

THE Yonkers Teacher

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The work on our contract was put together by many people. As usual, in the end the endless hours of tedious research and negotiations were covered by several Executive Board and Negotiation Team members. Salary schedules were checked and re-checked. Wording, commas, and sentence structure were all gone over. A major effort was put forth by many, and I thank them all publicly.

Special thanks go to Samantha Rosado-Ciriello for handling the herculean job of supervising and negotiating the 200 page Annual Performance Plan Review (APPR). She worked long days and nights (maybe even a few weekends) with administration clarifying, simplifying, and correcting the final language concerning our observations. While the work was shared by many Executive Board members, the efforts and expertise of Samantha, YFT Staff Director, Elementary Vice President, and friend was priceless. All teachers owe her thanks for her dedication to quality teaching and to true professional development that can only enhance the Yonkers Educational system.

In Solidarity,



Congressman Eliot Engel (D-NY) a 13th term Congressman was sworn in on January 13th to represent the new 16th Congressional District. The 16th District incorporates parts of the Bronx and Westchester County.



YFT Contract Summary Flyer Welfare Fund

Dear Colleagues,

There seems to be some confusion regarding the information about the "Welfare Fund contribution" portion of the informational flyer handed out at the membership meeting on January 4, 2013, titled "YFT Contract Summary".

The benefits provided by the YFT Welfare Fund are paid for by the contribution made by the Board for each active teacher and administrator. The amount of the contribution is negotiated between the Board and the YFT. In this new contract, the Board will increase its contribution rate for each teacher by 2% in 2012-2013 and another 2% in 2013-2014. The 2% is not taken from your salary. On page 46 of the 2007-2011 contract you can see the amount contributed by the Board for each year, for each active Welfare Fund member. Remember, Principals, Assistant Principals and Central Office Administrators are also members of the YFT Welfare Fund.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the YFT Office.

In Solidarity,
Pat Puleo
YFT President

Thank You

The YFT wishes to thank the following who donated their time in assisting the election committee in counting the ballots for the contract ratification vote on Friday, January 4, 2013:

Kara Popiel, School 13
Barbara Carey, School 16
Sara Pearl, School 16

Lucy Ukponmwan, School 17
Emiko Castro, School 21
Valerie Barbara, School 22
Jacqueline Davis, School 22
Theresa Smith, Lincoln
Kirk Bauer, Riverside
Jayme Downes, Riverside
Christine Iturriaga, Special Ed. Dept./
Central Office
Rita Seligmann, Retiree
Joseph Palya, Retiree
Barbara Johnson, NYSUT Field Rep.

The Michelle Sobel Literacy Grant 2012-2013

Teachers, please take note, the Michelle Sobel Literacy Grant is available once again this year. Applicants should submit their proposals for this \$2000 award via email to **jerrysobel@aol.com**, no later than March 4, 2013. Proposals should include a statement concerning the target group; how these monies will be used to promote their literacy; and how funds will be allocated specifying vendors with estimated costs.

This grant has been awarded by the Michelle Sobel Literacy Fund for the past seven years to a Yonkers teacher in memory of Mrs. Michelle Sobel, a former Yonkers Literacy Specialist. It is our hope that many more children and educators will benefit from her love for words and their meaningful communication.



The following people retired in 2012:

Pamela Ajello

Sakina Allen

Martha Armas

Diane Banyai

Donna Bartunek

Michael Berno

Joseph Buckley

Alejandro Cajina

Enida Cordova-Vitkowski

Susan Currie

Anna DeCesare

Eileen DiVito

Patricia Edwards-Ortega

Barbara Graham

Marianne Lazarou-Benjamin

Don Longo

Susan Mandell

Adrienne Siegel-Kaye

Linda Simms-Chin

Frank Slattery

Ana Soto

Catherine Spinney

Patti Burns-McCue

Joseph Kissner

Ben Dharm

Norma Lindsay

Marlene Arbeeny

Margaret Grosiak

Harriet Uschakow

Michele Veal

Kathie Taylor



Tell it like it is

NYSUT is clear:

- Stop the obsession with standardized testing!
- Invest in student learning, not testing!
- Devote time and resources to getting evaluations and common core right!

At every opportunity, NYSUT reiterates this message to education policymakers. Now we've created a vehicle for you to add your individual voice about your students, your school, your district or campus.

Calling NYSUT members:

Add your voice to the conversation. Go to www.nysut.org/tellit. Use this NYSUT-developed email to speak up and speak out to the State Education Commissioner and Board of Regents. Tell them:

- 1) How the current teaching and learning conditions and obsession with testing impacts the success of your students.
- 2) What needs to be done to get student assessment and teacher evaluation right.

Fill in the fields, write as much or as little as you like, and hit send. It's that simple.

Share your solutions from the front lines of education!

Subject: Getting It Right
Your Letter:

To Education Commissioner John King and the Board of Regents:

As a practitioner, I call upon you to rethink the obsession with standardized testing, devote time and resources to getting common core and evaluation right, and invest in student learning, not testing.

Here's what you need to know about what my students are experiencing.

[DESCRIBE THE IMPACT ON YOUR STUDENTS HERE]

I offer the following solutions to ensure student assessment and teacher evaluation are done right.

[RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS HERE]

A message from a dedicated practitioner.

First Name*

Last Name*

Email*

District/Campus*

www.nysut.org/tellit



The YFT and its members have raised close to six thousand dollars to help the victims of Superstorm Sandy. Once again, our members have shown their generous spirit of helping those in need. We wish to help all who made donations.

UNION DISTRIBUTES FREE STORYBOOKS TO KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADERS



During the summer 2012 AFT convention, Pat Puleo and Joanne Casella visited one of the educational booths that displayed elementary grade level reading books. Knowing how important reading is, Pat signed up for a free book giveaway program organized by the company, First Book. While the books were free, the YFT was responsible for paying the delivery charge. The YFT Public Relations Committee sorted and packaged the books for distribution to elementary school teachers. Each school received a box of 30 books.



As part of the agreement with First Book, the union guaranteed that the books would be given to students. The rationale for receiving this grant was to encourage young readers to take the books home and read them with their parents and guardians. The children would then come back to their class and share their literary experience. In this way, the student, the parent and the teacher are involved. Teachers who wished to extend

this project could have students bring the books back and exchange them for another one.

Arline Frey and Mike Boraczek, co-chairs of the YFT Public Relations Committee, would like to thank committee members Kathy Ryan, Margaret Fraina, and Marc Pekowsky for helping to sort and box the books for distribution.

Warren Hueber, at the YFT office, also deserves a special "thank you" for his invaluable assistance with this project.

The members of the YFT Public Relations Committee hope that this reading initiative program is productive and enjoyable for our elementary teachers and their students.



PROBATING A DECEDENT'S ESTATE

By: MIRKIN & GORDON, P.C.

The death of a family member or friend is an emotionally challenging event that we will all experience. Some of us will be faced with the added responsibility of having to distribute the decedent's estate.

If the Decedent had a Last Will and Testament, he is deemed to have passed away 'testate' and the estate must be 'probated' in most instances. If the Decedent passes away without a Last Will and Testament, he is deemed to have passed away 'intestate' and the estate must be 'administered' in most instances.

The Decedent's Last Will and Testament will dictate how the assets are to be distributed. If there is no Last Will and Testament, New York State law¹ provides a detailed, complex line of 'intestate succession' (ranging from surviving spouse to great-grandchildren) that dictates how the estate is to be distributed.

Either way, the legal process is time sensitive and can be a difficult and daunting task for a layperson. For example, the executor must file an inventory of the Decedent's assets with the Surrogate's Court within six months after death and file an estate tax return within nine months of death. In addition, the executor has a fiduciary duty to protect and manage the Decedent's assets pending distribution to the proper heirs.

Whether you choose to retain counsel or go it alone, here are a few tips to make things go smoother:

- Search the Decedent's house and other places for valuable papers and assets.

- Keep a detailed inventory of all accounts, life insurance policies, death benefits, investment accounts, real property owned and individual assets/effects.

- Keep detailed records and receipts for all income received such as rental income, dividends and pension/social security payments received after the Decedent's death.

- Keep a detailed account of and receipts for all expenses incurred on behalf of the Decedent's estate such as funeral/burial expenses, costs to maintain the Decedent's home and mortgage/rent/insurance payments made after the Decedent's death.

- Make sure that the Decedent's home is secure, maintained, insured and, as necessary, heated during the winter months.

- Do not sell, distribute or give away any of the Decedent's belongings/assets until you are given the specific authority and direction to do so by

the Surrogate's Court.

- Discontinue unneeded expenses such as cable TV, telephone and periodical subscriptions.

Probating or administering an estate is a daunting matter that must be performed during a difficult time. It gives the executor/administrator great authority and responsibility. Anyone faced with having to probate an estate should always consult with an attorney prior to doing so. The Legal Plan includes in its coverage an *Estates and Administration Benefit* and we encourage you to contact the Legal Plan attorney to schedule an appointment to discuss your specific needs and concerns in this regard.



¹ Estates, Powers and Trusts Law ("EPTL"), Article 4

MIRKIN & GORDON, P.C.

BOWLING EXTRAVAGANZA

We would first like to thank Maria Hadala for taking the time to put together a team to represent the YFT. The first NYSUT ED 15/16 Bowling EXTRAVAGANZA was a huge success on a variety of levels. What a tremendous demonstration of collective solidarity! Some locals were even able to show off their bowling skills. AND?we were able to raise \$7000 that will be donated to Project SHARE: A Thanksgiving Dinner For The Homeless.

We would like to give you an idea of how the numbers worked out. Over 400 NYSUT members attended the event. There were 336 registered bowlers. \$5500 in on-site donations. 56 bowling teams. 22 locals were represented. Three teams from the Tarrytown Regional Office. And the NYSUT Executive Board drove 144 miles to bowl with us!

The top three teams will receive trophies. The top three teams were:

1. Yonkers Federation of Teachers (157.2 team avg.)
2. Rye Neck TA (132.5 team avg.)
3. Yorktown Congress of Teachers/Split Happenz (132 team avg.)

Our team members were Maria Hadala, Matt Longo, Joanne Casella, Jen Lorio, and Enrique Rosario.

We hope you enjoyed the event, and we hope more join next year!

In Solidarity,
The Bowling Committee (Sean,Lisa,Karen,and Nate)

The 2012 Relay for Life occurred on a Friday June 1, 2012 at Lincoln High School. Ms. Debbie DeVito's and her students from Lincoln High School, Ann Dopia and Ann Victoria volunteered their engineering talents pitching the tent for the YFT.

Kerry Gorman, Kevin Gorman , family of Erin Gorman, Monique Rye , and Lia Council from Palisades Prep joined in the early preparation as well. The participants in the event managed the Ring Around A Duck on site fundraising efforts. The participants won a coupon for a free Ice cream cone from Carvel located at 639 McLean Avenue. The tent provided a shelter for many participants during a rain downpour in the early evening. The team feasted on donated food from Fratelli's Restaurant on 2507 Eastchester Road in the Bronx.

Whether on site or remembering those who have survived or suffered a loss from Cancer through a donation , Team Yonkers Teachers prevailed once again. **Thank you to everyone and I look forward to building our 2013 team.**

With Thanks,

Erin Theresa Gorman

The Participants include:

Jean Clark Siragusa

Jen Lorio Fermi

Carolina Carreira Pearls Hawthorne

Karen Liberatore PEARLS Hawthorne

Judy and John Bartunek Retired

Darren Wechman PEARLS Hawthorne

Helen Kuznicki PEARLS Hawthorne

Jacqueline Davis School 22

Karen Lotito YMA

Dena DeLucia CHA

Maria Hadala Fermi

Christina Brady DiChiaro

Erin Gorman PEARLS Hawthorne

Donations:

The Yonkers Federation of Teachers

Stacy Gallagher

Deborah Kozak (PEARLS/ School 22 Parent)

Zuleima and Alvaro Tinoco

Siragusa Faculty

Jean Clark Siragusa

Kara Popiel School 13

Alish Doran School 13

Dorinda Aviles PEARLS Hawthorne

Pulaski School and Christine Marrone

Julia Honeywell Pulaski

Emiko Castro and P.S. 21

Florence McCue and Friends

Kerri Madigan Lincoln HS

School28 Kahlil Gibran and Representative Ilene Dillo

Dodson and Representative Diana Perkins

Jessica DeDonato School 31

Karen Matuskovic DiChiaro

School 19 and Representative Rita Nolan

Lia Council at Riverside

Megan Trahey Pulaski

Mary Flaherty Pulaski

Erin Gorman PEARLS Hawthorne

Carolina Carreira PEARLS Hawthorne

Friends of Karen Liberatore

Friends of Helen Kuznicki

Friends of Darren Wechman

School 22 Faculty

Scholastic Academy

Dr. Sonia Byrd

Valerie Barbara

Tammyanne Witt

Carol Westphal

Wendy Holibaugh

Victoria King

Jacqueline Davis

Nick at John's Pizzeria S. Devoe Avenue



Richard Gazzola Teacher Center

TEACHER CENTER

NEWS

Lia Council, Policy Board Chair

by Paul J. Diamond, Director

E-mail - tchcntr@westnet.com

Teacher Center Phone- 376 8614 FAX- 376 8617

HAPPY NEW YEAR

"Every thought we think is creating our future".

Louise L. Hay

Welcome back to a bright and happy year. As we announced in our November news letter, registration is up and running. Due to the overwhelming request for our courses, most of our classes are full to capacity. We have two courses available:

On-line courses will be offered by Joan Carrozza
CMP 263 Cyber Bullying and Safety on the Net
May 31 – June 20th

On-site course will be offered by Dolores Bencivengo
EDUCU 228 Display Data in the Classroom
For details see our web site at:
www.rgteachercenter.org

Please call the Teacher Center or email our secretary for a registration.
NYSUT Education and Learning Trust:
College and Graduate Opportunities

Marilyn Fanelli is offering:
ED 441 Cooperative Discipline Marilyn's course is 6 credits and meets on Mondays. Call her at (914) 751-6519 if you would like more information.

Lia Council will be offering:
EDU 661102 Integrated Co-teaching: Strategies Enhancing Student Achievement
EDU 661101 Building Positive Connections with Diverse Families and Communities
Each course is 3 Graduate credits and will meet on Saturdays. Call (800) 528-6208 or www.nysut.org/elt to register

Helene Alalouf will be offering:
EDU 661104 The Role of Data Assessment and Instruction to Raise Student Achievement
Helene course is 3 Graduate credits and will meet on Saturdays. To register call (800) 628-6208 or www.nysut.org/elt

WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Don Bluestone in conjunction with WCC will be offering

HSERV310 Group Dynamics & Leadership which will be held on Mondays. For more information call Don at (718) 882-400 ext. 303

We are proud to announce a partnership with **BEPT/TILW**. We will be offering an Educational Leadership Advanced Certificate Program. The program consists of 36 credits and will be scheduled for completion within 2 ½ years. For more info go to mylearningplan.com or www.bept.org

Also there will be two new courses offered at **BEPT** through Stony Brook University. For information and registration go to mylearningplan.com or www.bept.org.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

Saturday, January 19, 2013

Saturday, February 2, 2013

Westchester Hills School 29 (Library)

8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Member Name _____ Check # _____
Address _____

School _____ Home Phone# _____
Cell Phone # _____ Date _____

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

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, One Larkin Center 3rd Fl Yonkers, NY 10701, with a \$30 check payable to **NYSUT Benefit Trust**.





It is with profound sadness that we share the news that Linn Solomon passed way on December 20th after waging a valiant battle with a brief illness. Linn began her career in the Yonkers Public Schools in 1969 and retired from the Cross Hill Academy School (School 29). Linn loved teaching young children and taught kindergarten there for many years. She moved to Pahoia , Hawaii a few years ago to pursue her interest in gardening. She leaves behind her husband Ross, her sons Kurt and Shane and her grandson Greyson. Her indomitable spirit will live on in our hearts and minds forever.

Written by Mary Ghiozzi

Welfare Fund NEWS

CLAIM FORMS

Remember to obtain dental and optical forms if you plan to visit a dentist or optician. You can also visit the YFT website and click on the link to download medical forms to download. The website is yftonline.org.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

914 793-0200 YFT OFFICE

914 793-7365 YFT OFFICE FAX

914 793-0393 YFT WELFARE FUND

914 376-7088 CREDIT UNION

DAY-BY-DAY JANUARY

- 22 AQE Linda Hammon TBA
 23 EXEC. BD. YFT 3:45
 29 ARB- SENIORITY TBA 4:00

FEBRUARY

- 4 YFT COR. COMM. YFT 3:30
 6 EXEC.BD YFT 3:45
 7 BLDG.ASSEM. ROOS. 3:45
 PRES.COUNCIL MT.KIS. 5:00
 11 YCPTA TBA 7:00
 12 ARB-SUPPORT PL. TBA 4:00
 13 BD.OF ED.
 CLC W.PLAINS 6:00

18-23 WINTER BREAK

- 27 EXEC.BD YFT 3:45
 28 ARB- INTERVIEW TBA 4:00

MARCH

- 4 YFT COR COMM YFT 3:30
 5 VOTE COPE MTG. 3:30
 ARB-PERSNL FILEW/REP 4:00
 11 YCPTA P.S.24 7:00
 12 ED ISSUES YFT 3:45
 ARB-LENTO 60 DAYS 4:00
 13 EXEC.BD. YFT 3:45
 CLC W.PLAINS 6:00
 14 BLDG. ASSEM. ROOS. 3:45
 ED 15/16 TARRY. 5:00