill the district director vacancy shall be timely submitted in writing, to the NYSUT Elections Committee c/o NYSUT Office of the President, in the manner specified by the Notice of Nomination and Election. Candidates must be NYSUT members in good standing at the time of their nomination.
11. Each candidate shall be given an opportunity to address the special election meeting for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes.
12. The chairperson may appoint an elections committee composed of no fewer than three (3) representatives from that district to assist with the election, none of whom shall be candidates for the position of Director. The chairperson and/or the members of the elections committee shall be responsible for the distribution and counting of ballots, and for the submission of the tally of the vote in accordance with prescribed procedures.
13. Candidates may observe or designate observers for the counting of ballots.
14. The chairperson, either individually or through the elections committee, will tabulate the results according to Article C, Section 1(b) of NYSUT's Bylaws, which states: "The votes of a local or retiree council shall be divided evenly among the delegates present at the time of voting. Votes shall be evenly divided to four (4) decimal positions by the Elections Committee at the time of tabulation. Election results will be reported by rounding the results to zero decimal positions."
15. Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the results of an election, the two nominees with the highest number of votes in the first election will be nominees. In the event that there is a tie for the second highest number of votes, the candidates receiving the highest number of votes and all candidates tied for second shall be placed on the second ballot. The meeting must remain in session until there are no more than two candidates on the ballot, and a candidate is elected Election District Director.
16. The chairperson of the meeting shall complete election report forms and shall be responsible for filing the proper reports and ballots at Headquarters as required by federal/state regulations. The certified election results and vote total per candidate shall be posted at [nysut.org](http://nysut.org).

## “Quotable”



### Hewlett-Woodmere FA

HWFA supporting our brothers and sisters in Lawrence. Nine years is enough @LawrenceTA15 (@hwfa18040)

### UNITE HERE Local 26

We're on the picket line with @hgsuuaw grad workers on strike! Local 26 dining hall workers went on strike against Harvard in 2016. We won and we know you will too! #1u #hgsustrike (@UNITEHERE26)

### NYS PEF

Layoffs is not the answer. We stand with Rochester teachers, students and staff #UnionStrong (@NYSPEF)

### WPTA presidents

NY needs to fully fund the current #FoundationAid formula. Give our schools the money they are owed while taking time to examine if adjustments need to be made. Thanks for the listening tour @ShelleyBMayer @AndreaSCousins #fairfunding @nysutEVP @mspetter @NYGovCuomo @nysut (@WPTApresidents)

### Yonkers Federation of Teachers

The School Board that stole Christmas. Our hearts break for the staff and students. We #StandWithRochester @RochesterTA #SpareOurStudents #FundPublicEd (@yft860)



# QUESTIONS FOR... Dante Morelli

President, Faculty Association  
of Suffolk Community College

## 1. What inspires your commitment to the union?

While surrounded by many labor unions where I grew up in western Pennsylvania, I did not come from a labor family. I was exposed to the value of unions at two different times. The first was reading Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in high school. That novel helped me understand that many sacrificed their bodies and family life in order to make a living, and I realized that a better, more democratic workplace could be achieved through union activism.

Second, while pursuing my bachelor's degree at California University of Pennsylvania, the faculty on campus had an active union. I had great respect for how they fought for a better workplace and a fair salary and benefits.

## 2. You serve on NYSUT's Civil and Human Rights Committee. Why are you committed to social justice work?

Workers' rights are human rights. We spend most of our lives working and dedicating ourselves to labor. Unfortunately, there are so many inequalities in the workplace. Women, people of

color and other minority communities are still far behind their counterparts in wages and benefits. Even today, the U.S. Supreme Court is considering whether employers can terminate employees for identifying as LGBTQ+. The Civil and Human Rights Committee focuses on such issues and creates campaigns or resolutions that can effect change.

## 3. Student enrollment is dropping at most community colleges. How do we get lawmakers to improve support?

This is one of the greatest challenges affecting our campuses. Community colleges have been transforming lives by offering an affordable education. We need to continue to educate elected officials about the mission and vision of the

community colleges and how they can become an agent of change in the lives of students, families and communities.

## 4. In 2019, at age 39, you were elected to lead one of the most powerful labor unions on Long Island. How does it feel to be at the vanguard of the next generation of union leaders?

It has been humbling. Members have entrusted me to continue a strong legacy of work on behalf of faculty and staff here. Although I may be the leader by title, the FA is only as strong as its membership and the many leaders who make up our union. My commitment is to continue to build a strong community of organizers and activists.

## 5. Where do you see the labor movement in 20 years?

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Janus* has been a game changer. One of the most recent, positive trends is that younger workers are committed to unionism, especially as they have experienced cuts in full-time work, wages and benefits. We need to continue to align ourselves with them, bring them into the union and get them involved. Our movement was built on the energy and sacrifice of present and past leaders. Learning from that history will contribute to a stronger labor movement.



EL-WISE NOSETTE

[ CLASSIFIEDS ]

**REAL ESTATE SALES**

FLORIDA — BUY, SELL, rent. Specializing in country club, active adult communities and beach areas from Ft. Lauderdale to Jupiter. Call Elly and Ed Lepselter. RE/MAX Advantage Plus, Boca Raton, FL. 561-302-9374.

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SECLUDED ADIRONDACK WATERFRONT retreat — Sleeps six. May-October. \$900/week. 518-582-4851; [nancy.tracy10@yahoo.com](mailto:nancy.tracy10@yahoo.com); [www.adirondacktracycamp.us](http://www.adirondacktracycamp.us).

"CABIN IN THE Woods" — Cozy creekside Adirondack getaway sleeps four. May-October. \$800/week. 518-582-4851; [nancy.tracy10@yahoo.com](mailto:nancy.tracy10@yahoo.com); [www.adirondacktracycamp.us](http://www.adirondacktracycamp.us).

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[ PASSINGS ]

**Laurie A. Addeo**  
Sept. 27, 2019  
Bay Shore Classroom Teachers Association

**Bruce J. Berlin** | Nov. 10, 2019  
Chittenango Teachers Association

**Joan C. Gray** | Sept. 29, 2019  
Retiree Council 7

**Edward Greene** | Nov. 16, 2019  
Amsterdam Teachers Association

**Maria Hadala** | Oct. 21, 2019  
Yonkers Federation of Teachers

**Shirley L. Harrington**  
Nov. 2, 2019  
Alden Teachers Association

**Lionel S. Lewis** | Oct. 1, 2019  
United University Professions—Buffalo Center

**John Pellegrino**  
Sept. 10, 2019  
Retiree Council 9

**Carolyn "Carrie" Ray**  
Oct. 6, 2019  
Brockport Teachers Association

**Shirley Y. Reif** | Nov. 23, 2019  
Chittenango Teachers Association

**Gina C. Zucker** | Oct. 29, 2019  
North Syracuse Education Association

**Cheryl Zmudzinski**  
Aug. 2, 2019  
Wappingers Congress of Teachers

*Obituary submissions must include decedent's full name, union affiliation, date of death, and contact information for the person submitting the notice. Fax notices to 518-213-6415; send to Julie Malec, NYSUT United, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455; or email [jmalec@nysutmail.org](mailto:jmalec@nysutmail.org).*

[ RESOURCES FOR YOU ]

**NEXT GENERATION**



To help new members get a jump-start on state-required Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) hours, NYSUT's Education & Learning Trust is offering one free online ELT seminar to teachers and SRPs in their first year of union membership.

Educators in their second through fifth years of membership can receive 50 percent off one online ELT seminar. Registration is limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Go to [NextGen.nysut.org/CTLE](http://NextGen.nysut.org/CTLE) for details.

**Good Life Challenge**

From Jan. 13-22, NYSUT members can take a free 10-day guided whole food, plant-based nutrition challenge with Victor TA member Doug Schmidt, a health and wellness coordinator. Sign up for The Good Life Challenge at [smore.com/3whgz-the-good-life-challenge-2020](http://smore.com/3whgz-the-good-life-challenge-2020) to access free resources and an e-book for support. Last year, 3,300 educators from 75 school districts participated.

**Save the date: 2020 STEM Institute**

The New York State STEM Collaborative Summer Institute will

be held July 26-28 at Alfred State, SUNY College of Technology.

The 2020 Institute, "STEM is here to stay! Are you ready?" is accepting proposals for session presentations and poster presentations that address learning levels K-20 and demonstrate how to integrate two or more STEM/STEAM learning disciplines. Proposal deadline is March 6.

Visit [nysstemeducation.org](http://nysstemeducation.org) for more information. Attendees can earn CTLE professional development hours.



# Retirees — NYSUT needs YOU for the census!



By Kara Smith  
ksmith@nysutmail.org

**T**he 24th U.S. Census starts this year and NYSUT needs the help of retirees to get every household accounted for. Through “NYSUT Counts,” a new union initiative to boost census participation, the statewide union will use one-to-one conversations, classroom resources, mailings, advertisements and coalition building to highlight its importance.

“Census data is used to distribute nearly a trillion in federal funding and to determine each states’ number of

electoral college votes and congressional representatives,” said NYSUT Vice President Paul Pecorale, noting that New York is slated to lose one, and possibly two, congressional reps. “We’ve got to get every resident living in New York State counted to ensure we don’t get shortchanged.”

New York’s share of congressional seats has fallen by nearly half since 1940, when it had 45 representatives; currently our state has 27 seats. Pecorale encouraged retirees to take active roles in the census process — by filling out and returning their census form; by becoming federal census takers; and by getting involved in the “NYSUT Counts” campaign.

“The census is safe for all state residents — regardless of immigration status,” said Pecorale. “Don’t let

anyone intimidate you or your loved ones from participating — sharing census information with other federal agencies is illegal.”

Since much of the collection is done digitally, getting accurate census data for those over age 55, in particular, can be challenging, continued Pecorale. “Make sure you’re counted.”

## Take care, beware

Be on the lookout for scams — fake census forms are out there. If you’re asked for a donation, money, your full Social Security number, mother’s maiden name, credit card or bank account numbers, or a political party contribution, it’s a scam, said Pecorale.

Additionally, web addresses should end in “.gov” and include an

“https” prefix — make sure the “s” is included. The official U.S. Census Bureau website is [census.gov](https://www.census.gov).

If you receive census information through the mail, check for a return address of Jeffersonville, Indiana; if it’s not from there, it’s not from the U.S. Census Bureau. Census visitors to your home must carry a valid U.S. Census ID badge. If you think you’ve received a fake census form, or been approached by a fake census taker, contact the Census Bureau at 800-523-3205.

Conducted every 10 years, the U.S. census is a constitutionally required count of every resident living in the U.S., including children and non-citizens. To learn more about “NYSUT Counts” or to get involved, visit [nysutcounts.org](https://www.nysutcounts.org).



## DID YOU KNOW?

NYSUT Retiree Services consultants are resources for retired members, retiree councils and in-service locals on NYSUT retiree matters.

**Tracy Beatty**, RC 1, 2, 3, 44  
716-634-7132

**Louise Ortman**, RC 4, 46  
716-664-7425

**Peter Randazzo**, RC 5, 6  
585-454-5550

**Anne Marie Voutsinas**, RC 7, 8  
315-431-4040

**Ruth Shippee**, RC 9, 10  
518-783-7977

**Mark Padgett**, RC 11, 45  
607-786-5742

**Jennifer Shaad-Derby**, RC 12, 13  
518-783-7977

**Ellen Pincus**, RC 14, 15-16  
914-592-4411

**Claire Zatorski**, RC 17, 18, 19  
516-496-2035

**Joan Perrini**, RC 20, 21, 22, 23  
631-273-8822

**Judy D. Kalb**, RC 43  
561-994-4929, ext. 129



ANDREW WATSON

Barbara Keilty-Michaleski, RC 18 president, makes a point at the 2019 Retiree Contiguous ED 51-53 meeting. Retirees approved five RA resolutions on topics including improved coverage for behavioral and mental health care; protecting retiree benefits; and COLA and disability retirement pension improvements.



PROVIDED

Patricia Riley, RC 15/16, was re-elected to the Peekskill Common Council, besting her challenger by close to 700 votes. The “union voice” on the council, Riley helped secure a project labor agreement for municipal contracts and advocates for including trade union representatives at Peekskill college fairs.



PROVIDED

NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale, far right, attends a meeting of NYSUT retirees in Florida to discuss a concerted ground campaign for 2020.

## REGIONAL CONFERENCES

**RC 43, Jan. 22**  
RSC Judy Kalb

**RC 12, May 13**  
RSC Jennifer Shaad-Derby

**RC 4, 46, May 20**  
RSC Louise Ortman

**RC 1-3 & 44, May 21**  
RSC Tracy Beatty

**RC 11 & 45, May 27**  
RSC Mark Padgett

**RC 10, May 28**  
RSC Ruth Shippee

**RC 7 & 8, June 1**  
RSC Anne Marie Voutsinas

## Ogdensburg Education Association



PROVIDED

Art teacher and Ogdensburg EA member Mary Marcinko volunteers at a community dinner hosted by the local.

## Hicksville Congress of Teachers

The Hicksville CT, led by Stephanie Sullo, raised nearly \$700 in a virtual food drive for Island Harvest Food Bank. The local also hosted a booth at the Homecoming Fair to raise money for scholarships the local awards to high school seniors.

## Newburgh Teachers Association

The Newburgh TA distributed more than 800 welcome packages to kindergarten students, including a book, bookmark, pencils and crayons. The NTA, led by President Stacy Moran, purchased the items, and members put the packages together.

“We want parents to know that NTA members are a part of the community as well,” said Matthew Scully,

Newburgh TA vice president.

## Salmon River Teachers Association

The Salmon River TA hosted its Fall Family Dinner and Movie Night on the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation. The event is open to all district families. “We host one in the fall and one in the spring each year as one of our Local Action Project events,” said Adam Schrader, local president.

The free dinner is provided with the assistance of sister support staff local, CSEA Local #817, whose workers prepare the meals. The event includes a movie and a hands-on craft activity. “This year we gave away two complete Thanksgiving turkey dinners as door prizes,” said Schrader.

Share news about your local's union or community events at [united@nysutmail.org](mailto:united@nysutmail.org); include LIA in the subject line.

## KUDOS!



### It's an honor

**April Charleson**, Massena Federation of Teachers, won the 2019 Ruth Everett Award from the New York State English Council for her work mentoring future English language arts teachers.

### In print

**Basilio Serrano**, United University Professions-Old Westbury, published *Puerto Rican Women from the Jazz Age: Stories of Success*. The book presents 14 biographies of women who entered the jazz-era world of music and film.

**Andy Tupaj**, Clarkstown TA, has written and published *Through the Valley of Darkness*. This epic quest novel involving ghosts, ghouls and villains is set in the Hudson Valley.

“Kudos!” recognizes the accomplishments of NYSUT members. Have good news you'd like to share? Email [united@nysutmail.org](mailto:united@nysutmail.org); include “Kudos!” in the subject line.

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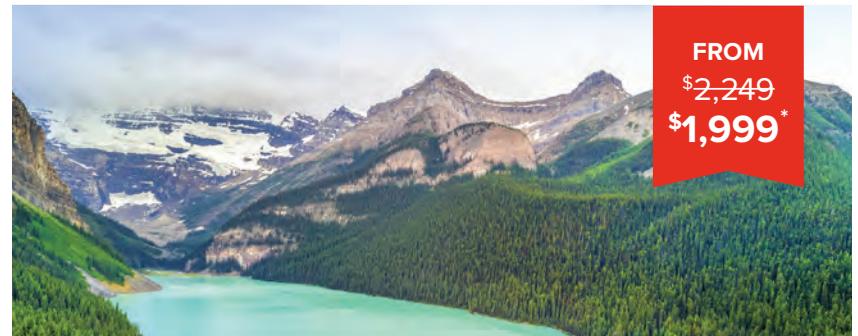
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## Get ready to 'Access' big savings!

**N**YSUT Member Benefits is pleased to announce the launch of its newest endorsed program — Member Benefits Discounts & Deals provided by Access Development. This exciting offering will dramatically increase the number of discounts offered to NYSUT members on a national basis. More importantly, this program will provide numerous savings opportunities at restaurants and merchants on a local and regional level.

This money-saving benefit is available exclusively to NYSUT members and features the nation's largest private discount network. These deals can be utilized either online or from the palm of your hand through Access Development's MB Deals mobile app.

Register your account on the Access website with your NYSUT ID number by visiting [mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com](http://mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com). You will then be able to enjoy exclusive access to savings of up to 50 percent at more than 700,000 locations for shopping, restaurants, movie tickets and entertainment, travel, oil changes and vehicle maintenance, and much more.

One of the best features of the Member Benefits Discounts & Deals



program is the ability to recommend your favorite local business, restaurant, coffee shop, etc., to potentially join the Access Development network. You can learn more information about recommending a merchant by visiting the site.

As an added bonus, all NYSUT members who register an account by March 31 will be entered to win one of three big giveaways: a \$500 American Express Gift Card; two (2) three-day park hopper tickets to Walt Disney World; or a seven-night condo stay provided by Endless Vacation Rentals.

We believe this new program will offer a tremendous added value to the NYSUT membership and are excited to have the opportunity to offer it to you. Again, you must register

your account on the Access website with your NYSUT ID number by visiting [mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com](http://mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com).

### Member Appreciation Month is back!

One of our most popular annual events is set to return this February. The 2020 Member Appreciation Month celebration will be filled with a series of prize drawings for items donated by NYSUT Member Benefits and our endorsed program providers.

All NYSUT members who sign up for our Member Alert Program email service by providing their email are eligible to win prizes each day in the month of February. Prizes will include a variety of gift cards and movie tickets; tablets, fitness trackers and other electronics and more.

If you have colleagues interested in being eligible to win, they must join our Member Alert Program. Daily prize winners will be announced on the Member Benefits website. Learn more by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or calling 800-626-8101 with any questions.

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

## Get a jump on it

*Continued from page 21*

The school recently received sleds, food processors and recess equipment through grants from the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative's Creating Healthy Schools and Communities project, funded by the state Department of Health.



### Tips to get students moving

- Have students stand up to ask or answer questions.
- To combine math and movement, have students stand and do a "rock-paper-scissors" technique with each other. The first student to say the total number of fingers thrown down will win. Switch partners, moving around the classroom.
- Set up a sensory hallway using tape to make lines so kids can gallop, skip, hop or jump to different colors. In Clifton Fine, high school students designed the hall for elementary students.
- Once a month have students walk a loop around the soccer field or track before school starts.
- Have students stand up and start moving around class. Each student finds a person to follow around the room. Eventually, students end up in a circle.
- Institute a walking period. At Clifton Fine a daily walking period is held after lunch for students in grades 7-12.
- One golden rule Hosmer advises: Don't use access to recess as a punishment.

## IT'S WHAT WE DO

**Elisabetta Iacoviello**  
Walkkill Teachers Association

Every spring, Elisabetta Iacoviello assembles sturdy cardboard boxes, fills them with early learning tools, and hands them out to about 75 soon-to-be kindergartners.

"I noticed a lot of kids coming for school who did not have exposure to anything getting them ready for kindergarten," said Iacoviello, who works at three Walkkill elementary schools as a member of the Walkkill Teachers Association.

She provides the kinder boxes to youngsters when they come to school in June for their kindergarten screening. There is tracing paper for them to trace their written name and become familiar with it. There are sight word workbooks, flash cards and a handwriting book. Each child gets a coloring book, a rhyming book, crayons, the words to an ABC song, and a list of numbers up to 10.

"The children are excited to have something solely, personally for them," Iacoviello said.

Once school starts, more students are on equal footing by knowing some basic learning steps. Parents are encouraged to keep the box to store their youngster's artwork throughout the year.

At the end of the year, Plattekill Public Library staff visit the school to sign up the new kindergarten graduates with a library card to boost their transformation into readers.

The kinder boxes have made enough of a mark that the school is now using similar ideas for other elementary students who are reading below their grade level.

To read more about Iacoviello's story, visit [nysut.org/itswhatwedo](http://nysut.org/itswhatwedo).

**On the job and in the community, NYSUT members make a difference.**



## Tier 3, 4: The right time to retire?

**T**ier 3 and 4 members make up the largest group of members (54 percent) of the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System. Tier 3 and 4 members are vested and qualify for retirement benefits after earning five years of service credit. Your pension is guaranteed, and the size of your benefit depends on your retirement age, your final average salary (FAS), and your years of service.

Age 62 is considered full retirement age, meaning you can retire at that age with your full benefit. Age 55 is the earliest that Tier 3 and 4 members can retire and collect a pension. However, unless you have 30 years of service, a penalty for early retirement is imposed. For example, if you retire at 55 with fewer than 30 years of service, your pension will be permanently reduced by 27 percent. The longer you wait to retire (up to age 62), the greater your benefit will be. Find more info about reductions at [osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/early\\_age\\_reduction.php](https://osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/early_age_reduction.php).

Your FAS is a significant factor in the calculation of your pension benefit. Since working longer usually means a higher FAS, continued public employment can increase your pension.

Service credit is another factor. One year of full-time employment with an ERS participating employer is equal to one year of service credit.

In every issue, State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, administrative head of the State and Local Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and trustee of the Common Retirement Fund, provides information on the System, which delivers retirement benefits to many NYSUT School-Related Professionals and other support staff. If you are an ERS member with a question of general interest, email [united@nysutmail.org](mailto:united@nysutmail.org).

For immediate assistance, call the ERS Contact Center toll-free at 866-805-0990 or 518-474-7736 in the Capital District.

Part-time employment is prorated. If you work half time, you will earn one year of service credit in two years. More service credit earns you a larger pension benefit, and after 20 years, it also gets you a better pension formula. For Tier 3 and 4 members, if you retire with fewer than 20 years of service, the formula is  $FAS \times 1.66\% \times \text{years of service}$ . Between 20 and 30 years, the formula becomes  $FAS \times 2.00\% \times \text{years of service}$ .

You can find details about reductions and how your pension is calculated in your retirement plan publication. Most Tier 3 and 4 members are in the "Article 15" plan. Find the Tier 3 and 4 Article 15 plan booklet on our Publications page, [osc.state.ny.us/retire/publications/index.php](https://osc.state.ny.us/retire/publications/index.php).

Sign in to your Retirement Online account ([osc.state.ny.us/retire/retirement\\_online/customers.php](https://osc.state.ny.us/retire/retirement_online/customers.php)) to view your total service credit and to see if you are covered by the Article 15 retirement plan. Use our online pension benefit calculator ([osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/projecting-your-pension.php](https://osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/projecting-your-pension.php)) to estimate your benefit with different retirement dates, FAS and service credit totals.

### NYSUT ERS consultants

Most NYSUT School-Related Professionals\* belong to the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System (ERS). NYSUT ERS consultants are available to help SRP members navigate the retirement system. Consultants can answer questions, provide forms and help members contact the ERS. Contact any one of our consultants for assistance.

Trudi Davis • 914-592-4411  
[troers@nysutmail.org](mailto:troers@nysutmail.org)

Patti Lennon • 516-496-2035, ext. 324  
[nroers@nysutmail.org](mailto:nroers@nysutmail.org)

\*Note: Certified teaching assistants belong to the state Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

## A taxing question for tax time

**Q:** It's the best of times and the worst of times: tax season. When will I receive my 1099-R tax statement for my 2019 retiree benefit earnings?

**A:** You should have that in your mailbox by the end of January. For those new to retirement, your 1099-R will show your total gross benefit, your taxable amount and the amount of any withheld federal tax.

If you have a MyNYSTRS account you can get your information even earlier, usually about mid-January. You can also see past tax statements and change your tax withholding.

If you have questions about your 1099, or don't receive it by Jan. 31, contact NYSTRS at 800-348-7298, ext. 6120. To sign up for a MyNYSTRS account, visit [secure.nysutrs.org/MyNYSTRS/register](https://secure.nysutrs.org/MyNYSTRS/register).



**Q:** When natural disasters occur, does the New York State Teachers' Retirement System have a system in place to ensure that benefit recipients receive their payments in a safe and timely manner?

**A:** Yes, it does. NYSTRS has an offsite disaster recovery center to ensure staff can both carry out essential business operations, and provide outreach to members in affected areas.

For instance, during the devastation of 2012's Hurricane Sandy, the vast majority of direct deposit payments, which account for 98 percent of NYSTRS benefits, posted on time at banking institutions. NYSTRS has long mandated the use of direct deposit benefit payments to reduce the risk of late or stolen payments, including during natural disasters.

### NYSUT TRS consultants

TRS members with questions may call your teacher-members on the New York State Teachers' Retirement System Board of Directors:

David Keefe • 516-741-1241  
(Retiree Representative)

Sheila Sullivan Buck • 585-454-5550  
[sbuck@nysutmail.org](mailto:sbuck@nysutmail.org)

Beth Chetney • 315-431-4040  
[bchetney@nysutmail.org](mailto:bchetney@nysutmail.org)

Ronald Gross • 631-273-8822  
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NYSUT represents teachers, school-related professionals, higher education faculty, professionals in education, human services and health care, and retirees.

## NEW Endorsed Program

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This money-saving benefit is available exclusively to NYSUT members and features the nation's largest private discount network.

Register your account with your NYSUT ID number by visiting [mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com](http://mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com).



You can then **enjoy exclusive access to savings of up to 50%** on shopping, restaurants, movie tickets & entertainment, travel, oil changes & vehicle maintenance, and much more.

Scan the QR code to register your account and start saving now!

Learn more by calling **800-626-8101** or visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).

## Member Appreciation Month

Sign up for MAP Alerts to enter!

One of our most popular annual events is set to return this February. The 2020 Member Appreciation Month celebration will be filled with a series of prize drawings for items donated by NYSUT Member Benefits and our endorsed program providers.



All NYSUT members who are members of our **Member Alert Program** email service or sign up for the service by providing their email are eligible to win prizes each day in the month of February.

Prizes will include gift cards & movie tickets; tablets, fitness trackers & other electronics; and more. Daily prize winners will be announced on the Member Benefits website.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Member Appreciation Month now!



**MEMBER BENEFITS**  
**nysut**  
Working to Benefit You