

the grapevine

NTA TEACHING ASSISTANT CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Welcome Back

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Welcome back to a new school year. We hear this question all of the time, what has the union done for me? The question that should be asked is what have you done for the union, since YOU are the union? United as one makes us strong and that makes us the NTAC of the NTA. Our unity shows in many ways. Contributing to Vote Cope, attending BOE meetings, participating at union rallies, and being registered to vote and going out to vote are just a few ways we show unity. Everyone has a job to make a strong union. In what way are you involved? You can reach any member of the Executive Committee at Newburghta.com. Check out the site for current union information, also the NTA Facebook page. Have a wonderful new school year! - Sheila Manning, NTATAC Chair



The Newburgh Teachers Association Teaching Assistant Chapter had a Seniority meeting on September 13, 2011. NTA President Patricia Van Duser and NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Ken DeStefano had a question and answer session about seniority and displacement.

It was discussed that all teaching assistants who believed their seniority information could be incorrect should call either Human Resources or Sheila Manning to confirm that their teaching assistant hire date is correct, the BOE meeting that their minutes were approved is correct, as well as any past time as a teaching aide is also correct. This is the order in which seniority is placed. If there are any modifications then you will need to contact the Teaching Assistants' Chapter with documentation so that it may prove that what the district has is incorrect.

Displacement was also discussed at the meeting. There is no "building seniority". Teaching Assistants can be moved at any time, but a reason may have to be documented. If you have a problem with the displacement or new position, contact the Teaching Assistants' Chapter so that a meeting with the administrator of the building to discuss this can be arranged. Next, if you are not satisfied with the meeting, you may contact the Teaching Assistants' Chapter to set up a meeting with the Superintendent, who has the final say.

General Information

Certification: Remember it is the member's responsibility to keep their certification up to date. You can access information on Teaching Assistants certification on the [NY State Education Web Site](#).

District email: Warning! Do not use the District's e-mail system for union or personal business! You should expect that any message sent or received through the District's system will be read by the administration. In the case of *Baynes v. Fairport CSD (Monroe County)*, the court held that a public employer can be required to honor a request made under NY's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) for copies of e-mails sent or received through the public employer's server (The Edge, Dec. '07).

Grievance Procedure: Please go to your Building Rep. first whenever you have a question or concern. You should know your contract and the area that pertains to your question or concern. The Building Rep. will then go with you to the Head Delegate if the problem or concern is a possible grievance. The correct forms will be filled out and be sent to the grievance committee.

Member Information Update: If your personal information (divorce, marriage, beneficiaries, address, phone number, etc.) has changed, please remember to update your TRS information and fill out and return the [Membership Update Form](#) to the NTA Office.

Sick Bank: The Sick Bank is a great resource but you need to follow the correct procedures. Please take the time to fill out and return the [Sick Leave Bank](#) donation form if you have not done so. Contributing to the Sick Bank entitles you to apply to the Sick Bank if it is necessary. To apply to the Sick Bank, send a letter accompanied with medical documentation (Doctor's letter), to Human Resources and Pat Favata, Vails Gate School.

New York State Teachers' Retirement System ...

Want to learn more about your retirement benefits or begin planning your retirement? Here are some dates and locations where you can schedule your in-person consultations:

Albany

(800) 348-7298, ext 6100

NYS Teachers' Retirement System

10 Corporate Woods Drive

Albany appointments are scheduled

During regular business hours,

Monday through Friday, year-round

Kingston

Board of Education

61 Crown Street

Nov. 14, 30; Dec. 6; Jan. 9, 24; Feb. 8, 27; March 8,

20; April 19, 30; May 8, 23; and, June 11

Central Valley - Video Consultation

Central Valley Elementary School, 45 Route 32

Pension Answers & Benefit Estimates

As part of your retirement planning, you should meet with a NYSTRS representative who can answer your pension questions and provide you with printed benefit estimates. You can book a consultation (or a Pension & retirement Education Program - PREP): **Online:** through the MyNYSTRS area of the NYSTRS website - www.nystrs.org or by calling NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, ext. 6100.

Bullying Prevention

By: Maureen Pavlik



Governor Cuomo proclaimed October 2011 as bullying prevention month in New York state. October is currently the national bullying prevention month as well. These campaigns unite communities locally and nationwide to educate and raise awareness of bullying prevention.

At the 2011 Youth Leadership Forum in Albany, Newburgh Free Academy students presented a workshop to share NFA's program **SAVVY-Students Against Violence in Youth**. NFA students developed the successful anti-violence campaign last year in response to several incidents that occurred within their school and community. **SAVVY** was the recipient of the Orange County Executive's Youth award at the Orange County Bureau's annual luncheon this past summer. Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther applauded the NFA students commenting that, "national research shows that peer to peer programs have a significant impact on students...and I believe other schools will soon be modeling this program."

In June 2010, the **Dignity For All Students Act** was signed into NYS law. The act prohibits harassment against all students in public schools including harassment based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practices, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. This act passed during the 2011 legislation and will take effect July 1, 2012.

This **Dignity For All Students Act** will require school districts to:

- establish anti-harassment and discrimination policies
- create school training programs in harassment and discrimination
- Develop nondiscrimination instruction and counseling methods.
- K-12 grade level curriculum must include a course on civility, citizenship and character education.

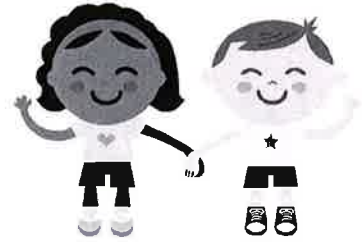
The Law to Encourage the Acceptance of all Differences (LEAD) addresses bullying in more detail. In LEAD, all school employees (including teachers, administrators, counselors, coaches and custodians) would be required to report all known or suspected incidences of bullying to the superintendent. The law would protect any employee who reports such incidents in good faith from civil liability. This mirrors the mandatory reporting policy governing known or suspected child abuse. LEAD would add bullying to the list of incidents for which disciplinary measures must be taken pursuant to the district code of conduct.

LEAD was passed by the Senate during the 2011 legislative session, but would still need to be passed by the Assembly and signed by Governor Cuomo before it can become a law.



Orange County student youth leaders from Newburgh, Middletown, and Pine Bush school districts recently attended the 2011 Youth Leadership Forum in Albany. While there, the students and their Orange County Youth Bureau hosts met with NYS representatives, including Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther.

School Highlights



NEWBURGH FREE ACADEMY

The 11th Annual Empty Bowls Event was held @ NFA on April 13th, 2011. Two hundred bowls were made by the talented ceramics students at NFA. The bowls were made in all shapes and sizes and a variety of soups made by the NFA cafeteria staff as well as salad, breads and desserts were served. All proceeds from this event was donated to the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley.

NEW WINDSOR SCHOOL

New Windsor School held its 4th annual fashion show on June 13, 2011. The fashion show was brought to NWS by Mr. Sheffield who bestowed the event to Mrs. Fernandez and Mrs. Cinnante who are 1st grade Teaching Assistants. The event keeps on growing every year. This year there were 45 participating students. The students truly enjoy participating in the show. The fashion show is broken into categories: best dressed, school spirit, summer wear, funny wear, and sports wear. Mrs. Lucas, NWS principal, is extremely happy that Mrs. Fernandez and Mrs. Cinnante have such a great event going for the students. Way to go ladies!!!

HORIZONS ON THE HUDSON

Horizons on the Hudson School has been working for authorization to become an International Baccalaureate World School. After a 3 year process, their hard work and effort has paid off. The visit for authorization was on March 24-25, 2011. Over the summer they received the email they had been looking for. It was official, they had authorization as an IB World School. There are 70 IB schools in New York State. Only 15 are on the elementary level. They are one of the 15. A huge congratulations goes out to Horizons for this great accomplishment! It was a total group effort from the IB coordinator, administrators, teachers, teaching assistants and the rest of the support staff.

Horizon on the Hudson Mission Statement:

Horizons-on-the-Hudson School provides an inquiry-based international program where all students are respected, guided and challenged to reach their full potential. The Horizons community pledges to develop lifelong learners who are responsible, caring, global citizens, prepared to become leaders in the 21st Century.



Did you know ...

It may not seem like bedspreads can spur an economic recovery, but consider this, the average US back to college shopper was expected to spend more than \$800 this season -- \$46 billion in total. If all of that was spent on US-made goods, economists say, that could result in almost a half-million new jobs.

But a majority of that back to school money is being spent overseas because of deals catalogue companies like On Campus Marketing have made. Many of these companies give financial incentives to the schools who send their catalogues to the hundreds of thousands of incoming students. In turn the students and their families are then using these catalogues as one-stop shopping guides to college, despite the fact that none of the products are made in America.

So if the American-made stuff was cheaper would the more than 800 universities that use On Campus Marketing's catalog be willing to make a switch and offer American-made items? "World News" introduced On Campus Marketing to Celia Rachel in Mohican Mills, N.C., a company that makes bedding at the same price as its foreign competitors. Celia Rachel boasts that its sheets are not only the same price, but last three times as long as the ones On Campus Marketing is selling right now.

According to economists, if every year, the more than three million incoming college freshman decided to buy sheets from American manufacturers, companies like Celia Rachel could quadruple their workforce and hire more than 1,300 new employees.

Most college students just create messes with their dorm rooms, but an entire generation is capable of creating thousands of jobs with theirs. By: Diane Sawyer, ABC News



The NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund is ongoing and your generosity is welcomed. If you would like to make an online donation, please go to www.nysut.org and go to the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund page where you can make a paypal donation. Donations may also be mailed to: NYSUT Headquarters, Attn: Jeff Lockwood, Accounting Department, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, New York 12110. Please make checks payable to "NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund".

General Membership Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, November 15, 2011— SRP Day

Refreshments will be served at the NTA Office @ 4:15pm

