

News & Notes

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www.saanys.org

Annual Award Winners Issue



SAANYS has a long history of serving its membership during the best and most challenging of times, and we remain steadfast in serving you during this pandemic as you work around the clock to support your school communities.

The SAANYS Legal Department remains vigilant and on hand to answer your important questions about terms of employment, “essential workers,” contract negotiations, and more. Our Government Relations Department is sending daily reports on what you need to know from the state and federal government, as well as SED. This timely information is also updated daily to the SAANYS website under our dedicated Coronavirus page (<https://saanys.org/news/coronavirus-resources/>). SAANYS professional learning has evolved into a number of online opportunities, including the newly created, “SAANYS Connect: A Panel Discussion Supporting Our School Leaders,” which focuses on sharing experiences and providing members with expertise, resources, and tools to use now and as our current environment evolves. Visit saanys.org/events regularly for the latest offerings.

The entire SAANYS staff is committed to remaining as accessible as always to the membership. To reach any staff member, please visit us at <https://saanys.org/about-us/>, where you will find a list of staff members, email addresses, and phone extensions. We are here to support you, do not hesitate to call on us. ■

Stratford Road Principal Named Elementary Principal of the Year



Dr. Alison Clark, principal of Stratford Road Elementary School in the Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District, has been selected as the 2020 New York State Elementary Principal of the Year by SAANYS and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). This award is given annually to a member of SAANYS and NAESP who is clearly committed to excellence, has

programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students, and has firm ties to parents and the community.

Known as a principal who believes in strengthening school culture to build a positive environment, Clark feels strongly that “The learning we foster is about supporting and being kind to others. Our belief is one that supports and initiates growth of the whole child, academically,

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Brentwood Principal Selected as NYS Secondary School Principal of the Year and NASSP NYS Principal of the Year



Felicia Thomas-Williams, principal at West Middle School in the Brentwood Union Free School District, has been selected as the 2020 New York State Secondary Principal of the Year by SAANYS. This award is given annually to a member of SAANYS to recognize outstanding principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession.

Thomas-Williams will also represent New York as the NASSP NYS Principal of the Year as sponsored by SAANYS’ national affiliate, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). In addition to selecting a National Principal of the Year from all the state finalists, NASSP honors all state principals of the year at the Principal’s Institute held each year in Washington, DC.

A long-time educator since 1993, Thomas-Williams joined the Brentwood UFSD in 1996, becoming an administrator in 2005, and serving as principal of West Middle School since 2013. West MS is a very diverse community of almost 1,000 students stemming from more than 50 countries, with many of the students experiencing early childhood trauma as a result of their immigration journey. As such, parents are often unsure of the best way to interact with the school, believing that the language and cultural barriers are insurmountable. An empathetic leader, Thomas-Williams takes on this challenge and has implemented many inclusive and innovative programs, strengthening the home-school relationship and developing a truly welcoming culture at the school. A turning point in her understanding came after she had the opportunity to attend a session at the SAANYS 2017 Annual Conference on Adverse Childhood Experiences. She later shared her insights with the school’s faculty and staff and

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LEGAL BRIEFS

Vacation in the Age of School Closure

As we are all aware at this point, Governor Cuomo’s state shutdown of schools has come with the edict that all remaining emergency closures and school breaks are null and void if school districts do not want to jeopardize state aid. While many could use a well-earned temporary break from the chaos, this might not be able to occur until the school year is officially over. The governor’s prohibition on school recess periods does not mean that administrators automatically forfeit their contractual vacation for the year though. Depending on the terms and conditions of your contract, you might have the ability to take vacation time while students are in session. Further, the superintendent may or may not have the ability to deny vacation time under the contract. These are issues that will require a case-by-case analysis should you wish to utilize a contractual leave day. However, the majority of contracts within districts provide that vacation time can only be taken during the summer and school recess periods. What happens if, for reasons completely out of your control this year, you are unable to use all of your leave time?

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Keynote speaker announced!

keynote



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Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

The Challenge of Our Times

I think it is fair to say that for most of us, the Coronavirus pandemic will be the most impactful event of our lives. There are certainly some to whom this won't apply: those whose personal circumstance, such as being stricken with a serious illness or encountering an unexpected catastrophic financial setback unrelated to Coronavirus, may eclipse the impact of the pandemic. However, for many more, the extent of the disruption of our norms will be unlike anything we have previously encountered. Those who Tom Brokaw called "The Greatest Generation" endured both the Great Depression and World War II. The following

generation lived through the Vietnam War, where many would be pressed into service, and the social upheaval of the 1960s. For those born in the late 1950's and 1960's, what, other than enduring the disco years, have been our great challenges?

Periodically watching the market collapse (the dot com bubble, the housing market collapse) certainly caused anxiety, but financial safeguards put into place as a result of prior experience mitigated the fallout. I am not insensitive to the pain felt by those who lost homes and retirement savings on the brink of retirement, but the impact to the broader population proved to be temporary. The experience of 9/11 was, and to some extent still is, jarring. In a way, for many of us, it was

a loss of innocence, a painful demonstration that our enemies were no longer constrained by geography. But even 9/11 impacted a relative few, albeit in a devastating fashion. Ground zero victims and their families, first responders, and many members of our armed forces over the following years have borne the brunt of that murderous assault.

This feels different. The enemy is an unseen virus. The widespread suspension of commerce and social activity is unprecedented for everyone. School administrators across the state are scrambling to provide distance learning on a huge scale

For educators, as unwelcome as it may be, this is the challenge of a lifetime. The early results suggest you are in fact up to the task.

working with a number of members seeking to address issues never before contemplated, many of which defy easy solution.

Will any good come out of this? Perhaps some improved operational efficiencies, but surely they won't be worth the cost. I hesitate to call it a silver lining, but I believe crisis imposes perspective, often harshly so. What was important yesterday becomes trivial today. Our definition of what really

matters constricts, and things that we took for granted in the past receive the appreciation they deserve.

The length of time that this crisis will dominate our attention is unknown, but it promises to be prolonged. For many, the economic fallout will be devastating, and schools will not be immune from that. The impact on state, local, and school budgets will be adverse and immediately apparent. This is a challenge that will affect everyone, but other than the health-care providers and first responders who are at the front line of the fight, educators are arguably impacted the most. I can think of no profession the members of which are needed to act decisively, now, across the state, to provide critical services to many. For educators, as unwelcome as it may be, this is the challenge of a lifetime. The early results suggest you are in fact up to the task. ■

Thank you, School Leaders

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

COVID-19 shuttered our society so quickly that there was little to no time to prepare for the unprecedented state-wide school shutdown. Regents exams and grades 3-8 ELA and math assessments have been sidelined and there is uncertainty about re-opening schools this year. School leaders in every district across our state have built new remote systems to educate, feed, and socially stabilize their students. The challenges have been compounded by the digi-

tal learning divide among students. Many student households do not have high speed internet and computing resources. Learning inequity is real and presents immense challenges ahead. Schools have stepped up, delivering learning materials, Chromebooks, and meals daily to their students. Teachers have and are establishing new learning platforms while staying connecting to their students and parents. This is evident now more than ever with many schools

serving as information centers for nervous communities in regard to COVID-19. Our schools are the informational epicenters for their communities and school leaders are at the forefront of these efforts, always with a steady hand and soothing calmness.

You are navigating your students, faculty, staff, families, and communities through very trying times. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do for those you serve. Your great work has not gone unnoticed and is greatly appreciated by everyone.

Schools will need to con-

tinue their efforts while at the same time begin preparing school re-entry plans for students, faculty, and staff, whether for this year or next September. Students and teachers will need time to adjust to the new norms that may be forthcoming. Social distancing runs counter to how schools operate and function. Adjusting common social practices and norms to new standards will present challenges because school buildings have been designed and built for pro-social proximity.

We at Educational Vistas want you to know we support your work. To help your efforts, we have developed a new

free lunch routing solution, LunchSync, to help schools deliver meals and learning materials to students in an efficient and effective manner.

To access your school's site, please go to:

[Lunchsync.trans-sync.com](https://lunchsync.trans-sync.com)

Stay safe and healthy.

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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— Christopher Reeve

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CAPITAL UPDATE

Overview of the April Board of Regents Meeting

The April meeting of the Board of Regents was conducted via conference call. Chancellor Rosa began with a reflection on the current COVID-19 crisis. She acknowledged the governor, health care providers across the state, service personnel, and department leadership. She also acknowledged educators and parents who are doing herculean work under great stress. A moment of silence was held for all who have been impacted by the pandemic.

Commissioner Search

As of April 1, 2020 the board started working with AGB Search to begin the process of finding the next commissioner of education. Chairing the search committee will be Regent Young and other members of the search committee include Regents Tilles, Cea, Norwood, Chin, and Collins.

COVID-19 Related Regulatory Action

The next segment of the meeting was the review and adoption of proposed regulations to provide flexibility and support to school districts, institutions of higher education, charter schools, and professionals in the field to address needed changes as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Scan the QR code for a chart summarizing the regulations adopted for emergency.



Additional information may be found by scanning the QR code at left.



Another useful resource summarizing the regulations may be found by scanning the QR code at right.



More information on regulations relating to transportation may be found by scanning the QR code at right.



It should be noted that some regulations are proposed as a result of the need for consistency with revised motor vehicle law. Other regulations are a result of the COVID-19 crisis and those are included in the chart as well.

Non-COVID-19 Regulatory Action

APPR – Revised regulations that provided greater flexibility for the evaluation of principals were first introduced at the February 2020 meeting of the Board of Regents. The revised regulations, which were adopted as an emergency action allowed:

- The student performance category of principals have an additional option to SLOs. As collectively bargained, an input model that demonstrates evidence of principal practice that promotes student growth may be used. The input model may also be used in the optional sub-component of the student performance category.
- For the principal school visit category, multiple sources of evidence may be collected and incorporate into the school visit protocol to better reflect school leadership practice and provide actionable feedback. Evidence of a principal's effectiveness as aligned to district or building goals may be used.

* *The APPR regulations cited above are intended to be permanently approved by the Board of Regents at their May meeting. SAANYS has worked with SED to seek relief from current APPR requirements due to the COVID-19 crisis. Any action taken on this would need to be through an executive order by the governor. ■*

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

10 WAYS TO SECURE ZOOM!

1 Use a Unique ID for Large or Public Zoom Calls

When you schedule a Zoom meeting, look for the Meeting ID options and choose Generate Automatically. Doing so plugs up one of the biggest holes that Zoom-bombers can exploit.

2 Require a Meeting Password

One way to protect the meeting is to require a password. You can give the password out only to those who have replied and seem credible. To password-protect a meeting, start by scheduling a meeting and checking the box next to Require meeting password.

3 Create a Waiting Room

When participants log into the call, they see a Waiting Room screen, the host, lets them in. You can let people in all at once or one at a time, which means if you see names you don't recognize in the Waiting Room, you don't have to let them in at all.

4 Only the Hosts Should Share Their Screen

Make sure your settings indicate that the only people allowed to share their screens are hosts. You can enable this setting in advance as well as during a call.

5 Create an Invite-Only Meeting

Only people who can join the call are those you invited, and they must sign in using the same email address you used to invite them.

6 Lock a Meeting Once It Starts

While the meeting is running, navigate to the bottom of the screen and click Manage Participants. The Participants panel will open. At the bottom, choose More > Lock Meeting.

7 Kick Someone Out or Put Them on Hold

During the call, go to the participants pane on the right. Hover over the name of the person you want to boot and when options appear, choose Remove.

8 Disable Someone's Camera

If someone is being rude or inappropriate on video, the host can open the Participants panel and click on the video camera icon next to the person's name.

9 Prevent Animated GIFs and Other Files in the Chat

In the chat area of a Zoom meeting, participants can share files, including images and animated GIFs—if you let them.

10 Disable Private Chat

Open Settings in the Zoom web app (it's not in the desktop app). On the left side, go to Personal > Settings. Then click In Meeting (Basic). Scroll until you see Private chat. When the button is gray, it's disabled.

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Leader in Digital Education Award

Richard (RJ) DeLisle

Director of Technology
Baldwinsville CSD

Richard (RJ) DeLisle, director of technology in the Baldwinsville Central School District, has been selected as the recipient of the 2020 Leader in Digital Education Award by SAANYS. This award recognizes a SAANYS member who has demonstrated exceptional, creative leadership in harnessing the potential of technology to further teaching and student achievement. The candidate will have demonstrated excellent organizational and communication skills in supporting and promoting such innovative digital practices for his/her learning community.

In his role as director of technology, DeLisle is often seen walking the halls of any one of the district's eight buildings to visit classrooms and test the technology, interact with teachers and students, and always asking himself the question, "What value does this add?" This hands-on approach has given him unique insight as to how best to integrate new and innovative technology needs into each classroom. Principal Alex Ewing commented on DeLisle's classroom visits, "As staff share openly their instructional needs, Mr. DeLisle not only offers words of encouragement and praise for implementing instructional creativity, but is right there in the trenches when necessary to troubleshoot and provide assistance to ensure positive experiences for teachers and students in the classroom."

During his tenure in the district, DeLisle has also been instrumental in reimagining the district's libraries into comprehensive learning centers. Seizing upon the vision of the library media specialists, he facilitated the creation Learning Pods in some buildings where students and teachers can work collaboratively in a Google-like setting. Each library has been transformed by installing mobile furniture and technology, along with makerspaces, collaboration stations, Oculus Quest Virtual Reality headsets, esports, green screens, recording studios, 3D printing, and more. Commented Durgee Jr. High School Librarian Lindsay Cesari, "RJ demonstrates that great leaders are also great listeners. If you're an educator that likes to dream big and try new things, RJ is the perfect person to have in your corner. He's always been a vocal and persistent advocate for our library programs, allowing us, as educators, to innovate."

Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction Tony Cardamone commented, "RJ seeks not only to get the latest and greatest technology for students and teachers, he seeks to find technology to support learning and teaching. At his core, RJ is a teacher. His first love and passion is instruction."

Commented Deputy Superintendent Joseph M. DeBarbieri, "RJ demonstrates quality leadership and ongoing professional learning as he works to engage and cultivate the professional growth of teachers and leaders alike. He is hardworking and a team player. He is committed to working with others for the good of all students, which is necessary for success in any leadership role." 🍌



K-12 Building Principal Award

Jonathan Slaybaugh

Principal, Birchwood School
Clarkstown CSD

Jonathan Slaybaugh, principal at the Birchwood School in the Clarkstown Central School District, has been selected as the recipient of the 2020 K-12 Building Principal Award by SAANYS. The K-12 Building Principal Award was created to recognize the unique characteristics of a K-12 building and the related demands, expectations, and challenges of a principal in this multi-level environment. It is given annually to a SAANYS member who is a successful K-12 principal, a recognized educational leader, and who demonstrates leadership in establishing the pace, character, and mission of the building and demonstrates creativity and resourcefulness in providing comprehensive programs and services for all levels and grades.

The Birchwood School is a therapeutic day school serving students requiring an intensive multidisciplinary team approach to learning. Recognizing the dramatic increase in students diagnosed with autism entering the school over the past ten years, Slaybaugh has been instrumental in designing and implementing changes to the physical structure and building utilization. He created a sensory room to meet the unique sensory needs of ASD students and created a sensory hallway where students are encouraged to hop, skip, touch, and feel the walls as they move from class to class, in contrast to the earlier practices requiring students to walk single file down the hallways without touching the walls or floors. Now, students are encouraged to experience opportunities for movement and to touch things that provide them comfort. During his tenure at the school, Slaybaugh has made it a priority to co-facilitate workshops to provide necessary training for staff to effectively and safely de-escalate situations. Staff members also receive additional training in non-violent crisis intervention through the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). A testament to this new approach can be seen by the number of students who graduated years ago who still visit the school to touch base and demonstrate and share their successes with their former teachers.

Commented Harry Leonardatos, principal of Clarkstown HS North, "Jon is a devoted and hard-working building leader who guides students with a variety of needs and learning abilities. As such, he is patient, flexible, easy-going, and adaptable. He is well-respected by both staff and students. Ultimately, Jon is able to engage each student in his school to perform their best according to their ability. He always recognizes and celebrates the successes of both his students and staff, and truly treats his role of principal as more of a mission than a job." 🍌



SAANYS and NASSP NYS Assistant Principal of the Year

Kristen Lennon-McMahan
Assistant Principal, Shenendehowa High School West
Shenendehowa CSD

Kristen Lennon-McMahan, assistant principal at Shenendehowa High School West in the Shenendehowa Central School District, has been selected as the 2020 New York State Assistant Principal of the Year by SAANYS. This award is given annually by SAANYS and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to a middle or high school assistant principal who has set the pace, character, and quality of education for the students in his or her school. Nominees are administrators who are committed to students, parents, and the community and have shown exceptional contributions to the educational process.

Lennon-McMahan has been an educator in the Shenendehowa school district since 2005, with the last eight years serving as assistant principal of Shenendehowa High School West. She is known as an administrator who is passionate about helping her students grow into empathetic young adults. To that end, Lennon-McMahan developed a school-wide event known as "Day of Acceptance" where students, staff, and faculty participate in three hour-long programs. She notes that "the goal behind each day was for students to recognize and respect differences. We really aimed to include every child and adult in our building to make it an inclusive activity." Commented student, Nuyanha Owens, "She is always there when I need her to be. That is one thing that is absolutely wonderful about her. That also applies to my fellow students as well."

Lennon-McMahan has also worked to provide cultural responsiveness training called, "The Art of Understanding Our Students" for staff and faculty, which has recently been implemented district-wide. Over the course of two years, close to 70 faculty and staff have been trained to become facilitators for the program. Commented Principal Ron Agostinoni, "Kristen understands the value and necessity of a positive culture where all stakeholders have opportunities for input. Her focus is not only to provide input, but to also empower those around her to make sustainable and systematic positive changes." Associate Principal Michael Gutchell notes, "I whole heartedly cannot think of anyone else more deserving of this honor as she possesses a great deal of pedagogical and adolescent social-emotional knowledge, along with a tireless work ethic." 🍌



Outstanding Educator Award

Ginger Vail
Assistant Principal, Saugerties Junior High School
Saugerties CSD

Ginger Vail, assistant principal at Saugerties Junior High School in the Saugerties Central School District, has been selected for the 2020 Outstanding Educator Award by SAANYS. This award is given annually to a SAANYS member who has made outstanding contributions in New York State schools through public education, professional organizations, or research and/or writing in the field of education.

Known as a leader who truly understands the social-emotional needs of middle school students, Vail prides herself on knowing each of her student's personal stories. She spearheaded the implementation of the school's Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) initiative, which has since been introduced at the high school level as well. One important component of this initiative has been to solidify the role of the "Redirect Center," a non-punitive space where students can get assistance from a social worker or guidance counselor to address their social-emotional needs. A testament to her leadership, students know her office is also a safe space and regularly seek her out for help and to share successes. Commented Director of Human Resources Daniel Erceg, "She knows every person in the building from student to staff member. She knows when something seems a little off. She knows when someone may have had a bad night at home. Mrs. Vail immediately reaches out to their teachers to make them aware and get their input."

Vail is also active in the community, serving as the softball league coordinator and on the board of the Saugerties Little League. As such, she spearheaded the league's "Light it Up" committee in 2016, an effort to upgrade the girls' facilities to include the installation of lights for evening play. After three years of effort, the lights will be turned on this season. Commented Saugerties Little League Vice President Gregory DeCelle, "She has put in countless hours chairing events and fundraisers as well as working with the business community to help fund the efforts to put lights on our primary softball field. This has been an effort of epic proportions as the cost for the job exceeded \$115K. I am proud to serve on our league board with Mrs. Vail and have tremendous respect for her efforts on behalf of the children in our community."

Commented Jr./Sr. High School Principal Thomas Averill, "She understands what motivates students, and the needs of parents as their children transition from four elementary schools into one Jr./Sr. high school. Finding ways to create an environment conducive to their age and maturity level has been the hallmark of her administrative leadership." 🍌

SAANYS Award Winners

SAANYS and NAESP NYS Assistant Principal of the Year

Mark Warford

Assistant Principal, Bethlehem Central
Middle School
Bethlehem CSD



Mark Warford, assistant principal at Bethlehem Central Middle School in the Bethlehem Central School District, has been selected as a 2020 New York State Assistant Principal of the Year by SAANYS and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). This award is given annually to a member of SAANYS and NAESP, promoting educational excellence for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade (PreK-8) schooling and calling attention to the fundamental importance of the assistant principal.

A long-time educator since 1995, Warford has served in his current position at Bethlehem Central Middle School since 2008. A significant accomplishment that began early in his educational career, was the creation of an academic assistance program for at-risk students called GROW (goal setting, responsibility, organization, work ethic). This program has been highly successful in giving these students the ability to achieve in school, while working on foundational skills and habits needed to reach that goal. Because of the success of the program, several other local school districts have since established their own GROW program. At Bethlehem Central MS, the GROW program has doubled in size over the last two years, paving the way for these students to have successful high school experiences. The program has accomplished so much that the district is considering implementing a model that can be used in the high school as well. Commented Mike Klugman, principal of Bethlehem Central MS, "He maintains the highest expectations of all students, and works tirelessly alongside teachers to demonstrate to students what their potential is and how they can reach it."

Warford has also been instrumental in leading Bethlehem CSD toward achieving a goal of environmental sustainability. To that end, he founded a district-wide committee called the Green Team, the mission of which is to change the district's infrastructure and policies in order to model what true sustainability looks like. The middle school initially served as a pilot for all the environmental initiatives now implemented across the district. Not only does the middle school house a small farm, producing thousands of pounds of produce annually (served in district cafeterias and a local restaurant, sold at the Delmar Farmers Market, and donated to the Town of Bethlehem food pantry), but the district has also eliminated disposable trays, plastic utensils, styrofoam containers, single use plastic straws, and implemented the recycling of paper, glass, plastic, metal, batteries, used electronics, markers, highlighters, and plastic writing utensils. The boldest initiatives have been to implement food composting across the district and the installation of a 2.1 megawatt solar array that now provides over 80 percent of the district's electricity. In 2012, Bethlehem MS was one of the first three public schools in New York to be given the National Green Ribbon award, and was again recognized in 2017 with the governor's award for environmental stewardship. On speaking about these accomplishments, Principal Klugman noted, "Mark is one of the most powerful role models in our community. He is esteemed and admired as much for his leadership as for his ethics and I have never worked with an assistant principal whose impact was so widely distributed throughout all schools in his district and throughout his community."

Irving Schwartz Distinguished Retiree Award

Michael Dawkins

Rensselaer City SD
(retired)

Michael Dawkins, retired principal from the Rensselaer City School District, has been selected as the recipient of the 2020 Irving Schwartz Distinguished Retiree Award by SAANYS. Irving Schwartz was a founding member of SAANYS. This award is given annually to a retired SAANYS member who, in retirement, has made significant contributions to the welfare of the association, education, and the greater community.

During his tenure in the Rensselaer City SD, Dawkins was known as a mentor to all with a goal of paying it forward. He states that he "worked with teachers to assist them in developing their goals and how those goals would impact student and organizational structure. They were able to see the value of sharing their experiences and expertise, many became mentors to their colleagues, which helped to enhance the value of ongoing professional development and organizational success." While speaking with a colleague about Dawson's impact as a leader, Jennifer Drautz recalled, "She went on for a while to talk about him as a principal, along with what she still remembered and admired about his leadership. Six years into his retirement, and this new future administrator continues to have Mike as her model of school leadership, that's nice evidence of a long-term impact."

In addition to his mentorship of colleagues, Dawkins has continued to serve his profession in a variety of roles. He has served as a SAANYS Regional Representative, APPR specialist, labor relations specialist and negotiator, and often assists in recruiting units to join SAANYS. He has also presented a variety of workshops at state-wide conferences, and was instrumental in the launching of the SAANYS Mentor Coaching service. In addition, he's worked as a college supervisor of student teachers for SUNY Oneonta and Siena College.

Leadership and Support Award

Ricky Frazier

Volunteer Coordinator
Rochester City SD



Ricky Frazier, volunteer coordinator for the Rochester City School District, has been selected as the 2020 recipient of the Leadership and Support Award by SAANYS. The SAANYS Leadership and Support Award was established to recognize the outstanding leadership efforts of those members whose responsibilities require leadership through support services to educators and students across and between buildings and districts.

Since joining the Rochester City SD in 2014, Frazier has been instrumental in the recruitment of more than 500 volunteers serving in various capacities throughout the district. A few of the projects he has implemented include a program where students of color from the University of Rochester serve as mentors to young males of color; recruiting an organization to bring therapy dogs into the schools for reading supports as well as social, emotional needs; working with Kodak for a donation of school supplies; and working with individual community members to donate gloves and hats. For the past several years, he has also served on the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) College Tour Committee, which distributed more than 3.5 million dollars in scholarships. Frazier organized a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, Art) Day for students in which more than 30 companies and organizations participated. Commented Director of Strategic Community Partnerships Nydia Padilla-Rodriguez, "Due to his exceptional work with volunteers in the community, he was honored by an alum who donated funds to purchase books for high school students. His commitment to students, parents, and community go beyond the call of duty, ensuring that educational programs and community resources are made available to our district and student population. His exemplary leadership skills are admirable."

Frazier is also responsible for working with alumni groups visiting the district and is in the process of relaunching the RCSD alumni website that will highlight ways in which alumni can support the district. Frazier often suggests a community service project in conjunction with an alumni reunion event. In particular, the class of 1968 reunion had participants working on a service project planting bulbs on campus. Commented participant Susan Blake Gabay, "Mr. Frazier was informative, friendly, and truly appeared to enjoy spending his Saturday morning with us. That morning, he even uncovered a plaque in front of the tree in the center of the courtyard that had one of our classmates honored for his ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam War, among several on the plaque. One of our local classmates is thus planning to plant some more bulbs in front of the plaque. The amount of good will fostered in the community throughout the excellent work performance of Mr. Frazier cannot be measured."

Friend of Education Award

**Food For Kids, Barbara
Quinn**

President, Food For Kids Board of
Directors
Washingtonville



Food For Kids in Washingtonville, represented by Barbara Quinn, president of the Food For Kids board of directors, has been selected as the recipient of the 2020 Friend of Education Award by SAANYS. This award is given to an individual, group, or organization that has consistently contributed to the support and advancement of outstanding public education and the students of New York State.

Food For Kids, a non-profit, all volunteer organization, was founded in May of 2015 by LouAnne Blanchard and Lois Dunikowski, mission ministry leaders at the First Presbyterian Church of Washingtonville, after learning about another school district's Backpacks for Food program providing food-insecure students non-perishable and easy-to-prepare foods for the weekend. They recognized the need in their own community and arranged to meet with the Superintendent and other concerned individuals and organizations. In the fall of 2015 Taft Elementary School was chosen to be the first school in the program. In subsequent school years, the program expanded its operation to include all three of the elementary schools as well as the middle school. From its inception, Food For Kids has operated as a multi-organization collaboration, working with Catholic Daughters of the Americas (Court St. Ann, Mother of Mary #2419), St. Mary's Catholic Church, First Presbyterian Church of Washingtonville, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Taft School community and PTA, Little Britain School community, Round Hill School community, Washingtonville Middle School, Country Kids Food Pantry, Grace Community Church, Knights of Columbus Our Lady of Lourdes Council #5890, The Country Store Thrift Shop, as well as countless individual community volunteers.

Every Friday during the school year, students who qualify and opt into the program are able to take home a backpack filled with non-perishable and easy-to-prepare foods. Special pack offs are done for long weekends and school holiday breaks. During the summer months, Food For Kids distributes daily lunches from several locations in the school district. The summer food program served more than 8,000 lunches in the summer of 2019 and is additionally supported by many Washingtonville restaurants and businesses, as well as the United Way of Dutchess and Orange Counties, the WEL Foundation, and donations from caring individuals in the community. Food donations may be dropped off in collection bins at all schools being served by the program, at St. Mary's Church outside of St. Joseph's Room, at Stop & Shop in Washingtonville, and at Grace Community Church's lobby area (except Fridays).

LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message from the SAANYS Legal Department



Jennifer Carlson
SAANYS Deputy General
Counsel
jcarlson@saanys.org



Vacation in the Age of School Closures

Like most things in public sector education, the answer will depend on your contract. Those that provide for unlimited rollover and accrual of vacation time provide the easiest resolution, but many contracts provide limitations on how many days can be carried over from one year to the next. The next step is to look at the number of days you can sell back for cash at the end of the school year. Many people already factor that ability sell back days when planning their vacation usage for the year, still leaving an overage due to the current predicament.

If after utilizing all of the remedies discussed above that are available

to you under your contract, you or someone in your unit still has a surplus of vacation days that will be forfeited due to the Executive Orders, **SAANYS recommends that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) be negotiated and drafted to prevent such unforeseen losses this year.** There are many different combinations as to how this goal can be accomplished with the district. The easiest solution would be for the MOA to permit unit members to sell back all unused vacation days at the conclusion of the 2019-2020 school year. With increasing budget concerns, this might not be feasible in some districts. The cap

on vacation accruals and rollover amounts, if any in your contract, could be enlarged to cover the unused vacation for this year. This could be a permanent change or for a limited duration during which time the unused vacation time must be used. If it is the latter, make sure that the timeframe is sufficiently long enough to allow your members to be able to take the time. Depending on how many extra days are being rolled over, taking them all during the 2020-2021 school year might not be practical. Of course, there is also always the ability to combine these options in a way that best benefits both the district and the unit.

The SAANYS Legal Department is here to help you navigate the options within your contract, as well as negotiate an agreement for preserving your unused vacation days at the end of the year. Please reach out to us with any questions so that we may help lessen your contractual concerns during this trying time. ■

SAANYS Professional Learning Update



For information on any SAANYS professional learning event, contact Karen Bronson at kbronson@saanys.org.

What a time it is.

A few short weeks ago, we were digging down into the details to make the final arrangements for upcoming professional learning events before the world changed.

The events that were scheduled into the spring, SAANYS After School Series, a four-part series for ASAR in Rochester, and other events, were cancelled right after things fell apart, but

we are fortunate that the five-part online series for current or aspiring principals and assistant principals with Andrew Marotta, will happen. We are also continuing to work on a collaboration with an area college for an online school leaders' network that will offer short focused workshops on topics that emerging and current leaders ask for. I hope to make that a primary focus as I work remotely and wonder, like all of you do, where this is all going?

But beyond the more immediate plans and works and progress, there are bigger questions that are and will continue to present themselves as the weeks pass, and we continue to walk through this unprecedented experience that impacts every part of our personal and professional lives.

There is certainly no playbook for this, and to me it seems that more questions arise by the day.

One thing that I find myself thinking about a lot is what school will be like when it does resume, whenever that may be. On the bright side (because I don't know about you, but I have to keep looking for some glimmers of light in this tunnel), I think students and families will appreciate school like never before — a ride on the school bus, lunch in the cafeteria, and not to mention that real human interaction around learning should take on a new gleam. I also think that appreciation for the way teachers and school leaders have stepped up in record time to get things together so that students can have some continuity at home during this time will be strongly in evidence. The memes (some pretty funny) about how parents have a new appreciation for school and the people that make it run are everywhere online. Let's hope that sentiment goes beyond the memes to greater respect and reverence for what schools do day in and day out to support students in so many ways.

I also think that the crash course everyone is taking to up their game with technology, regardless of where they were when this began, will deepen and take root in ways that continue to benefit students and their learning long after this is over. The explosion of Zoom, Google Classroom, Schoology, and so many more applications came of necessity to many late adopters, but are likely to continue to take their place as tools that supplement and enhance the real human relationships and interactions that we are missing right now.

One thing I think will be even a bigger priority than it has been up to now (if that is possible) once schools resume, is the mental and emotional wellness of students and educators. Regardless of how well kids or adults appear to be handling this crisis, the deep wear and tear of new levels of anxiety and uncertainty are taking their toll. The worry and stress this experience is engendering is not going to dissipate when the school buses roll again. We have to start thinking now about where the needs will be and how we will be called upon to support students and families in ways we never imagined. I know we will continue to rise to the occasion in the days ahead. ■

LEGAL HIGHLIGHTS

The SAANYS Legal Department - Working Tirelessly for Members Statewide

Below are just a few highlights of our many current and pending cases.

REGION 1

SAANYS reviewed and commented on a draft Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for a unit.

REGION 2

SAANYS negotiated a separation agreement for a member who was informed his position is being abolished at the end of the school year.

REGION 4

SAANYS conferred with unit to plan for negotiations and draft proposals.

REGION 5

SAANYS settled contract negotiations and counseled negotiations committee on the ratification process and the steps involved in that process.

REGION 6

SAANYS filed a level 2 grievance appeal and prepared for BOE level hearing with members.

REGION 7

SAANYS assisted a probationary member, pursuant to education law 3031, to receive her right to 30 days pre- and post- termination notice and continued pay plus benefits during that period of time.

REGION 8

SAANYS assisted with the formation of a new unit.

REGION 9

SAANYS negotiated a separation agreement in lieu of disciplinary charges.

REGION 10

SAANYS drafted a proposed letter of reference and submitted all relevant materials for a separation agreement to the district for review.

REGION 11

SAANYS helped a member prepare a response to a counseling memo.

REGION 12

SAANYS attended a meeting to negotiate the terms and conditions of a new administrative mentor program management would like to implement.

SAANYS Personal Legal 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

1-800-832-5182

Be prepared to present your membership ID #.

Have questions?
Need assistance?

Use the "Ask SAANYS" button at saanys.org.

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

Be sure to include your area code when leaving your number.

Moving onward and upward?

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THIS ONE'S FOR YOU!



ASSISTANT principals & NEW leaders

PRECONFERENCE

OCTOBER 17, 2020 | OTESAGA RESORT

date & location

SAANYS is pleased to announce a **PRECONFERENCE DAY** dedicated entirely to assistant principals and newer school leaders in any role (i.e. principals, IT, essential service leaders, directors) to be held on Saturday, October 17, the day before the SAANYS Annual Conference at the Otesaga Resort in Cooperstown.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2020 | 9 am – 4 pm
OTESAGA RESORT, 60 Lake Street, Cooperstown, NY

what to expect

This day of professional learning and connecting is devoted entirely to issues that impact you: keynotes, roundtables, mini-ed camp, and the opportunity to meet colleagues from all over New York State. Topics suited to your role and career goals will include:

- navigating district culture and politics
- building trust and relationships
- nitty gritty for those of you who handle discipline, such as
 - balancing consequences with restorative practices
 - dealing with pressure around handling of disciplinary issues
 - considerations for special education students
 - communicating with students and families
- the principal/assistant principal relationship
- getting better at difficult conversations
- onboarding and preparing for the principalship
- “Do This, Not That” strategies for building a professional reputation and avoiding common pitfalls
- using your local unit and SAANYS resources for support
- managing time and email
- improving your skills with teacher feedback around instruction
- taking care of yourself; managing stress
- APPR and getting to tenure; certification questions
- connecting with mentors
- assistant principal as a career choice
- special challenges facing IT and essential service leaders
- ...more details at www.saanys.org as it becomes available

registration

SPACE IS LIMITED – REGISTER EARLY

- Registration – \$125 includes light breakfast and lunch.
- Hotel reservation – please visit www.otesaga.com and enter group code 2792334 (\$185 a night); or nearby Holiday Inn Suites, Cooperstown, visit <http://bit.ly/39idAHw> and enter group code: SAANYS Conference. Room blocks will open April 6.

2020 CALENDAR



Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

National Physical Fitness and Sports Month

May 3-10 *Be Kind to Animals Week*

May 3 *World Press Freedom Day*

May 4-10 *National Children's Book Week*

May 4-8 *National Teacher Appreciation Week and National Teacher Day*

May 5 *Anniversary of First American Man in Space*

May 5 *Cinco de Mayo*

May 6 *National School Nurse Day*

May 8 *VE Day*

May 10-16 *Food Allergy Awareness Week*

May 10 *Mother's Day*

May 16 *Armed Forces Day*

May 20-21 *Lindberg Flight Anniversary*

May 25 *Memorial Day*

May 25 *Ralph Waldo Emerson's Birthday*

May 31 *World No Tobacco Day*



Great Outdoors Month

National Caribbean-American Heritage Month

June 5 *World Environment Day*

June 8-14 *National Little League Baseball Week*

June 12 *Anne Frank's Birthday*

June 14 *Flag Day*

June 15 *Anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's Kite Experiment*

June 15 *Magna Carta Day*

June 16 *International Day of the African Child*

June 16 *Anniversary of First Woman in Space*

June 19 *Juneteenth*

June 20 *First Day of Summer*

June 21 *Father's Day*

June 27 *Helen Keller's Birthday*

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Brentwood Principal Selected as NYS Secondary School Principal of the Year and NASSP NYS Principal of the Year

continued from page 1

arranged for embedded workshops with agencies to come work with the students. The impact of learning about and responding to these students' experiences resulted in significant social-emotional gains at West Middle School. Commented PTA board member and parent Maria Heuskin, "As the parent of an academically and emotionally challenged child, I have witnessed first-hand her caring and compassionate nature. She has stood strong with my child, letting him know that throughout his challenges he had a safe place and someone to always turn to." Commented Assistant Superintendent Monique Darrisaw-Akil, "At Mrs. Thomas-Williams' school, differences are celebrated and students are encouraged to showcase their cultural heritage. She uses her creativity to develop programs that engage students and parents."

Thomas-Williams is also active in her community, working with organizations such as the Special Olympics, the Parent Academy to foster positive relationships with parents, serving as community co-chair of My Brother's Keeper, and serving as an executive board member of the Brentwood Principals and Supervisors Organization. She is also a member of the board of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., a former member of the board of directors for the Wheatly Heights Mother's Club, a member of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, as well as being active in the Long Island Association for Curriculum and Development, the Long Island Black Educators, and more. Commented NYS Senator Monica Martinez, "Felicia Thomas-Williams is an individual I hold in the highest regard. She is a loyal, dedicated, and hard-working individual. Her talents and abilities prove her capacity to bolster the success of anything she does." 🍌

Stratford Road Principal Named Elementary Principal of the Year

continued from page 1

physically, socially, and emotionally." Stratford Road ES is not only the largest elementary school in the district, but also home to the largest English Language Learner (ELL) and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) populations, as well as the district's Autism Program. Commented Superintendent of Schools Dr. Lorna Lewis, "The success of this special population is due in no small part to the energy and support Dr. Clark gives to the program. Students and parents leave her building valuing the lessons of patience, charity, and kindness demonstrated there." The school hosts many events fostering inclusivity throughout the year, such as the annual circus, pay it forward, game days, gym helpers, peer buddies, and the kickoff welcome back assembly. In addition, students take part in community service projects by donating "Birthday Boxes" to Birthday Wishes, a local non-profit that provides birthday parties to children living in local homeless shelters. Over the years, more than 120 Birthday Boxes and over 400 gifts have been donated. Amanda Bodeker, grade 5, summed it up perfectly, "Dr. Clark puts kids before herself."

Considering herself the school's lead learner having earned her PhD while leading Stratford Road ES, she is also known as a mentor who cultivates leadership in others. She is an adjunct professor at SUNY Old Westbury, works with doctoral students on their dissertations at Concordia University, and has published numerous articles in educational journals. Commented Michael Rodgers, POB director of music and performing arts, "She has a disposition where she welcomes all and offers herself completely to help, listen, or support someone. She is a remarkable colleague who understands careers, trajectories, and believes in her team." 🍌

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"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it."

-Maya Angelou

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Online Workshop - 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

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...for Central Treasurers and Administrators
Two 1.5-hour sessions, on non-consecutive days
Online Workshop - 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM

Readiness for the Superintendency (online)
Single session – Online Webinar - 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Applying for the Superintendency (online)
Single session – Online Webinar - 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Dates, detailed information, and registration at
www.SuperintendentOfSchools.com
James M. Merrins, EdD, Executive Program Administrator
716-672-5473 jmerrins@cecomet.net

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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 / national principal of the year programs.

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