

# News & Notes

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www.saanys.org

## Senator Martinez Honored for Contributions to Education

SAANYS presented New York State Senator Monica R. Martinez with its 2019 Champion for Education award at a reception in her honor on Monday, November 4 at the Irish Coffee Pub in East Islip.



A former assistant principal in the Brentwood Union Free School District in Suffolk County, Martinez continues to demonstrate her passion for education and support of educators in her role as state senator. Among her many efforts is her recent procurement of long-needed funding in the state budget to support professional learning for New York State's school leaders, particularly school principals and other building administrators.



Shown with Senator Martinez are Jose Suarez, regional representative for Region 1 (upper left) and Kevin Casey, SAANYS executive director (upper right); James Cameron, principal of Islip High School (lower left); Stuart Pollak, SAANYS president (lower middle); and Bergre Escobores, Region 1 Board of Directors member (lower right).

School safety, student mental health, the increasing social emotional needs of our students, evolving standards, new federal requirements, and developing technologies represent just some of the growing demands on school administrators.

"Professional growth is important for all, but particularly so for those charged with leading our schools and learning environments," remarked SAANYS Executive Director Kevin Casey. "We applaud Senator Martinez for recognizing that, now more than ever, it is essential that our school leaders be provided with high-quality support as they help build a brighter future for New York's students."

## Summary of the November Board of Regents Meeting

The November meeting of the Board of Regents started on a very solemn note with a memorial to Regent Judith Johnson. Her dedication and commitment to the work of the board will be missed, as will her strong activism on behalf of students.

### Full Board

Pending announcements on vacant positions was of considerable interest going into the November meeting. Many questions from the field as to who would fill a multitude of

*continued on page 3*

## Administrators at the Forefront of the Vaping Crisis

Senator Schumer Visits Arlington High School



U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (right) and Paul Fanuele, executive principal of Arlington High School, during the senator's recent visit recognizing the high school's work to combat vaping.

Dr. Paul Fanuele @pfanuele

Thank you @SenSchumer for recognizing and speaking with our students on our work educating our school community on the dangers of vaping. @ArlingtonCSD @NASSP @GWaples @SAANYS



## SAANYS Provides Testimony at Albany County Legislature on Vaping Ban

On October 15, 2019, SAANYS provided comments in support of a proposed county-wide ban on e-cigarettes. The proposed ban, Local Law E, would ban flavored tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes, flavored cigars, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes, and vaping devices. SAANYS' position of support for such bans rests on the increasing negative impact on students. More information on these negative impacts can be found in our recent Special Report, *Student Vaping: A Growing Threat to Student Health*, which can be found at:

<https://saanys.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Vaping-Report2.pdf>

## LEGAL BRIEFS

### What You Need to Know to Successfully Negotiate Health Insurance Benefits

As unemployment numbers continue to drop and wages continue to increase, it is critical to remember that it is the benefits, pension, and work day/year that attract people to public service. SAANYS has recently conducted several seminars on negotiations at which members asked many questions about health insurance. As a result, we decided to write this article to provide important information about health insurance benefits to enable you to successfully negotiate improvements to your health insurance benefits.

In the public education sector, health insurance benefits typically cover (1) active employee health insurance coverage; (2) active employee prescription drug coverage; (3) retirement health insurance coverage; (4) the interplay of employer provided health insurance in retirement with enrollment in the federal Medicare program upon reaching 65 years old; and (5) retirement prescription drug coverage. However, in the western part of the state, retirement health insurance benefits are significantly less than found in other parts of the state. Also, it is important to

*continued on page 6*

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## Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

### Is It All About the Money?

The State Education Department (SED) recently released guidance on addressing equity in education by increasing students' access to rigorous learning opportunities. SED rightly points to its ESSA plan as a means of pursuing equity, in particular the plan's College, Career, and Civic Readiness index that will measure advanced course enrollment and credits. SED wants districts to provide "equitable opportunities for access to rigorous coursework for all students, including those students who are histori-

cally underserved." That is a sentiment that I suspect most educators share.

The guidance, dated November 18 and available on the SED website, provides a variety of statistics to establish that students of color are under-represented in "gatekeeper courses" that prepare one for advanced coursework, and less likely to attend schools that even offer an array of advanced coursework. It then goes on to offer five guiding principles for course access equity. I don't need to reiterate what is on the SED website, but suffice it to say

that implementation of the guidance will not be without cost to districts.

SED does not address the issue of cost, which in a way I understand. Delving into the funding morass would surely dilute the focus that the guidance brings to the issue of equity. Funding is however an annual priority issue for districts across the state, and coincidentally, the New York State Educational Conference Board (ECB; of which SAANYS is a member) released its 2020-21 school finance recommendations within days of SED releasing its guidance on equity.

ECB is calling for a \$2.1 billion state aid increase for 2020-21. ECB points out the growth in student needs in the recent past. Examples include a 15 percent increase in students receiving free and reduced lunch in the

10 year period between 2007-08 and 2017-18. During this same time period English language learners grew by over 18 percent and students with disabilities by over 17 percent. Recent surveys of both school superintendents and building administrators independently show a sharply increased need for mental health services in our schools. None of this diminishes the need for equity in education, but rather suggests that valid competing needs may exceed our budgetary capacity, especially with the tax cap and the expected increased Medicaid costs that will fall to the state.

Senator Shelley Mayer, chair of the NYS Senate Education Committee, has been conducting a series of hearings around the state to examine the Foundation

Aid funding formula. This formula, created after the successful Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit, has never been phased-in as intended when enacted, and therefore has never delivered on its promise to provide a school for all students that has sufficient resources to provide a high quality education; to provide the very type of coursework and supports that the SED guidance on equity envisions.

We can only hope that Senator Mayer's hearings may provide the evidence that will motivate the legislature to update the Foundation Aid formula and fully fund it. Without sufficient foundational support, the guidance of SED is rendered aspirational, and not operational. ■

## Food Insecurity

Sponsor Opinion Piece by Kenneth A. Facin, Solutions Facilitator, Educational Vistas, Inc.

The federal poverty index in the US for a family of four is \$25,750, which represents 12 percent of our country's population. Is it any wonder then that many students in our schools struggle on a daily basis with hunger? School breakfast and lunch programs are sometimes the only meals that a child has access to in a day. Indeed, one in seven children in the United States live with hunger. What used to be an issue mainly in rural and urban districts, has now increased significantly in suburban districts as well. Food insecurity has now become a regular discussion topic in every school.

Studies published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* and the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* show that hunger greatly impacts a child's performance and behavior in school. If a child is hungry, they can't focus on learning. Teachers often take it upon themselves to provide snacks during class time so that their students can focus and learn. The great work being done by educators to make sure their students are not hungry has not gone unnoticed by those who need it the most, their students.

Many families who do not

qualify for free or reduced lunch are not meeting their financial obligations for their children's school food costs. Schools struggle to get parents to pay their child's lunch costs, many times to no avail. Schools must then absorb thousands of dollars in unpaid school lunch bills yearly. Precious school leader time is spent on this issue.

Many schools have responded with full scale free/reduced lunch offerings available to all students. New York State has also taken a lead in not allowing "lunch shaming."

Children should not go hungry in our country. School leaders and teachers should not need to spend time worrying about the issues of student hunger, or parents who do not, or cannot,

pay their child's lunch costs. We need a state commission on student hunger and a comprehensive solution working with the US Department of Agriculture school breakfast and lunch programs to address this critical need.

*Kenneth A. Facin, Solutions Facilitator @ Educational Vistas. Ken worked for 32 years in public schools as a high school science teacher, principal, and superintendent of schools. He can be reached at kfacin@edvistas.com. ■*

*The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily imply or reflect the opinion or philosophy of SAANYS.*

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## News & Notes

School Administrators Association of New York State

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# CAPITAL UPDATE

## Summary of the November Board of Regents Meeting

*continued from page 1*

positions were answered at the end of the two-day meeting. The following is a list of the positions filled to date.

### Staff Appointments

Shannon Tahoe was named as the acting commissioner due to the resignation of Interim Commissioner Beth Berlin. Acting Commissioner Tahoe has been at SED for a number of years, holding various positions in the Office of Counsel.

John D'Agati was tapped from a very short retirement to serve as senior deputy commissioner, the position formerly held by Jhone Ebert. D'Agati was previously the deputy commissioner for higher education and comes to this new position very well prepared.

Lesli Myers-Small was appointed to the position of assistant commissioner for the Office of Innovation and School Reform. This position was formerly held by Dr. Kimberly Young-Wilkins who has since taken the position of deputy commissioner for P-12 instruction support. Dr. Myers-Small comes to SED with many of years of experience as superintendent of the Brockport CSD and assistant superintendent in the Ithaca CSD.

Elisa Alvarez will move into the position previously held by Angelica Infante-Greene as associate commissioner for the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages. Alvarez comes to SED from NYCDOE where she held the position of executive director of differentiated learning.

Jason Harmon was named as assistant commissioner for the Office of Accountability, filling the position held by Ira Schwartz. Harmon worked closely with Schwartz and is very familiar with the work of that office.

An announcement that was made at the Board of Regents meeting, but that has not been widely circulated, is the

appointment of Jason Breslin as the director of early childhood.

### P-12 Committee







#### Graduation Measures

The first presentation to the board was an update on the Graduation Measures Initiative. The timeline for the regional workgroups was pushed back until January, which was a delay from the original starting date of this fall. SAANYs will post the dates of the regional meetings as soon as they are announced to ensure that as many administrators as possible will be able to attend the regional discussion on graduation measures. SED will continue to review research and practices in other states during this first phase. Additionally, it was announced that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will provide \$100,000 to support this initiative.

#### Discussion Around the Table

Regents Collins and Reyes made statements regarding the need to ensure that the meetings be as inclusive as possible to ensure that student voices are included and that the needs of incarcerated youth would be heard.

### Major changes from Perkins IV to Perkins V

					
Only NYSED-approved CTE programs at the secondary level will be eligible for Perkins funding. At the postsecondary level, only applicants with at least one program meeting the federal definition of Program of Study will be eligible for Perkins funding.	A Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) must be conducted by applicants biennially in order to apply for funding.	Program-level data will now be used to assess programs and identify specific areas in need of improvement.	Perkins funds will now be tied directly to the needs/gaps identified in the CLNA.	Work-based learning will now be included in the secondary-level Performance Indicators.	Postsecondary Performance Indicators will now only include three Core Indicators instead of six.

Regent Mittler expressed a pointed concern that the Gates funding should be used purely to support the research portion of the initiative. She received assurances from staff that this was the case.

Regent Young expressed a desire to broaden the focus of examining student achievement to student learning. He was concerned that the focus on achievement was too narrow and that the discussion should ensure that many measures of learning be considered, not just alternative measures of achievement. A link to this presentation can be found by scanning the QR code.



### Raising the Age on Criminal Responsibility

In 2017, a law was passed that made changes to the procedures used to place 16 and 17 year olds in the criminal and juvenile justice system. The new law changes the types of detention and placements that such youth may receive and provides additional services.

The law revised the definition of juvenile delinquent to include 16 and 17 years olds (in some cases) and adds the definition of adolescent offender (AO). An AO is defined as a 16 or 17 year old who commits a felony and requires that specialized secure juvenile detention facilities be created as additional post-sentence placements.

Students in such facilities must be provided educational programs and as such, ESSA requires that every school district designate a transition liaison who will facilitate the transition in and out of residential facilities and academic settings.

The report recommended that SED pursue both statutory and regulatory changes to implement this new law. Statutorily, SED recommends that a school district in which a juvenile justice or DOCCS facility is located, be allowed to issue a diploma for students who meet graduation requirements while placed in such a facility. Additionally, a statutory change is needed to authorize the immediate transfer of student records from school districts to juvenile justice facilities.

In terms of regulations, the Board of Regents has proposed that students in such facilities be exempted from the two-credit physical education (PE) requirement that they would have earned while in a detained facility. Additionally, regulations propose to allow students who have earned the PE requirement, but need more than eight semester to graduate, to stop enrolling in PE courses. These changes are made due to the unique nature of educational programs offered in justice system facilities, as most students receive extensive PE. This item may be found by scanning the QR code.



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 Cynthia Gallagher, SAANYs director of government relations, at [cgallagher@saany.org](mailto:cgallagher@saany.org).

### Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act

New York State must submit a new state plan under the Perkins Act by April 2020 in order to be eligible to receive \$57,867,904.

The revised federal law is different from versions of the Perkins Act and are summarized in the chart at left.

It is anticipated that a draft plan will be out for public comment in December and it is expected to be reviewed by the Board of Regents in February, 2020. The link to this report can be found by scanning the QR code.



### Higher Education Committee

#### Report on Educator Diversity

In 2018, the legislature required SED to prepare a report to provide "an overview of teacher diversity throughout the state." The report was to examine:

- Data on the race, ethnicity, gender, and age of the state's educator workforce;
- A look at the hurdles diverse candidates encounter at each point along the pathway;
- Current efforts by higher education institutions to recruit and retain diverse candidates into educator preparation programs;
- Current efforts by schools and the state to attract, hire, and retain certified teachers who reflect the diversity of our students; and
- Recommendations on programs, practices, and policies that may be implemented by schools and teacher preparation programs to improve educator diversity in New York State.

The presentation provided *continued on page 7*

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James M. Merrins, EdD, Executive Program Administrator  
716-672-5473 [jmerrins@cecomet.net](mailto:jmerrins@cecomet.net)

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# Financial Fridays



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**FEB 7** **Basics of Taxes**

This seminar provides an overview of basic tax concepts including pre- and post-tax definitions, Roth options for savings alternatives, and others.

**MAR 6** **Student Loan Forgiveness**

There are a number of Student Loan Forgiveness options available to New York State educators, but sorting through all of them can be a challenge. Let us help you navigate the requirements by going over who may be eligible, how you may be able to qualify, all the way to how to submit the paperwork.

**APR 3** **Your Family, Your Future**

This presentation addresses the multitude of issues involved when juggling financial obligations of raising a family while still planning for your long-term financial future.

**MAY 1** **Social Security**

The Social Security system is one of the most important, and often misunderstood, retirement systems out there. Making the right decision is critical to your retirement planning. This seminar provides helpful information about the Social Security.

**JUN 5** **Summer Planning**

Have you been so busy during the school year that you put off addressing any and all personal financial matters? This presentation will provide a checklist of items that should be addressed during the summer, as well as a timeline and suggestions for an easy implementation of the plan.

register online at [saanys.org](http://saanys.org)

## REGIONAL EVENTS

Find out more details and register at [saanys.org/events](http://saanys.org/events)



### 5th Annual EdCamp Westchester

December 14, 2019  
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Manhattanville College, Purchase



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### Region 11 Awards Ceremony

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"Professional development can be a check in the box, or meaningful and purposeful. SAANYS provides an opportunity for colleagues to be collaborative and supportive, while focusing on hot topics in education."

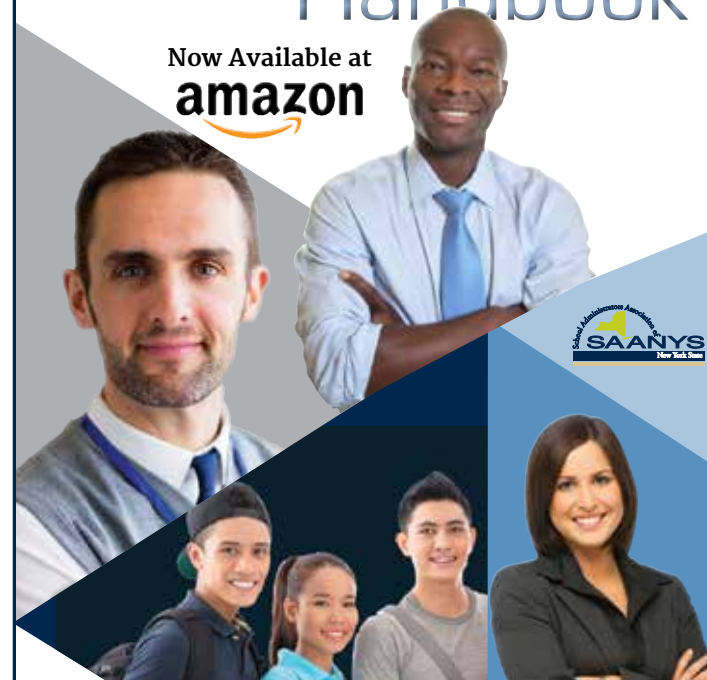
Timothy P. Martin, Ed.D. Principal  
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# SAANYS Professional Learning Update



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

Did you know that SAANYS has a wide range of topics available to you in your school or district in formats tailored to your particular learning needs, including:

- Face-to-face or virtual workshops, series, or book studies.
- Superintendents conference day learning opportunities for your teachers, as well as you and your administrative team.

- Topics relevant for essential service leaders as well as building or instructional leaders.
- One hour, half day, or full day or days of professional learning to fit your schedule.
- Mentoring options from individual to group coaching formats.

SAANYS is able to tailor our offerings to the needs of your leadership team, region, school, or district depending on your specific needs. We can provide anything from a brief online ZOOM session to a half or full day face-to-face workshop or summer retreat segment. Just give us a call or email us to start the conversation and explore ideas that might work for you and your colleagues.

Here is a brief sample of some of the topics that we have recently presented in various formats around the state:

- K-12 Schools as Customer Service Organizations: How Does Yours Measure Up?
- Courageous Conversations That Improve Student Learning
- Strategies to Counteract Poverty and Help Students Succeed
- Building Culturally Responsive Schools and Classrooms
- SED/APPR Update and Review: What You Need to Know
- MPPR: Principal Evaluation Strategies that Make Sense
- Innovate Within the Box
- Legal Update: What Issues are Trending Now
- Coaching Your Teachers on Formative Assessment
- What to Do When Trouble Finds You
- Implicit Bias Leadership Forum
- Collaborative Leadership
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- Connections Between Equity and Grading Policies / School Discipline
- Rollout of Restorative Practices for School Leaders
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Again, this is a sample — we look forward to working with you to build a PD option that is right for you and your team. For more information on options and pricing, contact Karen Bronson, SAANYS director of professional learning, at 518-782-0600 or [kbronson@saanys.org](mailto:kbronson@saanys.org). ■

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## SAANYS Diversity Committee

### Diversity: One District's Journey

Tony Cardamone, Director of Elementary Curriculum & Instruction, Baldwinsville CSD, SAANYS Executive Committee

Districts around the state and country have been facing the challenges of an ever-changing student body. More than ever, students are coming from diverse backgrounds that are often different from the leaders and teachers who are responsible for their learning and development. Our district is facing this challenge, too. I have been fortunate to be a teacher and administrator in the Baldwinsville Central School District for more than 25 years.

Bville (our local shorthand for our district's name) is a suburban district located just outside of Syracuse in Central New York. Bville has approximately 5,500 students from kindergarten through twelfth grade in eight buildings. We are the third largest suburban public school system in Onondaga County, covering approximately 75 square miles. About 900 instructional and support staff work for the district.

From the outside, our district looks like many other suburban school districts in CNY. Yet just like any other district, we are facing the needs of a changing, diverse student population.

The 2018-19 breakdown of our students is: 88.2 percent White, 4.2 percent Hispanic/Latino, 4.4 percent Multi-racial, 1.9 percent Black or African American, 1.1 percent Asian/Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander. Our students with disabilities rate in 2007 was 11 percent, as of 2018 it was 15 percent. Our economically disadvantaged students rate in 2007 was 13 percent and in 2018 it was up to 29 percent. Many educators and leaders around the state will probably look at these figures and fare better, while others would have much higher numbers.

These figures only reflect one aspect of our community. We all know the diversity of our student population is represented by more than these statistics. Students are coming from diverse families, many with learning/social emotional needs, and dealing with the impact of technology in their daily lives.

Our district is like your district. We face the same challenges.

Our superintendent, Mr. Matthew J. McDonald, has led us on a quest not only to explore the needs and challenges of our students, but to embrace their diversity in all its forms. Central to this is the belief that diversity is not just the color of one's skin, but much more. His goal is for all students to have a personal connection with each other and with adults throughout each building.

This has led our district to look at diversity from many angles. Some of our learning has led to the following:

#### Embracing Inclusion of All Students

Our special education department has worked to provide solid inclusive education throughout our district. This has required the support of our board of education and community so we could provide the necessary special education staff in k-12 co-teaching settings. It has also led us to foster a partnership with Syracuse University to support our professional learning in this area.

#### Identifying and Supporting Students' Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Our district has instituted the use of Behavior Intervention Monitoring & Assessment System (BIMAS) as part of our annual academic screening process. This information helps building-based teams to identify each school year the SEL needs of students. The district has also increased school-based SEL supports via school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, and school-based community mental health agencies. Most recently, we have added deans of students in two of our elementary buildings with a focus on restorative practices. This summer, all eight buildings sent administrators and teacher teams to restorative practices professional learning. And this fall, a team of administrators is attending Brian Mendler's workshop "Motivating and Managing the Hard to Reach Students." These tools and techniques help to equip our staff with the skills needed to support our students' SEL development and challenges.

*continued*

### Creating a Culture that Embraces Diversity

Our district has been a leader with the Positivity Project (P2) in our schools. This is based on the belief that relationships are the cornerstone of health, happiness, and resilience. P2 ([www.posproject.org](http://www.posproject.org)) equips schools with the training, strategy, and resources to inspire students to build positive relationships. Teams at each school have been trained in restorative practices and use morning meetings to develop cultures that proactively manage conflict while building positive relationships.

### Culturally Responsive Teaching

This year, a group of secondary teachers participated in a book study with our secondary curriculum director around the book *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom*, by Matthew R. Kay. The goal of their work was to raise their own awareness of the biases we all bring into the classroom and how to facilitate discussions with students around the topic of race.

This year I am proud to be a member of our district's new Diversity Committee. This group has representation from instructional and non-instructional staff, administrators, parents/families, students, and community members. It is being facilitated by Derrick L. Dorsey. Mr. Dorsey is the past executive director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Syracuse and was most recently the director of the community-wide dialogue to end racism for InterFaith Works of Central New York. He is also on the board of education for the Syracuse City School District.

Our initial charge as a committee this fall was to define diversity, create a mission statement, and set goals. This will be presented to the board of education in January 2020 with full implementation in the spring of 2020. This will include any revised curriculum and presentations to staff, students, families, and community members.

Baldwinsville Central School District is just one of over 950 districts in New York State, but like all of you, we are on the journey of understanding and embracing the diversity of our students and community — however that may look. ■



# LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message from the SAANYS Legal Department



Arthur Scheuermann  
SAANYS General Counsel  
ascheuermann@saanys.org



## What You Need to Know to Successfully Negotiate Health Insurance Benefits

continued from page 1

understand that over the past 30 years, the cost of health insurance benefits has dramatically increased and now health insurance has become a much larger portion of each worker's total income.

Consider this, is it better to contribute more toward the premium cost of health insurance during active employment (when you can use pre-tax dollars to pay for those premium costs) or pay less in retirement when the administrator is on a fixed income?

### Health Insurance During Active Employment

The first consideration is the type(s) of health insurance plans the community college, school district, or BOCES is offering as its primary plan to its administrative personnel. The industry trend has been to reduce the quality of the health insurance plans being offered. In public education today, there

are only a few indemnity plans still being offered by employers. More common are PPO plans (which have an in-network and out-of-network structure), HMO plans, or EPO plans. However, due to sharply increased costs in HMO plans, these plans are being phased out as plan options. There has also been a recent push to introduce high deductible plans into the public education sector. These plans require the individual employee to absorb a large deductible before getting fully paid coverage. Insurers believe that high deductible plans save money because the covered employee, through their deductible, covers the typical average plan usage. Public employers, seeking to entice their employees to enroll in high deductible plans, have offered to cover the full cost of the deductible and/or to have employees contribute a much lower amount toward the

premium cost of such plans compared to other available plans. Generally speaking, these types of plans appear fine for younger employees without families, but prove too costly for families or people with pre-existing medical conditions.

Also, remember that all health insurance plans are rated under the Affordable

Care Act (ACA). The rating system uses metals to describe the quality of the plan, platinum being the best, followed by gold, silver, and bronze. In 2022, the employer excise tax is scheduled to be implemented. However, the roll-out of the excise tax has been delayed for almost eight years now, with the expectation that it will be postponed again.

In the collective bargaining agreement, make sure to identify the primary plan offered to unit members. Also, do not tie your insurance to other units. There are several contracts that SAANYS has worked on recently that allowed the teachers to negotiate changes in their primary health insurance plan, that would automatically change the health insurance plan available to members in the administrative bargaining unit. Attempt to negotiate all your

health insurance benefits into your own contract, do not allow mandatory terms and conditions of employment to be subject to what other bargaining units negotiate.

Finally, understand that employers will realize the largest cost savings

*When employers switch health plans, the employees will bear the brunt of the switch in the form of receiving inferior quality plans, with the employees bearing a larger proportion of the costs associated with the new plans.*

when they change health insurance plans. Correspondingly, when employers switch health plans, the employees will bear the brunt of the switch in the form of receiving inferior quality plans, with the employees bearing a larger proportion of the costs associated with the new plans. On average, switching health plans will save the employer an estimated average of \$3,000 per member.

As important as identifying the primary health insurance plan in the contract, is spelling out the employee's responsibilities for deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses, and co-payments. Without setting forth in writing what those additional costs are, an employer may attempt to maintain its premium costs by increasing those amounts. Remember, any changes to these components of

health insurance should be negotiated. Spelling these terms out in the contract makes it more difficult for the employer to unilaterally change those health insurance benefits. If your unit has sustained increased costs to any aspect of health insurance, please contact SAANYS.

The final aspect of active employee health insurance coverage to consider and try to keep control of is the health insurance premium cost sharing. Very few administrative bargaining units today do not contribute any amount toward the cost of health insurance. The state-wide average is around 15 percent with greater employee contributions in suburban areas, where the cost can be anywhere from 15 percent to 25 percent. In the private sector, the average employee cost sharing for health insurance is 33 percent. Also, understand that governing boards of community colleges, school districts, and BOCES are seemingly obsessed with demanding their employees contribute more and more toward the rising cost of health insurance. However, it does not make sense to keep increasing administrators' contribution percentages when other unions in the employer organization do not contribute the same amount. If confronted with this situation, politely advise the employer's negotiating team that we have carefully considered the proposal, reject it, and will no longer entertain it.

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## Contract Settlements

NOTICE: Please send copies of your unit's settlements in the event that SAANYS did not negotiate the contract. This information is important and is helpful to fellow SAANYS members.

### Liverpool Administrators Association, Region 10

Negotiations were led by SAANYS Negotiator Dr. Frederick P. Kirsch and assisted by Unit President Amanda Caldwell and team.

**Duration of contract:** 2019–2023

**Salary increases as follows:** 2.85 percent each year plus \$1,950 in year one, \$1,250 in year two, and \$676 in year three.

- Secured upfront vacation days for newly hired unit members.
- Added a vision insurance plan with a contribution from the district.
- Frontloaded small longevity increases, CAS stipend, and minor and auxiliary extra work stipends into the base salary of all unit members.
- Made a retirement incentive available during the first three years of eligibility. Increased the district's contribution match to all unit members' 403(b) by .25 percent.
- The district will offer a 457 savings plan.
- No change in the health insurance premium share.
- Resisted the district's proposals to eliminate health insurance at age 65.

continued on page 7

### Active Employees Prescription Drug Plans

Like the health insurance plan itself, the employer's prescription drug plan should be identified in the contract with specification of the number of applicable tiers and the co-payments for each tier. Thirty years ago, public education prescription drug plans usually carried only one co-payment figure. However, over time, as the cost of prescription drugs has increased, so has the employer passing the rising costs onto their employees in the form of creating tiers with increased co-payments. Today, health insurance plans frequently offer two-tier (generic and brand) or three-tier (generic, brand, and formulary/specialty) with different negotiated co-payment levels.

Employers also provide their employees with a mail order option for maintenance drugs. The standard type of mail order drug plan involves a three-month supply for

continued on page 8



# Contract Settlements

continued from page 6

## Richfield Springs Administrative Professionals Association, Region 8

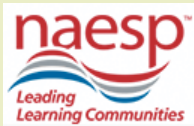
Negotiations were led by SAANYS Negotiator Dr. Frederick P. Kirsch and assisted by Unit President Joseph D'Apice.

**Duration of contract:** 2019–2022

**Salary increases:** Four percent per year

- Increased the professional development allotment for each member from \$1,000 to \$1,500 annually.
- Added three additional vacation days per year to a maximum of 28.
- Accelerated longevity payments with \$1,000 add-ons for 8, 15, 20, and 25 years of service; and for tenure.
- Referenced the health plan in the contract by making any changes a mandatory subject of bargaining.
- Lowered members' health plan deductible.
- Accepted a slight increase in prescription co-pays to \$5/\$20/\$40.
- The district agreed to establish a 105/106(h) health reimbursement plan amounting to \$200 per year.
- Improved dental insurance.
- New vision insurance.
- Added term life insurance for 1X members' annual salary.
- Increased sick day payout at rates of \$70 for 0-149 days, \$80 for 150-199 days, and \$90 for 200-360 days.
- Increased retirement incentive to \$12,500 in year one and \$7,500 in year two.
- Changed health premium share from 90/10 to 88/12 over the life of the contract. ■

## National Affiliation

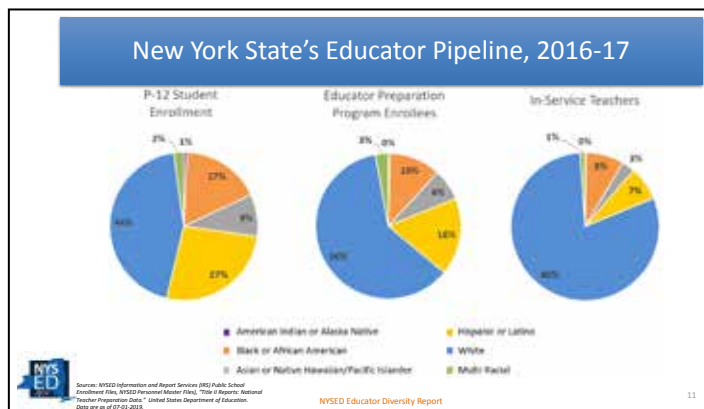


SAANYS is the official state affiliate of both the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals and their state and national principal of the year programs.

# Summary of the November Board of Regents Meeting

continued from page 3

data and practices in the field that attempt to address the need to increase the diversity of the teaching workforce. The following graph demonstrates how our workforce is not commensurate with the student population.



## Discussion Around the Table

As members of the board digested the information, their initial reactions focused on the need to bring urgency to the state of the workforce. Several members expressed their desire to develop policies and incentives targeted to this challenge.

Regent Young suggested that it would be important to look at the complete story, which would include not only the pipeline but the recruitment and interview process at the district level.

Regent Mittler expressed the need to not only recruit teachers of color, but also to support teachers during their employment so as to avoid isolation and provide comprehensive support.

The presentation on this report may be found by scanning the QR code.



Should you wish any further information on the above information, please feel free to contact Cindy Gallagher at [cgallagher@saanys.org](mailto:cgallagher@saanys.org) or by calling 518 782-0600. ■

Contact a  
SAANYS  
Attorney



During normal business hours, call 518-782-0600 to speak with a SAANYS attorney. After Hours Pager: 1-800-978-6055

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# 2019 CALENDAR



Dec 10 *Emily Dickinson's Birthday*

Dec 10 *Human Rights Day*

Dec 15 *Bill of Rights Day*

Dec 16 *Boston Tea Party Anniversary*

Dec 17 *Anniversary of Wright Brothers' Flight*

Dec 21 *First Day of Winter*

Dec 22-30 *Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)*

Dec 25 *Christmas*

Dec 25 *Clara Barton's Birthday*

Dec 26-Jan 1 *Kwanzaa*



Jan 1-3 *Japanese New Year Festivities*

Jan 1 *Emancipation Proclamation Anniversary*

Jan 1 *New Year's Day*

Jan 19 *World Religion Day*

Jan 20 *Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Observance*

Jan 23 *First Native American U.S. Senator*

Jan 25 *Chinese New Year*

Jan 28 *Christa McAuliffe Day*



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# What You Need to Know to Successfully Negotiate Health Insurance Benefits

continued from page 6

the cost of a two-month supply if purchased at the pharmacy. Recently, an employer compelled its employees to use mail order for all maintenance drugs, as a cost-saving measure.

A more recent trend in health insurance is Step Therapy and Prior Authorization medication plans. Step Therapy plans apply to prescription drugs. Such plans require an enrollee to try less expensive, usually generic brand, medications for a period of time before they can be authorized to use more expensive, name brand medications. There is generally a mandatory “testing” period of between fifteen and thirty days in which the enrollee must try the cheaper, generic drug. During that period, they are monitored by a physician. If the physician determines that the generic medication was effective, then that is the only drug the plan will cover. If the physician determines that the drug was ineffective however, they are permitted to authorize (i.e. Prior Authorization) a more expensive, name brand medication. Notably, if an enrollee insists on using a name brand, higher tiered medication after a physician has already determined that the generic drug was effective, the enrollee generally must pay the difference in the cost between the generic and the name brand medication. It should be noted that in general, generic medications are much more effective and better quality than they were in the past. Step Therapy plans can, and often do, result in significant savings for enrollees — between five and ten percent savings on prescriptions can be expected. Issues can arise however, for people who trust and rely on a specific name brand medication — perhaps having used a particular name brand drug for many years. If prior authorization is not gained for the name brand prescription drug, it can result in an enrollee being forced to choose between having to switch to the generic medication, or spending the money to cover the difference between the price of the generic and the name brand prescription drugs. ■

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PLAN



SAANYS has always been there for members who need advice or assistance from legal counsel on job-related matters. Now, SAANYS has partnered with the law firm of Feldman, Kramer and Monaco to help when you need *personal* legal advice and assistance.

**\$85** annually provides a simple will, power of attorney, health care proxy, living will, and unlimited advice via telephone. Enrollees will also receive certificates good for two free hour-long office consultations with a local referral attorney. For services beyond this package, discounted rates apply.

Contact Feldman, Kramer and Monaco, the law firm that administers the plan for SAANYS members, at

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Be prepared to present your membership ID #.

Rate applies to regular active, retired active, and retired affiliate members. Associate member fee is \$150.



## Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)



The PAEMST awards are the highest honors bestowed by the United States

government specifically for K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teaching. The Awards were established by Congress in 1983. The President may recognize up to 108 exemplary teachers each year. This year's awards will honor teachers working in grades K-6. Nominations close on March 1, 2020. Learn more at <https://www.paemst.org/>.

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A message from a SAANYS corporate sponsor



The people that comprise our Army must be qualified, dedicated, and skilled soldiers. Besides equipping our soldiers with basic and specialty military training, the Army offers a plethora of educational incentives to continuously enhance our nation's youth.

The U.S. Army attends the SAANYS conference to inform educators and influencers about these particular education programs. Conventional programs many people are familiar with are loan repayment, college tuition assistance, and the GI bill offering college tuition for the soldier or their family member. But do you know about programs such as the ASVAB CEP (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery-Career Exploration Program) or March 2 Success?

The ASVAB CEP walks students, counselors, and parents through not just military but civilian career options based on the students' test results. It is a comprehensive career exploration and planning program that includes a multiple aptitude test battery, an interest inventory, and an exercise designed to help students explore career options.

March 2 Success is a free, online, standardized test preparation program to improve math, science and English skills. It is designed to help students perform on standardized tests at a level consistent with their abilities. Parents and teachers can be monitors on the student's account to track progress. And best of all, there are free practice SAT and ACT tests!

We are here to provide this and much more information about what the Army can do for your students and school districts. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have about how we can assist your schools and students. ■