

Official Publication of The Yonkers Federation of Teachers

35 East Grassy Sprain Road
Yonkers, N.Y. 10710
(914) 793-0200
Fax (914) 793-7365

EDITOR:
Constance Sajdak

**PRODUCTION/
DISTRIBUTION
EDITORS**
Bryan Boyd
Doraid Ereifej
Vera Corato

**PRODUCTION/
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Patricia Puleo



Q & A Regarding Projected Teacher Evaluations

These are just a few of the questions we at the YFT Office have received from members. You are welcome to submit more questions to YFT860@bestweb.net. Please know that you can find many more answers on NYSUT's website: www.NYSUT.org. Look for the "Teacher Evaluation" red box.

1. Does the new evaluation system take into account a student's absences in evaluating the teacher?

We have been told that the State Education Department has a formula it is going to use to determine a teacher's score for state tests. Local assessments will not be allowed to take attendance into account at this time. NYSUT is working to include student attendance as a factor in determining the score.

2. How long do we have after an ineffective rating to get it changed? For example: one year support plan.

As the details of our new evaluation are not written yet, this is difficult to answer. After an ineffective rating, a teacher would receive a support plan. Teachers would also have the right to appeal developing and ineffective ratings.

3. How will this affect our pension?

Pensions are determined by years in the system. As long as you are employed, there is no effect on pensions.

4. Students of varied levels can be found throughout our schools. Will that make a difference?

Growth is the issue at hand. There will be a pretest and a post-test. The growth shown of your students is the important factor in determining final scores.

5. How about social promotion in middle schools?

There is no contractual control we have regarding social promotion; those decisions are made by the Board of Trustees. Again growth is what is being measured; not proficiency.

6. How about classes that don't have assessments (art, music, phys. ed.)? How will they be measured?

There will be local assessments developed. The YFT's position is that teachers design the assessments appropriate to subject and grade.

7. If a student aren't passing a class and do not pass finals, are they allowed to take the regents?

SED wants everyone counted. We believe everyone will be required to take the state tests.

8. Will No-Show students count against us?

NYSUT is fighting to have attendance count in the State formula. The YFT is proposing a similar idea for local assessments. If a student does not show up to take state or local tests, they cannot be counted toward a teacher's score.

9. Will this new evaluation system affect retirement if a teacher gets an ineffective rating?

No. Please understand that a teacher would have to receive two years of ineffective ratings before the District could decide to proceed with a 3020A process. All due process rights remain in place.



School Related Injuries-*

In New York, Workers' Compensation Law covers on-the-job injury. It is critically important that an employee who believes that he/she suffered an on-the-job injury immediately file a claim with the New York State Workers' Compensation Board. The Board has an excellent website: www.wcb.ny.gov with a link on how to file a claim. Failure to file a claim may prove disastrous. An employee does not have to worry about filing a claim that is disallowed – there is no penalty (unless it was truly a fraudulent claim). You should fill out a school related injury form secured from your YFT rep.

A teacher who slips on snow or in the classroom and twists an ankle obviously suffers on-the-job injury. In certain circumstances, an injury incurred walking to or from your car in the parking lot may fall under the definition of worker's compensation. If an employee is required to go from one building to another as part of his/her job, any car accident that he/she is involved in while changing buildings is likely covered by worker's compensation. Accidents during incidental breaks or lunch breaks may also be covered by worker's compensation law. If a member is involved in any of these types of accidents, he/she should contact the building representative as well as administration.

“School-Related Injuries (pg.66 of the contract):

A teacher, who is injured in the course of carrying out his/her duties and responsibilities for the Board, whether on school property or not, shall be granted a leave without loss of pay, benefits or accumulated sick leave of up to sixty (60) days.

In situations where injury is not immediately debilitating and the teacher returns to work immediately but **within (3) consecutive days following the injury**, becomes debilitated and requires additional medical/surgical treatment, the school related injury may commence at that point.

Nothing in this provision shall prevent the teacher from applying for special consideration in accordance with Article 12, G, (5).

Any teacher, who is injured while on duty and who receives leave under this provision, shall apply for Worker's Compensation, and when payment is received therefrom, shall sign over such payment to the Board.”

Assuming that the injury is a worker's compensation injury, the employee is entitled to health care related to the injury and time off to heal. The health care is paid for by the employer's worker's compensation provider, not the individual's private insurance plan.

Upon completion of the case, the employee will have the

sick time used restored to his/her accruals. If the employee has no sick time, he/she may have to apply to the District Sick Bank and thereafter be on leave without pay until recovered. If the employee has used personal sick time due to the length of recovery a worker's compensation attorney must request time be returned.

Once you have returned from worker's comp. make sure that you are fully recovered. If you return and are not recovered, worker's comp. can not be restored.

** The above article was originally printed in The Edge.*

GRIEVANCE ARBITRATIONS

Florence McCue, YFT Grievance Chair

Building Rep Preps at Yonkers Montessori Academy: When this school was formed, there were already two reps: one for the Pre-K-8 school and one for the High School. Now that the school is merged and there is only one principal, the district argued that there should be only one rep and that one rep should have one prep a day. The district decided which of the two reps should get the five preps and the other rep got none at all. The Federation argued that each rep was to receive five preps. After mediating with the help of an arbitrator, it was agreed that the YFT and the teachers decide who the rep is. Going forward, there will be one rep and one alternate. The rep now receives 5 preps a week and the alternate rep (only at this school) receives three preps a week. This school will include grades Pre-K to 12.

Health Insurance Premium Payments by Retirees: This arbitration is being heard by the arbitrator. The Federation has put on its initial case and now the District will put on their case. The Federation will then have an opportunity to rebut the testimony of the District. The Federation argues that retirees should receive free medical coverage in retirement since the Federation never agreed that they would be charged and this has to be negotiated before it can be changed. The district argues that the retirees should pay like the in-service teachers do. The next hearing date on this matter is April 5.

Entitlement of Regular Substitutes to Salary Step Award: This grievance was settled between the Federation and the District. The Regular Substitutes were to have been placed onto their correct step last month, and they are to receive all of the retroactive salary due to them according to the timetable contained in the remedy timetable for regular teachers.

You will be informed when other settlements are signed or arbitration awards are received.

Reading is FUNdamental: Read Across America *

NEA's Read Across America is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author, Dr. Seuss. NEA's Read Across America also provides teachers, parents, caregivers, and children the resources and activities they need to keep reading on the calendar 365 days a year.

In May 1997, a small reading task force at NEA came up with a big idea. "Let's create a day to celebrate reading," the group decided. "We hold pep rallies to get kids excited about football. We assemble to remember that Character Counts. Why don't we do something to get kids excited about reading? We'll call it 'NEA's Read Across America' and we'll celebrate it on Dr. Seuss's birthday." And so was born, on March 2, 1998, the largest celebration of reading this country has ever seen. Motivating children to read is an important factor in promoting student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school. Information on Read Across America can be found at: www.nea.org/readacross.

Create a Reading Event

The following is a simple scenario for elementary or middle school teachers who want to conduct a Read Across America event in their classroom. This is by far the most typical celebration and can be easily adapted to other situations.

- Consult your principal and obtain approvals. In our experience, principals love NEA's Read Across America. Most will not only support your efforts, they will become actively involved. If your principal hasn't heard of the program, refer him or her to the web site listed above.
- Look at your school's calendar and choose a date to celebrate. The official day is March 2, but feel free to pick a different day. Some schools celebrate the week before or after. Talk to your principal and check your school calendar as early as possible to avoid any last minute problems.
- Consult with your school librarian. It's likely that he or she is already familiar with Read Across America and may have ideas to offer. Reserve books in advance – there may be a run on Dr. Seuss titles!
- Ask other teachers if they are making plans. Consider coordinating your efforts for a school-wide event.

- Invite guest readers to come to your class on March 2 and read to your students. By far, this is the most popular activity. There is something powerful about legislators such as the Mayor, City Council Members, Union President, or a policeman, firefighter, radio personality, pastor, high school quarterback, or grandmother sharing their love for reading. Be sure and ask your guests to talk about why reading is important in their lives and about their favorite books when they were kids. Afterwards, have your students write thank you notes.
- Children love receiving tangible acknowledgement of their efforts, and your adult helpers will appreciate being thanked. You can download a pre-designed certificate and other fun things from the website.
- Send information home to parents. Some parents may offer to help, and a few may volunteer to be guest readers.
- Explore the website fully for ideas and resources. There is a lot of information that will be useful if you want to expand on the basics.
- Put on your hats for the big day! Enjoy your guest readers. Eat birthday cake, drink punch, and don't forget to sing "Happy Birthday" to Dr. Seuss. Read, read, read, and have fun!

** The above article was originally printed in the Edge. It has not been edited for inclusion in this newsletter.*

Volunteers are needed for the Annual Storybook Bonanza which will be held on Saturday, May 12th at Philipse Manor Hall. Anyone interested in helping should call Arline Frey at the YFT Office (793-0200) and leave their name, phone number and email.

WHO'S WHO AT THE YFT



Florence McCue

"I work closely with all local unions as well as the YFT to foster labor's agenda in a climate where hardworking men and women have become the target of blame for all the nation's ills and woes. We are living in a time when it is imperative for organized labor to stand together to highlight the contributions we make and the needed services we provide."

Present:

YFT Grievance/Arbitrations Chair, YFT PAC Committee, YFT Contract Negotiating Team, NYSUT PAC Coordinator, NYSUT Rep. Assembly Delegate, NYSUT Delegate Democratic National Convention , NYSUT Retiree Advisory Committee, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Westchester/Putnam , NYSUT Retirees Westchester/Putnam Advisory Board, NYSUT Retirees making Strides Against Breast Cancer Team Captain, AFL-CIO Labor Picnic Committee Chair, NYSUT Part 83 and 3020(a) Union Panelist

Union Experience:

YFT Treasurer	YFT Executive Board	YFT Building Rep
YFT APPR District Team	AFT Living the Legacy Award	AFT Convention Delegate
SDM Grant writer	NYSUT Labor Religion Liaison	Staff Development facilitator
Staff Development facilitator	YFT Health and Safety Com.	Elem. Report Card Com.
NYSUT Leadership Presenter	NYSUT Fair Trade Delegate to El Paso/Ciudad Juarez	

Delegate to the NYS Teachers' Retirement System
School Based PDP, APPR, SDM teams and Special Projects Facilitator
District-wide Social Studies Curriculum Writing Committee

JOIN US! Religion and Democracy: A Workshop for Educators

New York Public Library
Stephen A. Schwarzman Building
Fifth Ave at 42nd St
New York, NY

Saturday, April 28, 2012
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

"To Bigotry No Sanction, to Persecution No Assistance." George Washington made this commitment in 1790 in a landmark letter to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island. Inspired by Washington's defense of religious liberty, this workshop will examine the nature of citizenship, religious freedom, and equality in a democracy from the birth of the United States through the aftermath of the attacks on 9/11. The workshop will provide educators tools to bring these timely issues into the classroom. Presented by Facing History and Ourselves and the George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom.

\$10 registration fee includes lunch and materials.

Space is limited. Registration does not guarantee a space in this workshop. Priority will be given to middle school and high school teachers who can implement Facing History content in their classroom.

"Tis a Yonkers March Madness"



March madness has many meanings. While some sports fanatics are wrapped up in their favorite college basketball teams, Irish Americans are preparing for a month dedicated to their heritage. The first of March began the March madness for members of the PEARLS Hawthorne School when we received an invitation to a well-attended kick-off reception on Park Avenue in New York City. The New

York Irish General Consulate graciously held a reception on a weekday evening.

Among the invited guests were Mrs. Susan O'Sullivan and Erin Gorman from PEARLS Hawthorne School. A parent of PEARLS students, Claire Cunnane felt that our Yonkers teachers would enjoy networking with the many educators attending the St Patrick's Day reception this year. The topics discussed among the reception attendees included the educational changes and needs of students in modern Ireland, local Irish language programs, music, and dance lessons available from the Irish Arts Center, and the opportunities for local students to participate in annual competitions, and study abroad programs. Visit the Consulate's website for information on visas, passports and background information on Ireland at www.consulateofirelandnewyork.org.

Three days later on March fourth the PEARLS community marched in the City of Yonkers Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. Students, parents, retired and active teachers and relatives marched together on a beautiful March day down South Broadway. The group was organized by Erin Gorman and received the Monsignor John J. Foley Memorial Trophy for the Best Grade School Marching Unit. Teachers Karen Liberatore, Dan Gallagher, and retired teacher Judy Bartunek represented a few of the Yonkers citizens that participated in the marching unit. School 16's marching unit also marched in the same division of the parade.

Culminating the month's activities, the First Grade Teachers of PEARLS, their students, and talented PEARLS parents presented their own version of Tomie dePaolas' Jamie

O'Rourke and the Big Potato. The curtains opened With Mr. Neal's choir and his choir accompanied by instrumentalists performing Irish musical selections. Then Leila Sweeney, Karen Liberatore, Yana Botvinnik and Erin Gorman directed their students' dramatic version of the well-known story. The first grade chorus had been taught three musical selections by the teachers and musical direction of Sandra Carolan, a Yonkers parent. A resident of Lincoln Park and mother of three, Sandra Carolan volunteered her Fridays in February and March to prepare for a well-reviewed show. She accompanied them on the school's piano. The PEARLS students from the Lowry-Farrelly School of Irish Dance demonstrated their fancy footwork under the direction of Aileen Farrelly. Aileen's three oldest children had attended the PEARLS program, and she continues to return with her children each year to share their Irish cultural instrumental music and dance talents.

The Kindergarten to Fifth grade audience applauded and requested an encore from the performers. The auditorium vibrantly joined in a chorus of "Everybody is Irish". Critics in the audience were quoted as saying they were reminded of the "old days". Others echoed the need for Arts to return to the schools. With support for the Arts and emphasis on the scheduling of Arts from the Yonkers District, students could once again show-off their talents as a whole community of learners. The reappointment of district wide instrumental and choral teachers would nurture the talents our city's students and teachers possess.

Enjoy all of your March festivities and Holiday celebrations!

Written By Erin Gorman



Reminder to all our teachers that anything written on Facebook is public and worldwide information that can and most likely will be taken out of context. There may even be persons or parties monitoring Facebook for teacher comments.

For Retirees

A reminder to all retirees enrolled in Medicare Part B who paid more than \$96.40 in 2011 due to a higher standard premium and/or the Income Related Surcharge. To receive reimbursement for the Income Related Surcharge and/or the higher standard premium, you must submit a copy of the SSA – 1099 for year 2011. If you have not done this yet, please send in by March 31, 2012. Along with the copy of your 1099, include a note with your name and the name of a dependent on whose behalf you are requesting reimbursement. Also include a day time phone number at which you can be reached.

Fraternally,
John Eshoo, Retiree Rep.

THESE ARE IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO HAVE ON HAND

914 793-0200 YFT OFFICE
914 793-7365 YFT OFFICE FAX
914 793-0393 YFT WELFARE FUND
1800-342-9810 NYSUT ALBANY
914 592-4411 NYSUT REGIONAL OFFICE IN ELMSFORD
1800 356 3128 NYS TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM
914 376-7088 CREDIT UNION

AFT Members Will Stand Together for 'We Are One' Week of Action



Workers' fundamental rights are under attack in a growing number of states. But as we have seen in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana and elsewhere, those attacks have inspired and motivated tens of thousands of union members to stand together for their rights. The challenge now, as AFT president Randi Weingarten put it in a recent e-mail to more than 1.5 million AFT members and allies, is to take this moment and turn it into a movement. One step in that direction is a "We Are One" Week of Action, **starting April 4**, that will bring together members from the AFT and other unions, along with our allies, to participate in events around the country. First, take the pledge to help make a difference. Once you take the pledge, you'll see lots of ideas for how to join in the week of action.

TO ALL YFT MEMBERS:

Thanks to **Webmaster Gene Zilempe**, the YFT has a new website. The website, which is regularly updated, features current union events and online resources. Explore JFK's Legacy, join the Generation Y discussion community, and peruse previous issues of the YFT Newsletter. The website contains information concerning your benefits, including downloadable forms for dental, prescription and optical, as well as the current form of the APPR. You can access the website at:
<http://ny.aft.org/yft> or yftonline.org.



Richard Gazzola Teacher Center

TEACHER CENTER NEWS

Lia Council, Policy

by Paul J. Diamond, Director

E-mail - tchcntr@westnet.com

Teacher Center Phone- 376 8614 FAX- 376 8617

Registration

Due to a delay in the production of the Teacher Center Catalogue and a delay in the printing of the YFT Newsletter, there was some confusion about course availability. The Policy Board has approved and the Director has established a second run for all overenrolled classes. As a result, every teacher who applied for classes received at least one selection. If you are interested in participating, give us a call and we will notify you of any seats available.

National Board Certification

We are scheduling a National Board Certification Awareness session on May 2, 2012. Please contact the Center if you are interested. If for some reason you can not attend, please call us anyway so we can record your interest. We will share information about various trainings in the area.

NYSUT ELT AP Training

The NYSUT Education Learning Trust is offering In-Service Training for teaching AP classes. The tuition is \$700.00. Please remember that if you wish to receive In-Service training, you must have prior approval from the Personnel Department. Call the Education Learning Trust at (800) 528-6308.

Gifted and Talented Extension

Teachers interested in pursuing a Gifted and Talented Extension should contact the Teacher Institute of Lower Westchester at (914) 738-7352 to register your interest. The program consists of 5 Graduate Courses, (15 Graduate Credits) cost \$995 per 3 credit course.

Teacher Center Library

The Teacher Center has restored its lending library and is ready to support your educational needs. Among many things, we have Big Books, Ellison Die Cast, Poster Maker Large and Small Laminator and Book Binder

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Saturday, April 21, 2012

Member Name _____

Check # _____

Address _____

School _____

Phone _____

Cell _____

Date _____

Name(s) of family members- (must be licensed drivers)

Name _____

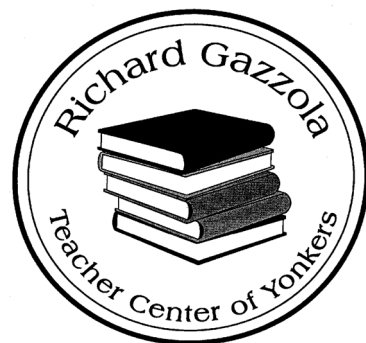
Check# _____ Date _____

Name _____

Check# _____ Date _____

No Faxes accepted! Make checks payable to NYSUT Benefit Trust.

Mail or bring this application form to: The Richard Gazzola Teacher Center, 1 Larkin Center 3rd Fl, Yonkers, NY 10701, with a \$30 check payable to NYSUT Benefit Trust.





TAXES 2011

FULL TIME TEACHERS-	\$839.96
TA'S	\$661.08
RETIREES-	\$72.00
RETIRED 6/11-	\$592.00

A MESSAGE FROM THE WELFARE FUND

Collect your prescription print out and then send it to the Welfare Fund. Print outs need to be received by March 31st of the next calendar year.

Attention: Rejoin the Union and the Welfare Fund...

If you went out on a Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or any other leave (including those members who were laid-off and subsequently rehired), upon your return to your assignment rejoin the union (including NYSUT) and the Welfare Fund by resubmitting the required forms for membership: NYSUT Membership Form, Welfare Fund Benefit Card(s), YFT Membership Dues Deduction Card and VOTE/COPE Form. This also pertains to any individual who was a full time administrative intern and has returned to teaching.

Teachers who undergo changes in marital status (through marriage, divorce or death of a spouse), or addition of children, changes in beneficiaries or residence and/or phone number **notify the Welfare Fund.**

If you need further information please call us at 914-793-0393 and ask for Georgia DeMuro or Kathy Reagan. All claim forms can be obtained on-line at the YFT website, yftonline.org.

**DAY-BY-DAY
MARCH**

- 20 **SPECIAL ELECTION
NYS 93RD AD SHELLEY MAYER**
- 21 **EXEC. BD. YFT 3:45**
- 26 **INVOLUNTARY TRANSFER
ARBITRATION 4PM**

APRIL

- 4 **EXEC. BD. YFT 3:45**
- 5 **RETIREE HEALTH INSURANCE
PREMIUM ARBITRATION**
- 6-15 SPRING RECESS**
- 11 **CEN. LABOR COUNCIL 6:00**
- 18 **EXEC. BD. YFT 3:45**
- 19 **BLDG. ASSEM. ROOS. 3:45
ED 15-16 TARRY.**
- 24 **PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY
ELECTION DAY**
- 26-28 NYSUT RA BUFFALO**

