

# News & Notes

VOL. XLV No. 6 • SEPTEMBER 2016

## SAANYS Remains Active in Engaging Federal Lawmakers

SAANYS has seized every available opportunity to influence the development of federal regulations and state procedures underpinning the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

### Meeting with the New York Federal Delegation in Washington DC

In June, SAANYS participated in the National Leaders Conference organized by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in Washington DC. The conference culminated with lobby teams from the various states meeting with members of their respective federal delegations.



The team from New York was comprised of:

- Karl Thielking – SAANYS Past President, SAANYS NASSP representative, and Principal of Pittsford Mendon HS
- John McKenna – SAANYS President and Principal of Fletcher Elementary School
- Paul Fanuele – SAANYS President Elect and Executive Principal of Arlington HS
- James Viola – SAANYS Director of Government Relations

As is often the case at such conferences, SAANYS had the most ambitious schedule of appointments with their federal representatives from New York State. Meetings were completed with representatives and staff from the following offices:

- Senator Charles Schumer
- Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
- Congressman Chris Collins – District 27
- Congressman Chris Gibson – District 19
- Congressman Brian Higgins – District 26
- Congressman Sean Maloney – District 18
- Congresswoman Louise Slaughter – District 25
- Congresswoman Elise Stefanik – District 21

In light of the many statutory and regulatory requirements that remain in place following the Race to the Top (RTTT) program and additional program requirements that have been established in New York State, team members urged maximum allocations for each of the title programs.

**SAANYS 45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

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**OCT 23-24 2016**



**SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

New York's Title II allocation was then scheduled for a \$9 million reduction; and the State Education Department was allocated only \$1 million of the \$45 million it requested from the state legislature for professional development. Quality professional development is needed throughout the state to successfully phase-in the new state standards and state assessments now under development. Otherwise, there is a risk of repeating the mistakes made during the roll-out of RTTT reforms. In regard to RTTT, the Gates Foundation CEO said, "...our foundation underestimated the level of resources and support required for our public education systems to be well-equipped to implement the standards."

For Title III, there is a great and growing need for support to meet the needs of English learners and immigrant students. There are over 213,000 English language learners in New York State, and many school districts across the state are experiencing large increases of ELL students and unaccompanied minors – many of whom are Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) and

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## SAANYS Welcomes New Units:

– REGION 2 –

Hempstead School Administrators Association

– REGION 8 –

Oneonta CSD Administrators Association

– REGION 8 –

Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Administrators Association

## LEGAL BRIEFS

### The Unpopular and Dreaded Counseling Memo

There may come a time when you or someone you know may inadvertently engage in an action that is perceived by the district to warrant discipline. While this is something that no one wants to contemplate, you may need to do so at some point in your career.

It is important to understand that administrators, organized under a collective bargaining agreement, have the right to the representation of their choice in any meeting where discipline is either going to be imposed or where they may be asked questions that could result in discipline. As a general rule, if you are advised that you have the right to bring representation, then you should probably do so, if for no other reason than to have a witness to the meeting. If you are called into such a meeting, it is a good idea to call SAANYS or have your representation call our office in order to know your rights. Typically, the representation is someone from within the unit; however, SAANYS has attorneys and labor relations specialists who are available to represent an administrator in such situations. If representation is not available at the appointed time of the meeting, it can be rescheduled within a reasonable period of time.

By law, the only forms of discipline that a district can unilaterally implement against an administrator are an oral warning or a written counseling memorandum to the administrator's personnel file. Any other forms of discipline, including a written reprimand, fine, suspension, or termination, must be either negotiated with the administrator or rendered by a hearing officer at the conclusion of a 3020-a hearing. A collective bargaining unit may negotiate

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## Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

### A Time for Adults

By now it is well known what efforts are underway to reverse the damage caused by NCLB, RTTT, CCLS, and New York's ever-evolving evaluation system.

NCLB has been replaced by ESSA, which is intended to give significant discretion and authority in education policy back to the states. The RTTT has run its course (pun intended) and New York is now using practitioners to develop new learning standards. Some complain that the development process is not meaningful, but I believe such a viewpoint needs to be tempered by

recognition of the difficulty in soliciting, considering, and fairly integrating the competing viewpoints of many stakeholders.

There is a new assessment vendor, and the promise that future assessments will in fact be related to the new standards and developed with the assistance of practitioners. The tests have been shortened (I acknowledge the debate over the significance of the reduction), time limitations removed (I acknowledge the debate over whether that change has been positive or negative), and test results are being supplied quicker (quick enough?) and with

greater transparency.

There are also the current and looming statutory and regulatory changes that are significant. They include the current moratorium on the use of test scores in evaluations and the promise of a new evaluation system to be developed by SED. Not coincidentally, the new evaluation system is due right as the test score moratorium ends. This reflects the thinking of a revamped Board of Regents; revamped in a manner I believe most educators think is in their interests. There seems to be a level of activity that gives rise to hope that logic and fairness may soon be restored to our professional environment.

The implementation of reforms under development may help calm the waters. It may lead parents to conclude that it is unnecessary to opt their children out of the state exams. As real reforms are implemented it is reasonable

to expect the opt-out rate to decline, barring some outside (read federal) interference.

Current U.S. Secretary of Education John King has proposed ESSA regulations that would require a 95 percent participation rate in state examinations, of all identifiable subgroups, or else a district failing to meet this threshold would have to develop and implement an improvement plan. In many districts, with or without a 95 percent participation rate, that would be a colossal waste of time and resources. Failing to meet that threshold could be a matter of a child or two, and assumes it is within the control of the educator to compel participation in the exams. As recent experience plainly demonstrates, that ship has long sailed.

The 95 percent participation requirement seems punitive and overreaching given the move to state control. It will likely in-

crease defiance that may well manifest itself in increased opt-outs, and extend and exacerbate the chaotic educational environment of the recent past. It is the proverbial fuel to the fire. It could subvert much of the good work currently being done by the new Board of Regents, Commissioner Elia, and many practitioners from around the state that is slowly restoring some semblance of confidence in state regulators.

Increasing student participation in state exams is best attained by correcting the underlying deficiencies which gave rise to the opt-out movement in the first instance. Simply seeking to compel participation, and punishing schools for the decisions of parents when an arbitrary threshold has not been attained, strikes me as almost juvenile in its intransigence. We should learn from our past. ■

## A Time for a New Curriculum Theory

Sponsor Opinion piece by Dr. Bruce H. Crowder, Educational Vistas, Inc.

With the advent of new standards and new assessments which bring forth a deeper understanding in all academic areas, it is only logical that a curriculum theory to carry new and rigorous expectations needs to be developed. In fact, a reexamination of the domain of curriculum has been long overdue. For one thing, there is not currently a clear definition of curriculum.

Academicians continue to argue it, for the most part, from a philosophical perspective.

Stronger voices from the past that speak to the curriculum domain include William James, Jean Piaget, and James Macdonald. William James in his "radical empiricism" was lead to the conclusion that knowing or understanding is not a passive awareness, but a form of activity. He viewed

cognition as not a matter of holding ideas before the mind, but a matter of using whatever may be before the mind. In the case of Jean Piaget, his empirical research lead him to view intelligence not as the figurative content of culture but the operations performed. James Macdonald in similar fashion stressed a curriculum of action rather than intention, plans, goals, and objectives, which should not form the nucleus of curriculum.

This brings us to the question: How should the curriculum domain be defined in terms of new thinking and new practices? My view, based

on experience and a long arc of examination from Aristotle to those currently working in the domain, takes me back to the voices of James, Piaget, and Macdonald with an extended perspective. I define curriculum as the integration of teaching, learning, and assessment within an integrated web. This definition rests squarely on the importance of doing!

An examination of extant, so-called curriculum being used today remains heavily dependent on skill and process. And yet, new standards and assessments demand student performance opportunities to access

knowledge. Without a new view on testing as an integrated feature of the curriculum, student scores will remain stagnant or with minimal improvement. Teaching in one domain and testing in another is counterproductive. This may account heavily for the continued low performance of students, as exhibited on state assessments.

*Dr. Bruce H. Crowder, former New York State assistant commissioner for school improvement, is a senior researcher at EdVistas and is currently writing a text titled, "Curriculum Theory for New Standards, Assessments, and Practices."* ■

*The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinion or philosophy of the School Administrators Association of New York State.*

## News & Notes

School Administrators Association of New York State

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# Engaging Federal Lawmakers

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require extensive and intensive educational services. In addition, the Board of Regents adopted changes to Part 154 of state regulations for the enhanced provision of services to ELL students, without any additional funding.

In order to make more funds available for student services, the team strongly advised against enactment of the Respect—The Best Job in the World program proposed by Education Secretary John King. If enacted, this competitive grant program would allocate \$1 billion to increase the salaries of “effective teachers” to move up the salary scale at an accelerated pace. The team felt that such a program could create derision in school districts:

- Which teachers are effective and which are not?
- The annual professional performance review system is an invalid and unreliable “mess” in New York State, and is virtually useless for making fair determinations.
- After the grant period this program would constitute an unfunded mandate for participating school districts.

With the passage of ESSA, Commissioner Elia expressed strong interest in New York State applying to be one of seven states to be granted Section 1204, Innovative Assessment and Accountability Demonstration Authority. However, in June, the commissioner informed SAANYS that SED would not submit an application because the program includes no additional funding for implementation. The SAANYS team strongly recommended that reasonable funding support be allocated for this program, and impressed upon federal representatives the need for better, more innovative assessment approaches in order to win back the public confidence and support necessary to drive down the state assessment opt-out rate, which was 220,000 in 2015 (and has further increased to approximately 230,000 in 2016).

Finally, for purposes of school accountability and the

calculation of high school graduation, the SAANYS team urged reconsideration of what constitutes successful completion in two ways.

First, it was recommended that a high school equivalency diploma be “counted” as a form of successful school completion, whereas the USDOE currently designates students who receive HSE diplomas as dropouts. The new GED® test and tests like it, such as CTB McGraw-Hill’s Tests Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) – adopted by New York State – are rigorous and consistent with common core standards. Students who remain in school and successfully complete this test battery should be regarded as successful school completers for purposes of graduation rate calculations and school accountability – they certainly are not dropouts.

Second, in New York State, students earn Regents, local, or high school equivalency diplomas based on rigorous criteria, which do not include a time criterion – and there is no compelling reason to establish a four-year criterion now. At a time when we are increasing academic rigor and strongly emphasizing college and career readiness, we should not be seeking the most expedient route to school completion, but the route that is planned, sequenced, and timed to make the best strategic use of no-cost public education services to promote success in post-secondary education opportunities. Therefore, states should be allowed to include every student who remains in school and graduates with a high school diploma as a “graduate” and successful school completer for purposes of school accountability.

## Addressing Draft Federal Regulations

On May 31, the U.S. Department of Education issued draft regulations to implement programs to the Every Student Succeeds Act, which was enacted in December 2015. On July 22, SAANYS submitted comments and recommendations that have been broadly disseminated to all members of New York State’s congressional delegation, and to others.

The letter states that SAANYS applauded the clear intent of ESSA to change the federal-state relationship by returning more decision-making to the states. With respect to the accountability system, it is the association’s overall observation that “...many of the proposed regulations exceed statutory authority, and sometimes fly in the face of congressional intent. Just as importantly, many of the provisions are rushed, oversimplistic, and are more focused on punishment than the provision of assistance. These same characteristics are applicable to New York State’s recent flawed roll-out of Race to the Top reforms – all of which are now in

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For more information regarding the SAANYS legislative agenda, the New York State Board of Regents, the Educational Conference Board, or other government relations concerns, contact James Viola, SAANYS director of government relations, at [JViola@saanys.org](mailto:JViola@saanys.org).

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# 2016 CALENDAR



*Library Card Signup Month*

**Sept 8 International Literacy Day**

**Sept 11-17 National Arts in Education Week**

**Sept 11 Patriot Day**

**Sept 15-Oct 15 National Hispanic Heritage Month**

**Sept 16 Mayflower Day**

**Sept 17 Citizenship Day**

**Sept 21 International Day of Peace**

**Sept 22 First Day of Autumn**

**Sept 28 National Good Neighbor Day**



*National Bullying Prevention Month*

*National Principals Month*

**Oct 3 Child Health Day**

**Oct 5 International Walk to School Day**

**Oct 9-15 National Educational Office Professionals Career Awareness Week**

**Oct 10-14 National School Lunch Week**

**Oct 16 World Food Day**

**Oct 17-21 National Character Counts Week**

**Oct 17-21 National School Bus Safety Week**

**Oct 22 Make a Difference Day**

**Oct 24 United Nations Day**

**Oct 31 Halloween**

# SAANYS Professional Development Update



For information on any SAANYS professional development event, contact Karen Bronson at [KBronson@saanys.org](mailto:KBronson@saanys.org).

As I write this, I am ready to set off for Buffalo for the last 2016 LIFT NY Summer Leadership Institute to be held at McKinley High School for 200 Buffalo City and other regional school leaders. This event, a result of our collaboration with our partners at NYSFSA, will feature eight workshops over two days and will provide attendees a choice to select the topics that are most relevant to their work. A sampler: Google and Microsoft for All Administrators; Getting Your Laptop, Ipad, and Phone in Sync; Honing Your Observation Skills; Using Data to Inform Instruction; Leadership for a Changing Time; Promoting a Positive School Culture Through Team Building; and more.

The other two LIFT Summer Leadership Institutes were held in Long Island on July 18 and 19, and in Albany here at SAANYS on July 20 and 21. Each featured varied topics to connect with the varied issues and needs that our leaders face across the state: Rethinking Traditional Approaches to Grading offered easy to implement strategies to get the conversation started and put the focus more on learning and less on grading in ways that move us closer to a deeper revamp of this complex issue that seems more anachronistic by the day. An overview of the big ideas of the thought leaders, Tom Guskey, Cathy Vatterott, Myron Dueck, and others, provided a glimpse at both the reasons why our traditional system does not work for students and the short and long term steps needed to start to chip away at this old bedrock. Leadership Through the Lens of Michael Fullan provided a good complement to the grading workshop by focusing on systems thinking and capacity building around actions like common formative assessment to shift the focus from "What did I get?" to "What did I learn?"

Long Island and Albany also featured a look Beyond the Horizon: Current Trends in Educational Technology; Moving Long Term ELLs Forward; Google Classroom for Administrators; and Situations and Simulations for Educational Leaders, which used video simulations for problem solving of the kinds of realistic situations that our school leaders face every day. It is important to note that unlike one shot workshops, each of the LIFT NY face-to-face sessions was followed up by online sessions and opportunities for the attendees to contact the presenters for individual follow up and implementation. So, if you liked what you heard in the data workshop, for example, the conversation with the presenter is extended online and individually when you get back to your building and actually want to implement a strategy you learned in the workshop. Jeff Olefson of Olefson Associates has done an outstanding job of organizing and moderating these online sessions for our many attendees over the summer.

None of this would have happened without the expertise and efforts of my fellow presenters and partners. A huge thank you goes out to our partners at NYSCATE, JP Associates, Measurement Inc. Executive Leadership Institute (ELI), and practitioner presenters Tom Payton and David Ashdown.

### Here's what our attendees had to say:

- **"Lots of useful, applicable information to move forward with immediately."**
- **"Appreciated the sharing of new ideas and resources in an interactive format."**
- **"Interactive workshops with real world applications"**
- **"Great followup to the sessions online!"**

So again, THANK YOU to everyone who made our Summer Leadership Institutes a success!

PS – In the midst of our summer work here in NYS, I had the opportunity to travel to England to do a presentation at the Oxford University Education Symposium – what a way to experience what education leaders are thinking about all over the world! Check out some pics in this issue of *News & Notes* and look for an article about the experience in a future issue of *Vanguard*. Hope to see you at the Sagamore! ■

# Scenes from Summer PD

Summer LIFT NY events of the Magellan Foundation in collaboration with SAANYS and NYSFSA.



Doug Blancero of JP Associates presents at the July GST BOCES Leadership Academy.



David Ashdown leads Google Classroom for Administrators: Modeling Digital Age Learning at SAANYS on July 21.



Sarah Vakkas, Sara Fontana, and Linda Perry of GST BOCES facilitating the August cohort meeting of the SAANYS LIFT NY Leadership Academy in Painted Post.



The leadership team of Greenville Central School enjoyed the workshop on Inter Rater Reliability at the Albany Country Club on July 13.



Dan Shornstein, Don Gately, and Tom Averill engage in a professional online conversation on the importance of relationship building on August 10.

Are you teaching about robotics in your school?  
Which ones are you using & what grade level?



Hands on new tech at the Summer Leadership Institute at SAANYS on July 20.



Tom Payton walks attendees through the ELS Situations and Simulations LIFT NY workshop on July 21 at SAANYS.



Karen Bronson ready to present with educators from around the world at the Oxford University Educational Symposium in Oxford, England on August 4.

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**Sunday, October 23 – 5:00 pm**

Author and leader of *the Strengths Movement in Schools*

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What if you came on as principal only to see your school described as a ‘cesspool’ on the front page of the *Boston Globe*? That’s what happened to Sue Szachowicz when she began as principal of Brockton High School. What happened next is a powerful story of school transformation and collaborative leadership in the truest sense of the word. Regardless of the size or demographics of your school and district, this powerful keynote promises to leave you with ideas that both inspire and stick.

A Q&A With:



**MARYELLEN ELIA**

New York State Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York

**Monday, October 24 – 8:00 am**

Sponsored by Centric Learning

MaryEllen Elia is the New York State Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York (USNY). A native New Yorker, Ms. Elia has 45 years of experience as an educator. Prior to her appointment in New York, she served as superintendent of schools in Hillsborough County, FL, for 10 years. In Hillsborough, which includes Tampa and is the nation’s eighth largest school district, she successfully implemented higher learning standards, partnered with teachers to develop a comprehensive evaluation system, and earned national recognition for gains in student achievement.

Workshops

- Strengthening Middle School Education Through the STW Continuous Improvement Process
- Ten Ways to (Ensure That You Don’t) Kill Joy in Your School: Common Pitfalls and the Strategies to Avoid Them
- Transitioning to Standards Based Grading
- Transforming Your Learning Environment so Students and Teachers Can Thrive
- Disrupting Education Through Pathways in Technology Early College High School (PTECH)
- The Millennials are Taking Over! How Leaders Can Leverage Culture with a New Work Force
- Transition Scores and SLOs: Who, When, and How

Ed Camp



This year’s program will include an EdCamp professional development experience from 1:45-4:45pm on Sunday as part of the conference program.

Because the session topics are determined onsite by the attendees, you will be free to tackle the issues keeping you up at night and hash out innovative solutions with your peers. Facilitated by SAANYS’ own Don Gately, principal at Jericho Middle School.

**SESSIONS WITH SAANYS STAFF:**

**Sunday, October 23 – 11:00 am - 12:15 pm**

Education Programs, Services, and Planning

James Viola, SAANYS Director of Government Relations

Sponsored by SMP

**Monday, October 24 – 2:45 pm - 3:45 pm**

Legal and Legislative Update

Arthur Scheuermann, SAANYS General Counsel

James Viola, SAANYS Director of Government Relations

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- Bringing the Future to a Small Rural School through STEAM and Makerfaire
- Teacher Engagement: A Model that Works
- Organizing Time, Space, and Technology to Support 21st Century Learning
- Assets Get Active: Utilizing the Forty Developmental Assets Within a High School Curriculum
- Implementing Consistent Grading Practices at the Secondary Level
- AXA Retirement Workshop

# LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message From  
Wendy DeForge  
SAANYS Counsel  
WDeForge@saanys.org



## The Dreaded and Unpopular Counseling Memo

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alternate procedures for imposing and/or disputing more severe forms of discipline, but such contractual clauses are rare.

A counseling memo should not be thought of as discipline so much as guidance or counseling on a perceived problem and the district's expectations of how similar matters should be handled in the future. Depending on whether any procedures outlined in your contract have been violated, there

may be an opportunity to grieve the memo. However, the most typical way to address a counseling memo is to write a written rebuttal.

A written rebuttal is a letter addressing the alleged conduct in the counseling memorandum that is attached to the memo and becomes a part of the personnel file. Since receiving a counseling memorandum is often a stressful and emotional experience, we

often recommend that the administrator either waits until he or she has had time to digest the situation or to write everything out, including how he or she feels, and then rip it up and start on the actual rebuttal. A rebuttal should never attack a supervisor or others on a personal level. It should be informative and candid while resisting the temptation to let anger or hurt take priority over professionalism.

The rebuttal should be short, concise, and always professional. Open the rebuttal with some word of acknowledgment or thanks regarding the advice that was rendered and how it will be applied to future situations. Then, taking the counseling memorandum point by

point, it should directly quote the counseling memorandum whenever possible. The response should be logical and briefly factually addressing each point. We

*The SAANYS Legal Department is here to help you evaluate any counseling memos you may receive and assist with the rebuttal.*

usually recommend that the responses be written in bullet points in order to prevent straying from the salient points.

If some of the accusations are correct, but may require an explanation, take ownership of the errors. If an explanation is warranted, provide the reason, but do not make multiple excuses. It

should be stressed that any mistake was a single error in an otherwise strong career that will not be repeated. The rebuttal should ultimately end with a reiteration that you will take the advice and counseling to heart and will apply it in the future.

The SAANYS Legal Department is here to help you evaluate any counseling memos you may receive and assist

with the rebuttal. It is highly recommended that you run any rebuttals by SAANYS in order to assure that you are putting your best foot forward, both for your short term relationship with your supervisors and with any others who may see the counseling memorandum and the rebuttal in the future. ■

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**Thursdays - Oct 20, Nov 17, & Dec 9, 2016**  
Capital Region BOCES – Latham (Albany area), NY

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**Thursday, November 10, 2016 - Albany**

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Half-day - Four locations  
**Tuesday, September 13, 2016 - Long Island**  
**Wednesday, September 14, 2016 - Albany**  
**Thursday, September 15, 2016 - Syracuse**  
**Friday, September 16, 2016 - Buffalo**

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# Engaging Federal Lawmakers

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the process of being reviewed and revised by the State Education Department. Therefore, to advance the federal-state relationship intended in ESSA, it is our overriding recommendation that federal regulations be written in a manner that closely parallels the ESSA statutory language and framework.”

The SAANYS letter states positions and extends alternative recommendations in regard to eight proposed requirements:

1. That accountability determinations be made using prior year school results, including summer school graduates, and those determinations be provided to school districts prior to the start of the school year.
2. That only a four-year graduation rate, and not any extended year graduation rates, be used to determine which schools have graduation rates below 67 percent and must be identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement.
3. That all schools be assigned to at least one of three summative levels (e.g., Red, Green, Yellow) and publically reported as such.
4. That if more than five percent of an accountability group (e.g., students with disabilities) on an accountability measure do not participate in a state assessment these students will be considered non-proficient.
5. That all school that fail to meet the participation rate requirement must implement an improvement plan.
6. That for schools that fail to meet the participation rate requirement, the state would be required to place the school in the lowest category on an accountability indicator or on the summative indicator, identify the school for Targeted Improvement, or implement another equally rigorous action.
7. That if a school district wishes to use a nationally recognized high school examination in lieu of a state assessment, all students in the school district must take the examination.
8. That teacher salaries will be included in supplement, not supplant and comparability determinations.



## Hosting a Constituent Meeting for Congressman Tonko and School Administrators

On August 23, SAANYS hosted the 5th annual meeting of Congressman Paul Tonko (and his colleagues Emily Duhovny, legislative assistant, and Diana Bennett, field representative), with school administrators from schools located in the 20th Congressional District.

School administrators discussed a broad array of educational issues based on the circumstances of their respective school districts. Principally in connection with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), topics included early childhood educational services, services for English language learners and immigrant students, and the need for quality professional development. However, the topics that received the greatest attention were provisions contained in draft federal regulations related to consequences for not achieving 95 percent student participation in state assessments and the inappropriateness of making school accountability determinations based upon a four-year graduation rate.

In addition to SAANYS Executive Director Kevin Casey, and Director of Government Relations James Viola, the following school administrators attended the Constituent Meeting:



- Albany City SD – Thomas Giglio
- Amsterdam City SD – Vicky Ramos
- Amsterdam City SD – Patrick Corrigan
- Ballston Spa CSD – Joseph Dragone
- Berne-Knox-Westerlo CSD – Leslie Smith
- Burnt Hills – Ballston Lake – Christopher Abdo
- Cohoes City SD – Bryan Wood
- East Greenbush CSD – Lawrence Edson
- Guilderland CSD – Christopher Sanita
- North Colonie CSD – Brian Spofford
- Saratoga Springs CSD – Brett Miller
- Schalmont CSD – Joby Gifford
- Schalmont CSD – Brian Sherman
- Schenectady City SD – Diane Wilkinson
- Shenendehowa CS – Jill Gould
- Shenendehowa CS – Greg Pace
- South Colonie CSD – Greg Bearup

## Active Participation in the State Education Department's ESSA Think Tank

Finally, SAANYS has been active in engaging State Education Leadership in their work to develop a new ESSA compliant State Plan. Such engagement continues to be ongoing and includes **monthly meetings with Commissioner MaryEllen Elia** and members of her administrative team. It also includes regular involvement in the department's ESSA Think Tank that is headed by Assistant Commissioner Ira Schwartz – involving frequent telephone conference calls as well as face-to-face meetings.

The State Education Department has set the goal to submit its ESSA State Plan by March 6, 2017. However, state education agencies may also submit their plans during a second window, in July 5, 2017.

For more information regarding the federal engagement initiatives summarized in this article, contact James Viola, director of government relations, by e-mailing [JViola@saanys.org](mailto:JViola@saanys.org). The letter submitted by SAANYS in regard to the draft federal regulations is posted on the SAANYS website. ■

## Congratulations Retiring Members

Janet Cullen Abowd  
William Adam  
Christine Antalek  
Evelyn Arias-Farneti  
Mary Beth Ash-Jones  
Susan Barsky  
Karen Bauchle  
Kevin Bayen  
Stephen Beamish  
Kathleen Bernhard  
David Berryann  
Karen Boni  
Joyce Brace  
Theresa Brayman  
Micah Brown  
Stewart Brown  
Cheryl Buggs  
Lawrence Butti  
Anthony Cali  
Regina Calvano  
Andrea Campo  
Rose Castello  
Barbara Cesario  
Donald Chung  
Debora Cox  
Karen Culotti  
Maureen Dart  
Paula Donohue  
Barbara Dunn  
Kelly Ford Ellingham  
Stephen Ettinger  
Walter Foltarz  
Shelley Gentile  
Nancy Gerstner  
Susan Gies  
Barbara Goldstein  
Kathleen Gottschalk  
Joanne Goudy-Crosson  
Laurie Harris  
Jeff Johnson  
Frances Kennedy  
Steven Kessler  
Wendy Kisseloff  
Linda Korycki  
Linda Law  
Marjorie Lefler  
Harold Leve  
Eleanor Levy  
Michele Liguori-Alampi  
Diane Lordi  
Lorraine Malecki  
Marilyn Manfredi  
Margaret Maraia  
Gayle Marchica  
Margaret Marengni  
Barbara Marrine  
Daniel McDougal  
Carolyn Merrihew  
James Meyer  
Michael Millan  
Christine Mucci  
Marian Nasta  
Brian Nolan  
Jose Olavarria  
Karen Olynk  
Linda O'Neill  
Kimberly Patterson  
Maureen Patterson  
Catherine Peets  
David Peter  
Linda Ann Pickering  
Vicki Pohlman  
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Carmela Proctor  
Charles Purce  
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## The (Tax) Advantages of Saving for Retirement



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Did you know that every time you save for retirement, you can also save on taxes? It's true. As a school district

employee, you have access to a retirement savings plan called a 403(b), which is like a 401(k) for educators. A 403(b) offers tax benefits that can help you lower your current taxable income, reduce your tax burden, grow your savings faster, and supplement your pension, so you can enjoy a more comfortable retirement.

### Pre-tax contributions may mean more take-home pay

The money you save in a 403(b) plan is deducted right from your paycheck, before taxes are taken out. So each time you save money, you lower your taxable income, which in turn, reduces your tax burden. And that can leave you with more money to spend compared to saving after taxes.

Here's an example...

Let's say your gross annual income is \$60,000

And you want to save 10%: \$6,000

	Save pre-tax in a 403(b)	Save post-tax
Your taxable income	\$54,000	\$60,000
In 2015, your estimated federal income taxes*	\$7,178	\$8,078
Which means, you're left with this much to spend:	\$46,822	\$45,922

### Your earnings compound

Another benefit of saving in a 403(b) plan is that you won't pay taxes on any investment earnings while they stay in your account. Your earnings compounds – like interest earning interest – which can help your money grow faster than it would if it were taxed each year.

### You may pay less taxes on the other end too

As long as your money stays in the 403(b) account, it can grow tax-deferred. This means that once you start taking distributions, you'll have to pay taxes on the amount you withdraw. However, you may find that you're in a lower tax bracket when you're retired, so you'll pay less taxes than you would if you were working. And, if you wait until you're at least age 59 ½ before taking money from your 403(b) account, you'll also avoid a potential 10% Federal income tax penalty.

By starting to save for retirement in a 403(b) plan now, you can reap the (tax) benefits and take an important step toward a comfortable retirement.

*Withdrawals from a 403(b) plan are subject to ordinary income tax treatment and if taken prior to age 59 ½ may also be subject to an additional 10% federal income tax penalty.*

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GE-114845 (5/16) (Exp. 5/18) ■

*"I dream my painting and I paint my dream."  
– Vincent van Gogh*

## Congratulations Retiring Members

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Mary Kathryn Seymour  
Richard Shaver  
Timothy Silk  
Gary Smith  
Patti Sonnenschein  
G. Thomas Stella  
Mona Stewart  
W. Scott Stuart  
Frank Sutliff  
Carla Tarazi

Jan Taylor  
Marie Toombs  
RoseMarie Urzetta  
Andrea Volckmar  
Leslie Vollar  
Diane Weiss  
Jeffrey White  
Colleen Wolff  
Nan Woodworth  
James Zumbo ■

A message from a SAANYS corporate sponsor



Since 1993, Educational Vistas, Inc. (EVI) has been providing schools and districts with both software products and services. Over the course of 23 years, we have developed leading educational management systems and in-district services that are assisting schools to improve student performance and the educational entity as a whole.

We are currently working with over 350 New York State school districts and many of the Charter schools in both NY City and upstate. The products and services that we provide are available directly from EVI as well as through many BOCES contracts across the state.

We bring a systemic, integrated approach and efficiency to everything that we do. This translates directly to cost savings, faster and better decision making, improvement in data and information quality, and the elimination of data redundancy. We are techno-byte-head-geeks and educators working together to provide the best products and services available.

By linking to any existing district data system(s), we quickly install and configure our web-based software solutions to make them available to schools as soon as possible. This process also allows us to upload critical data from any of these systems for unlimited numbers of years. File conversions, data integrity checks and modifications are normal services that we provide on a daily basis.

We stand ready to assist any and all districts that require our expertise and unique capabilities. Our reputation is built upon the successes we have had in the past and on the client retention and growth we enjoy today. ■

## SAY SOMETHING WEEK



During the week of October 24-28, 2016, hundreds of schools and

youth organizations from across the United States will participate in Say Something Week. Say Something Week raises awareness and educates students and the community through training, advertising, public proclamations, media events, and contests and school awards. Say Something Week reinforces the power young people have to prevent tragedies and save lives when they Say Something to a trusted adult.

More information: <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/saysomethingweek>

## DayByDayNY ONE MORE STORY

For all educators working with young children, the New York State Library's DaybyDayNY website is a



valuable resource. It includes excellent early learning and early literacy resources such as a daily e-book picture book (One More Story), health and wellness tips (in both Spanish and English), arts and crafts activities, and museums throughout New York State that serve families with young children. The recently-updated OneMoreStory feature lists a book title for every day of the year.

More information: <http://daybydayny.org>



Hunger Solutions New York offers free tools, resources and one-on-one assistance to help schools maximize the use of child nutrition programs.

**A Afterschool Meals**  
Schools with a majority of low income students, which offer extended day programs or host enrichment programs, can serve reimbursable meals through the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

**B Breakfast**  
We work to make school breakfast accessible to all students by helping schools implement Breakfast in the Classroom and other best practice service models.

**C Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)**  
Schools with a high percentage of low-income students can offer free breakfast and lunch to all through this federal provision.

More information: <http://hungersolutionsny.org>



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