

# THE **Yonkers** Teacher

November 25, 2014

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35 East Grassy Sprain Rd  
Yonkers, NY 10710  
(914) 793-0200  
Fax (914)793-7365

### EDITOR:

Christine Morrone

### PRODUCTION/ DISTRIBUTION

#### EDITORS:

Bryan Boyd  
Doraid Ereifej  
Vera Corato

### PRODUCTION/ DISTRIBUTION TEAM:

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### DISTRIBUTION TEAM:

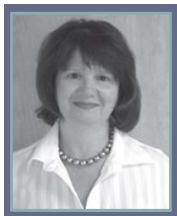
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**nysut**  
A Union of Professionals



As we leave November election politics behind us, we can take some satisfaction in that over 90% of the statewide candidates supported by NYSUT and in turn YFT were successful. The fight to save a public education system free from corporate takeover and excessive over testing will be a long fight. I would like to personally thank all the people who donated their time and came to the YFT office for political action. We all hope to see more members next time. Your help is needed and appreciated.

### Negotiation Update #1-

We met with the district/city late in October due to their availability. It was more of a meet and greet, as all the members representing the district and the city of Yonkers have never before negotiated with the YFT team. Two future dates were set for December and proposals will be exchanged at that time. It is a start. Your negotiating team is comprised of Executive Board members and three YFT members elected by Building Assembly. The team members are:

**Pat Puleo, President (YFT Office)**

**Paul J. Diamond, Executive Vice President (YFT Office)**

**James W. Hayes, High School Vice President (Palisades Prep)**

**Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, Elementary Vice President (YFT Office)**

**Dan Florin, Elementary Vice President (School 9)**

**Joanne Casella, Middle School Vice President (Dodson)**

**Lia Council, Special Areas Vice President (Riverside High School)**

**Kara Popiel, Secretary (YFT Office)**

**Michael Ciriello, Executive Board (Lincoln High School)**

**Debra DeVito, Executive Board (Lincoln High School)**

**John D. Eshoo, Executive Board (Retiree Representative)**

**Michael Garbowski, Executive Board (School 30)**

**Erin Gorman, Executive Board (PEARLS Hawthorne)**

**Roselyn Kendrick-Jones, Executive Board (Yonkers Middle/High School)**

**Jennifer Lorio, Executive Board (Enrico Fermi)**

**Christine Morrone, Executive Board (Pulaski)**

**Jayne Downes, Building Representative (Riverside High School)**

**Karen Lotito, Building Representative (Yonkers Montessori Academy)**

**Mitch Polay, Building Representative (Paideia 15)**

In Solidarity,

Pat Puleo, YFT President



# Richard Gazzola Teacher Center

# TEACHER CENTER NEWS

Kara Popiel, Policy Board Chair

Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, Director

Teacher Center Phone - 376-8614

Fax- 376-3427

[www.rgteachercenter.org](http://www.rgteachercenter.org)

## POLICY BOARD MEMBERS

The Policy Board is the governing body of the Teacher Center. The Richard Gazzola Teacher Center has been fortunate to have Policy Board Members who bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the table. Our members are dedicated volunteers whose input assures the highest possible quality of education of our students through the professional development of teachers and teaching assistants. The 2014-2015 school year has brought new membership as many of our former Policy Board Members have moved on to other phases of their lives.

The Teacher Center would like to thank the following members for their time served on the Policy Board: Dr. Edwin Quezada (administrator), Amanda Curley (administrator), Steven Mazzola (administrator), Jayme Downes (teacher), Danielle Eaton (parent), and most of all, Kevin Cacace (business community member), who has been a Policy Board Member since the inception of our Center in 1988.

We would like to welcome our new members to the Policy Board. They include Cynthia Eisner (administrator), Tiara Reyes-Vega (administrator), Elaine Shine (administrator), Sophia Wu (parent) and Alex Simeoforides (business community member).

We would like to welcome back our returning members, Lia Council (teacher), Kirk Bauer (teacher), Kevin Clifford (teacher), Helen Di-Noia (non-public school representative), Dan Florin (teacher), Ingrid Hockstader (teacher), Roz Kendrick-Jones (teacher), Jen Lorio (teacher), Dr. Christopher Macaluso (administrator), Ellen Meier (higher education representative), Dr. Kara Popiel (teacher), Bill Roney (teacher) and our secretary, Jeanne Ismail (teacher).

## RESOURCES

As a teacher, you accrue points on your evaluation for reading professional literature and implementing research-based instructional practices. The Teacher Center has a library of professional books such as *The Art of Coaching* by Elena Aguilar, *Drive* by Daniel Pink, *Mindset* by Carol Dweck, *Reframing the Path to School Leadership*, second edition by Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal, *Classroom Instruction That Works*, second edition by Ceri Dean, Elizabeth Hubbell, Howard Pitler and Bj Stone, *Implementing the Framework for Teaching* by Charlotte Danielson, *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning* second edition by Lois Easton and many others. Please let us know if you would like to borrow from our library.

## DEFENSIVE DRIVING

The Defensive Driving Class was a success. As a result, the Richard Gazzola Teacher Center, in collaboration with the National Safety Council six hour program, will offer Defensive Driving for all Yonkers teachers, teaching assistants and their family members.

Registration will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a maximum of 30 in a class. The cost of the program is **\$25.00 per person**. We must have the check before the course start date.

Benefits of the Program:

- 10% discount on personal injury, bodily injury & property damage, liability coverage and collision
- Discounts for 3 years
- Removal of up to 4 points

Make checks payable to: Bill Troy, Instructor

### DEFENSIVE DRIVING

**DATE:** Saturday, December 6, 2014

**TIME:** 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Grinton Will Library  
1500 Central Park Ave  
Yonkers, N.Y. 10710

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

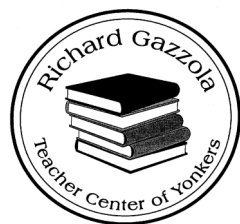
Name(s) of family members – (must be licensed drivers)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Teachers Teaching Teachers

## APPR and its Effects on Collegiality

By Kara Popiel

One of the many disturbing outcomes of the current high-stakes Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) is the detrimental effect it has had on teacher collectivity and collegiality. Instead of promoting a sense of unity, cooperation and trust, it has fostered feelings of inequity, divisiveness and self-preservation. Instead of enabling teachers to focus on reflective practice and real, authentic student growth, it has diverted our attention to a number-crunching obsession over how we can reach that 75 point "Effective" threshold, and what might happen if we don't.

Much of the discussion has centered on the unfairness of the system: how some teachers get to make their own tests while others don't, whose scores are based on state assessments and whose are not, who does or doesn't have Regents courses affecting their score, who gets assigned higher achieving students and who does not, whose students are receiving consistent services and support and whose are not. These are all legitimate and very real concerns. The problem is that these discussions are not bringing us together as teachers and colleagues; they are factionalizing us and creating ill will. They are not helping us develop solutions, they are merely adding to our collective sense of cynicism, fear and defeat.

This is even more disturbing when you consider how crucial teacher relationships are to student success. Numerous studies have found that one of the most important factors necessary for school success and academic achievement is a positive school climate that promotes collegiality, collective responsibility, cooperation and mutual trust (Drago-Severson et al., 2013; Fullen, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullen, 2012; Harris, 2013; Spillane, 2013; Thapa et al., 2013). Teachers need to have systems in place that will support their collaborative work with students as well as their joint professional growth. As Linda Darling-Hammond (2013) writes, "Teaching improves most in collegial settings where common goals are set, curriculum is jointly developed, and expertise is shared...[and] student gains are most pronounced where teachers have greater longevity and work as a team." An evaluation system that creates a distrustful, competitive, fearful environment will benefit neither teachers nor students.

So what can we do about this? The YFT and NYSUT will continue our efforts to protect our members from the harm, damage, inequity and inaccuracies of the APPR. We will continue to advocate for a better, fairer evaluation system that promotes collegiality and cooperation. But there is something we can all do right now: Do not allow this APPR to destroy our sense of professionalism, our collective vision, our passion for our work, or our cooperative efforts to educate students. We know how challenging our work is; we cannot allow this APPR to divide and divert us. We can only succeed if we work together. It's up to us to overcome this latest challenge by joining together in mutual support as fellow teachers and colleagues to help ourselves, our students and each other.

### REFERENCES

- Darling-Hammond, L. (2013). *Getting teacher evaluation right: What really matters for effectiveness and improvement*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Drago-Severson, E., Blum-DeStefano, J. & Asghar, A. (2013). *Learning for leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Sage.
- Fullan, M. (2011). *The moral imperative realized*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Sage.
- Hargreaves, A. & Fullen, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Harris, A. (2013). Building the collective capacity for system change. In Malone, H. J. (Ed). *Leading educational change: Global issues, challenges, and lessons on whole-system reform*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Spillane, J. P. (2013). Diagnosing and designing for schoolhouse practice: Educational administration and instructional improvement. In Malone, H. J. (Ed). *Leading educational change: Global issues, challenges, and lessons on whole-system reform*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Thapa, A, Cohen, J., Guffey, S. & Higgens-D'Alessandro, A. (2013, September). A review of school climate research. *Review of educational research, 83, no. 3, 357-385*.

## Solidarity is an Old Union Word

By Paul Diamond

Solidarity is an old union word, but that does not make it obsolete. We hear all the time that solidarity created the 5 day work week, the 2 week vacation, and in Yonkers, it created a lunch period for teachers, an uninterrupted preparation period, and basically all the benefits which have benefitted education and educators in our Collective Bargaining Agreement and in our laws.

We all know this is history, but it is really current events. Our victories are sometimes accompanied by challenges and detractors and we all know what they are. Many do not know what some original proposed legislation included. When politicians attacked tenure, preferring 5 year renewable contracts, NYSUT turned that into the new professional certificate certification. When right wing forces wanted teachers to be rated solely on test scores, NYSUT moved the legislature to our current APPR.

Any teacher, by now, can discuss the shortcomings of the APPR for hours, without repeating themselves and with great accuracy, and with overwhelming agreement. We know they are right, but among the most dangerous things to education is the law's self-proclaimed purpose of differentiating teachers and rating us against ourselves on a simple student score, ignoring the complexity of learning and readiness to learn.

Why did they do this? To attack solidarity. These people who don't understand that all great movement in education has resulted from cooperation, teachers helping teachers, not competition. How does this lend itself to attack solidarity? Any teacher can come up with great reasons. A divided workforce is a malleable workforce. Once a sixth grade teacher gets upset with another teacher, because of the students they were assigned, because of the support their students may or may not get, once we get angry, or jealous, we lose why we became educators.

We became teachers because we want to help. Competition introduced by Commissioner King is toxic and so we are presented with a choice. Do we race to the bottom, complain about our colleagues, fight among ourselves, or do we talk to our colleagues, express our concerns and work together for solutions?

When teachers fight teachers, Race to the Top wins. After all, a race must have a winner and must have losers. Now that the stakes are so high, do you want to win knowing you helped to create losers? I hope not, I hope we know better. We know that the only way we survive the challenges we experience is together. We not only survive these challenges together, we even thrive.

# IMPORTANT NOTICE

## Election Schedule for:

### Welfare Fund Trustee and NYSUT Representative Assembly in Buffalo (May 1-2)

#### Tuesday, November 18, 2014:

Election Flyer to members  
(notification in YFT newsletter mailings of two elections)

#### Tuesday, December 16, 2014:

Petitions due in YFT office by 4:00pm

#### Friday, December 19, 2014:

Flyer to all YFT members (in newsletter mailing if possible)  
Flyer to include open positions or results of no-contest elections

#### Thursday, January 22, 2015:

Elections held if contest(s) develop

### Are You Interested in Becoming a Tutor?

Did you know the YFT maintains a list of teachers who are interested in tutoring students in Yonkers? When parents contact the YFT Office, we will provide your contact information to them. The YFT takes no further action past pairing the parent with potential tutors. The amount charged for tutoring, scheduling and location of meetings are arranged by the parent(s) and tutor.

If you are interested, please complete the form below and send to the YFT at 35 East Grassy Sprain Road, Suite 501, Yonkers, NY 10710 OR through inter-school mail to the "YFT Office."

#### PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject(s) that you are able to tutor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bilingual: Yes No Languages: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Please note: your name will remain on the tutoring list until you contact the YFT Office to remove your name from the list.*

# Political Action 2014

Pat Puleo	YFT	Roselyn Kendrick-Jones	YMHS	Monique Rye	Riverside	Jacqueline Smith	Family Sch.32
Mike Ciriello	Lincoln	Rosie Tutt	PEARLS	Maria Beyrer	DiChario/Sch. 30	Herson Martinez	Siragusa
Joanne Casella	Dodson	Doraid Ereifij	Dodson	Paula Johnson	Gibran	Bryan Boyd	Paideia 24
Lettie Hartwell	Retired	Christina Bellusci	PEARLS	Mitch Polay	Paideia 15	Stella McCormack	PEARLS
Michael Boraczek	Retired	Richard Kauffman	Riverside	Lia Council	Riverside	Susan Havranek	Cross Hill
Kara Popiel	YFT	Jeannine Kocher	Pulaski/ 15	Vera Corato	Central Office	Mary Keaveney	Siragusa
Christine Morrone	Pulaski	Marion Kass	Lincoln	Karen Lotito	YMA	Nancy Libow	Family Sch.32
Kathy Zeolla	Pulaski	Taramati Singh	Riverside	Rachel Pagano	Cedar Place	Bridgid Murray	Cedar Place
Bryan Janszen	Saunders	Christine Marvin	Gibran	Maria Hadala	Fermi	Claire Conners	DiChario
MaryJoan Owens	Sch.31	Ellen Wilster	Pulaski/ 15	Felicia Cossifos	Sch. 24	Genia Flammia	PEARLS
Olivia King	Gibran	Rhonda Arezza	Fermi/ Sch. 5	Maureen Corrigan-Connell	YMA	Katherine Brezler	Sch. 32
Laura Gardia	Scholastic	Lia Council	Riverside	Dorothy Hicks-Terry	Cedar/Foxfire	Monica Creacy	Riverside
Aileen Myers	PEARLS	Rachel Pagano	Cedar Place	Cathy O'Connor	DiChiaro	Kevin Clifford	Cross Hill
Mala Lipis	PEARLS	Aferdita Silverman	Lincoln	Elizabeth O'Donnell	Riverside	Dan Florin	Sch. 9
Majorie Huges	Cross Hill	Sabina Pirrotta	Sch. 27	Deb Fimmano	YMA	Carline Clarke	Retiree
Jayme Downes	Riverside	Arlene Love	Sch. 27	L.D. Sweeney	PEARLS	Fran Pasquel	Retiree
Laurence Berkowitz	YMA	Maria Hadala	Fermi	Marc Pekowsky	PEARLS	Joann Kleinlp	Sch. 17
Karen Matuskovic	DiChiaro	Kara Popiel	YFT	Karen Liberatore	PEARLS	Nydia Perez	Hostos
Erin Gorman	PEARLS	Jeanne Ismail	Sch. 21	Dolores Amodeo	Mont. 31	Kilolo Thomas	Paideia 24
Renee' Zulli-Spillo	Cross Hill	Oscar Apronte	Dodson	Rosie Tutt	PEARLS	Jay Cheraskin	Gorton
Sheila Tyler	YMHS	Ikhlas Fakhoury	Cornell	Alyson Simmons	Sch. 25	Claudia Wright-Henry	Sch. 30
Craig Thorne	YMHS	Debbie Collier	Retiree/ PAC	Paul Diamond	YFT	Laura Anson	Foxfire
Laura Warner	Saunders	Denise McKinney	Retiree	Monica Anla	Sch. 31	Jennifer Lorio	Fermi
Deborah DelGuidice	Sch. 23	William McKinney	Retiree	Emiko Castro	Sch. 22	Linda Frum	YMHS
Theresa Smith	Lincoln	Monica Creacy	Riverside	Lynn Leone	Foxfire	Rachel Campanella	Fermi
Megan Huron	Lincoln	Rosie Tutt	PEARLS	Arline Frey	Retired	Elaine Betancourt	YMHS
Randy Ascher	BOE	Rita Riehman	Fermi	Millie Melendez-Hernandez	Fermi	William Betancourt	Fermi
Kirk Bauer	Riverside	Sonia Byrd	YMHS/Mont. 27	Barbara Carey	Sch. 16	Genia Flammia	PEARLS
Jeff Kane	YMA					Joan Llenin	Fermi

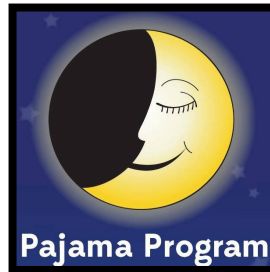
Thank you to all our members who gave up their time to support the YFT!



# YFT Community Outreach



## The Pajama Program's Stuff-a-Bus Drive!



## Making Strides Against Breast Cancer



Thank you to the following YFT members who participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk at Manhattanville College on October 19th:

**Karen Valko**  
**Justin Rosenhan**  
**Dr. C. Caragine**  
**Arlene Rosep**

**Kerriann Longo**  
**Joanne Casella**  
**Deborah Collier**  
**Florence McCue**

**Sandra Weinstein**  
**Janet Ryan**  
**Lisa Foto**  
**Olivia King**

# CONGRATULATIONS!

The following teachers have successfully completed their probationary teaching period and have been granted tenure in September through November 2014:

Jacklyn Cooney, Special Education

Almerinda DiLeo, Foreign Language

Louis DiMonaco, English

Sherry Marji, Special Education

Sheena Abraham, Elementary Education

Jak Curanovic, Special Education

Joan Livanis, Music

Michael LoMedico, Elementary Education

Joann Longo-DeRosa, Special Education

Maria Randazzo, Social Studies

Patricia Soropoulous, Science

Lauren Spagna, Elementary

Sean Stahn, Physical Education

Pedro Taveras, Foreign Language

Jessica Tufo, Elementary

“The best way to predict the future is to help create it.”

# YFT BULLETIN BOARD

## December Calendar

2nd	4:00pm	Negotiation Meeting	Will Library
3rd	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
10th	5:00pm	CLC	White Plains
11th		NYSUT Exec. Comm.	Albany
15th	7:00pm	YCPTA	
17th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
18th	3:45pm	Building Assembly	ECHS
19th	7:00pm	BOE Stated Meeting	Saunders
20th	5:00pm	ED 15/16	Mt. Kisco



YFT Happy Hour

@ **Burkes**

Bronx River Road

December 19th

**Last one of 2014!**



A female chaperone is needed for a school-sponsored, 9-day trip to Italy in Spring 2015. If you are interested, please contact Francesco Mazzuca (Palisade Prep) at (914)316-4775



**T**arrytown  
**L**earning  
**C**enter

Professional Development Seminars for NYSUT Members

Please take advantage of new PD workshops available at the Tarrytown NYSUT

Regional Office. The website is: [www.nysut.org/ereg/tlc](http://www.nysut.org/ereg/tlc).

December 9, 2014- 21st Century Skills for Teachers

December 18, 2014- Engaging the Disruptive Student

January 26, 2015- Evidence Collection for the Non-Observable Standards

**For more details, contact NYSUT at (914)592-4411.**



The YFT's Toys For Tots holiday drive is in full swing! Please donate new, wrapped toys labeled with age range and boy/girl.

**Please deliver to your building rep  
by**

**December 1st**