

USA INFORMATION

UNITED STAFF ASSOCIATION OF PUTNAM/NORTHERN WESTCHESTER BOCES
LOCAL 15-175 NYSUT LOCAL 3072 AFT

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT...

As the end of the school year approaches, many of our colleagues here at BOCES and in our component districts find themselves in despairing situations. Due to the climate surrounding education, districts are cutting programs and teacher jobs as a way to balance their budgets. Here at BOCES our existence depends upon the population of students that we serve. This population has been diminishing due to the belief of our 18 component districts that holding students back is the answer to saving money when the reality is in the long run it winds up costing districts more.

This is not a new concept that districts are practicing. This had been done in the past and after a year or so the districts realize that this concept was not as beneficial as they had hoped and eventually start sending students back to BOCES. Unfortunately by the time districts come to that realization, BOCES will have lost exceptional teachers. Due to the economic climate this time, it looks like this trend may take longer to turn around for BOCES to get students back from districts.

These are different times, brothers and sisters, for all of us. We must stay true to our profession and do the best we can for our students and each other. We all already do the very best we can to move BOCES and our students forward. We must continue to focus on the positives and not let the negatives deter us from doing our very best.

As a union, our goal moving forward is to work with our colleagues and administrators to help ensure that BOCES continues the level of quality that our districts have become accustomed to and to help districts understand that BOCES is not the problem for them; it's the solution!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Desk of the President	1
Know Your Contract	2
Upcoming Meetings	2
School Budget Vote Flyer	3
"Vote for What is Best for Kids!"	4
NYSUT Representative Assembly 2011	5
A Bouquet from Us	7

As we approach the summer and start enjoying our well-deserved time off, keep in mind that BOCES and our districts will be working to figure out what next year will bring. Many districts statewide look at what other districts are doing to help them decide on a strategy. Stay informed over the summer. Read the newspaper; listen to the news specifically when they start talking about education and collective bargaining. Check the NYSUT web site at www.nysut.org for current events, as well.

In closing, I want to thank our executive board for all the support they have given the union and me this year. It would be remiss if I didn't also thank our outstanding program reps; you are the front line of the union and do your jobs very well. For that we all thank you!

Also I want to thank all the members that stepped up to help out on committees. I know it consumes a lot of your time and you may not hear it often enough, thank you as well.

Our teaching duties may end at the end of June, but our duties to ourselves as teachers should not! Stay informed! A well-educated union is a strong union!

Have a wonderful summer!

In solidarity,
Larry Marino

*Upcoming Executive Board Meetings:
June 7*

Location: Pinesbridge Conference Room
3:00P.M.

Upcoming General Membership Meetings:

Stay tuned for the 2011-2012 meeting schedule.

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT...

SECTION VI - RIGHTS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

F. Representatives of the Association shall meet on a monthly basis with the Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services to discuss matters of mutual concern, such as staff meetings, the problem of ill children in the classroom, requests for variances, and so forth. The Board agrees to share all available public data and documents with the Association relating to the topics discussed at such monthly meetings. If the parties mutually agree that a particular monthly meeting is not necessary, it may be cancelled.

What this means:

Once a month the president and grievance chairperson meet with human resources to discuss any and all issues our union and its members may have. These meetings give the union and the administration the opportunity to discuss situations and rectify them before they become issues.

Union Representatives

PUTNAM/NORTHERN WESTCHESTER B.O.C.E.S.
YORKTOWN HEIGHTS, NEW YORK 10598
(914) 962-9579

Executive Board:

- President..... Larry Marino
- 1st Vice President..... Alfred Santoli
- 2nd Vice President..... Doug Andreotti
- Secretary..... Jenn Guiffre
- Treasurer..... Dan Gottfried
- Membership Chairperson..... Debra Haggerty
- Grievance Chairperson..... Mary Ann Alvord
- Negotiations Chairperson..... Al Cotoia
- Building Rep Chairperson..... Carolyn Schneider

Program Representatives:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Administrator | Representative |
| Jim Bellucci..... | Michael Tomaseski |
| Michael Sowul..... | Lynn Ammann |
| Steve Lowery..... | Marie Russo |
| Marla Gardner..... | Robert Angiello |
| Adam Vanderstuyf..... | Catherine Armisto |
| Judy Spaulding..... | Judy Gillet |
| Bob Keldershouse..... | Elisa Longo |

**United Staff Association Welfare Fund
c/o Daniel H. Cook Associates
253 West 35th Street, 12 Floor
New York, New York 10001**

- Chairperson..... Lola Smerdon
- Secretary..... Nancy Finsmith
- Treasurer..... Janine deGrouchy-Hraska
- Trustees..... Larry Marino
Jenn Guiffre
Doreen Trani
- Consultant..... Flo Laicher

Administrator..... Daniel Cook Associates
(914) 250-0700
(212) 505-5050
1-800-DHCOOK1
(1-800-342-6651)
FAX# (212) 714-1454

Legal Fund.....(914) 997-1576

Give our children a bright future!



SUPPORT WHAT KIDS NEED — VOTE MAY 17!

May 17 is the day to show your support for our schools by voting for what kids need.

Working together, we've made great progress helping children succeed. Now we must keep the momentum going.

Show pride in our community's excellent public schools by voting May 17. Your vote does matter.

All district residents who are U.S. citizens are eligible to vote (and non-U.S. citizens if the district allows)

Vote for what is best for kids!

By Betsy Sandberg - NYSUT United - April 21, 2011



On May 17, vote for what kids need in their classrooms, in their schools and in their communities.

That's the message NYSUT sends this month as the statewide union, through a series of regional radio ad campaigns, is encouraging the public and especially its members to vote.

In careful consultation with local and regional leaders, NYSUT found a wide disparity in what it means to cut \$1.2 billion from nearly 700 districts. In some regions, budget cuts will erase years of progress. In others, school districts had reserves they could tap to spare programs.

"On May 17, taxpayers have the chance to say whether they agree with a school budget that invests in our children and invests in the future, or they disagree with a budget that is destructive for our communities," said NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi. "Voting is an important part of the process this year and NYSUT locals must make voters aware of the impact a 'yes' or 'no' vote can have on kids and programs."

When budgets fail, districts are allowed one revote, but most often they adopt a contingency budget — capped this year at 1.92 percent.

Union leaders ask voters to consider what would be lost under an austerity budget when deciding whether to support or oppose budget proposals.

"A 'no' vote could mean an even more draconian budget situation," said Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta.

Under a contingency budget, a district may fund only prescribed items. Some expenses, such as those for voter-approved capital projects and expenditures attributable to increases in enrollment, are exempt from the contingency budget cap.

Any district revotes will be held on June 21.

As NYSUT United went to press, districts were up against deadlines for setting property tax report cards and completing budgets, but the preliminary drafts are drab at best.

Numerous districts plan to cut or eliminate programs, lay off teachers and other support staff and even close schools. In New York City, where residents, like in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers, don't have the right to vote on school budgets, the mayor says he will lay off 4,600 teachers. Statewide projections call for an additional 10,000 layoffs of instructional staff.

Local unions across the state have sacrificed raises or agreed to increase payments toward health insurance to help save jobs and programs in their districts.

In the coming weeks, locals have a variety of options to get their message out to voters in their districts.

Postcards are an effective, inexpensive tool for reaching voters. NYSUT has developed downloadable postcards local unions can bring to a union printer in their area. Members and parents can address the cards together and mail them to district voters in the days before May 17.

Just as effective are phone calls. A number of local unions will run special nights for members to get together to make calls. Some local unions sponsor art and music shows the days leading up to, or the day of, the vote to showcase student efforts. Check with your union to find out about your local's efforts.

New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) Representative Assembly 2011

New York, NY April 7-9th

The theme for this year's RA was "United We Lead." Approximately 3000 union members attended the convention. Some of the topics that we discussed were budget cuts, early child care funding, bullying in schools, and professional development.

When Dick Iannuzzi, the President of NYSUT, addressed the delegation his message was loud and clear. WE must lead. He said, "We cannot leave it to the politicians. We cannot leave it to corporate America. We cannot leave it to other workers, leaders or unions. No, it must be United WE Lead." President Iannuzzi confirmed that these are serious times for us. He went on to say that NYSUT will meet every challenge, and we will be united as we move forward.

This convention always educates, enlightens, motivates, and invigorates the delegates that attend. I urge you to visit www.NYSUT.org to look at the videos posted from the RA and read some of the speeches that were given by a variety of prominent and not so prominent speakers. I always find this convention a worthwhile experience.

In solidarity,
Irene Snow

Each year NYSUT holds a Representatives Assembly in which each local send their president and their elected delegates. Irene Snow and I attended as your elected delegates this year. I have been fortunate enough that this has been my fifth RA. Each year Electoral Districts (composed of a number of union locals) get together and propose different resolutions to be presented at the RA to be voted on and adopted, tabled for further discussion or voted down. These resolutions set different union policies and agendas for the coming year(s). It is here where the voice of the locals come together.

There is usually much discussion and careful crafting before the resolutions come to the RA. Once at the RA, delegates break into committees where they are discussed, argued, debated and once again - language is carefully crafted so the resolutions can be presented before the Assembly. The resolutions are posted prior to the RA then after the RA - once they have been voted on in their final format. If you are interested in reading the resolution and seeing the voting results please check the RA page on the union site: NYSUT.org.

In today's anti-union climate (remember Wisconsin and other municipalities-in which unions have taken a blow) a rally, sponsored by the AFL-CIO was held at the end of the RA in Times Square. Many unions joined together in solidarity to show support for one another. The mantras for the day were "We are One!" and "This is How Democracy Looks!" Please remember that there is strength in numbers - many together create a powerful voice. WE ARE ONE!

Athena Swikata
Representative Assembly Delegate

New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) Representative Assembly 2011 New York, NY April 7-9th

In my 25 years of being a union member, first with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and now with the United Staff Association of PNWBOCES, I have never seen such unity as I did at the Regional Assembly this past April. There were presidents and delegates representing over 600 teacher unions throughout the NY State. At one point during the conference, there were close to 3,000 educators there.

I reveled in the many speakers that addressed the conference attendees. One such speaker was Kerry Kennedy, who is the daughter of Robert Kennedy. Her campaign "Speak Truth to Power", a big part of which is to inspire young people to become Defenders of Human Rights, rang through the convention hall. She reminisced about how her father and his brother, JFK, would talk about the value of an education and about the important role teachers take in that process. David Steiner (Commissioner of Education) spoke as well. He also talked about the important role that teachers play in education. His support on a state level has been a very helpful for education and teachers. Unfortunately, after he spoke at the conference we heard that he was resigning as commissioner of education.

NYSUT's president, Dick Iannuzzi, also addressed the assembly several times. His message was clear. We must all do what is necessary to move our union forward. We must be informed. Be visible at local rallies. Attend local school board meetings and voice our concerns. Be involved and Get involved as a local union and as an individual. Many people have sacrificed for us to have what we have. Let stick together and ensure that those sacrifices had not been made in vain.

I also got the opportunity to network with presidents from many other districts. We discussed how each of our districts is navigating through these tough times. We developed strategies that worked in some district and tailored them to work in other districts. Other than getting to meet Kerry Kennedy this was my favorite part of the Assembly. Experiencing this Regional Assembly for the 1st time, I found the information a useful tool to use in steering the union forward.

In solidarity,
Larry Marino

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

<http://ny.aft.org/pnwb/>

PLEASE HELP US BY SENDING NEWS!

Thanks to All..

Thank you to everyone who contributes to this newsletter by submitting articles, important information, the bouquets or helping with the printing or distribution throughout the school year.

Please send retiree news for the newsletter to Winnie McCarthy wam48@aol.com or 36 Cheshire Lane, Yorktown, NY 10598. We want to reach out to more retirees.

Please send any information that you deem is newsletter worthy to Meredith Markolovic (Tech) at mmarkolovic@pnwboces.org or (914)248-3815.



A Bouquet from Us...

In Memoriam...

Peter Schneckner, retired teacher

Congratulations to...



Mary Jo Kramer
Lorraine Petriello

on the birth of granddaughters!

IMPORTANT...

Mary Ann Alvord is the Grievance Chairperson.
She can be reached at extension **764**, or from
the outside at (914) 248-2764.

USA PHONE NUMBER: (914) 962-9579



To schedule an appointment with the lawyer
members should call (914) 997-1576.

Send items for *A Bouquet from Us* to Elizabeth
Bowler at ebowler@pnwboces.org