

Conversation
With New Ed.
Panel Chair
3

Thinking
Of Retiring?
Prepare Now
4



Best Practice
Sharing For
School Leaders
4

Spring Line-Up:
New, Updated
ELI Seminars
6

CSA NEWS

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Feb. 2019

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American Federation
of School Administrators,
AFL-CIO Local 1

Staten Island: Collaborative Communities Partnership

'Students learn how we're all alike more than different. They become supportive, compassionate and will tell you nothing has impacted their lives more.'

BY CRAIG DIFOLCO

Just before the new year, NY State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia visited New Dorp High School to learn more about the school's Collaborative School Communities partnership with The Richard Hungerford School, a District 75 school. New Dorp Principal

Deirdre DeAngelis and Hungerford Principal Kristin McHugh supervised a discussion panel featuring teachers and students who have participated in the inclusion program, and the commissioner then sat in on a choir rehearsal as they prepared for their holiday show later that week.

The choir is only one of the

many extracurricular activities in which students from the two Staten Island schools participate, but the partnership is much more than a list of shared activities and classes. Their communities continually work together to create a culture of inclusion, mutual respect, understanding and collaboration.

"As a longtime special educator, I've always seen how inclusion programs for students with IEPs impact them academically, socially, and emotionally," said Ms. DeAngelis. "And for our students at New Dorp, they get one of the best lessons possible in how we're all more alike than

Continued on Page 5

Despite APPR Bill, High-Stakes Test Woes To Continue

BY CHUCK WILBANKS

Will efforts to curtail standardized testing end up actually end up creating more of the same?

That's the worry after the New York State legislature voted on Jan. 23 to stop linking state math and English tests to teacher evaluations for grades 3-8. Despite the delinkage, schools will still have to administer the math and English tests, and the new law leaves in place the rule that half of a teacher's evaluation will be determined by measurement of students.

The Annual Professional Performance Review, or APPR, has been widely reviled by educators and ultimately the citizenry as well. The burdens placed on students, teachers and administrators, as well as unfair results in judging teachers and schools this way, led to the rise of the opt-out movement. Widespread protests around the state followed, mainly in the form of simple refusals to take the exams. In 2015, for example, 20 percent of

Continued on Page 9

TRANSITION CENTERS

Crucial New Resource For Public School Students With IEPs

BY CRAIG DIFOLCO

In November, the DOE opened their newest Transition and College Access Center (TCAC) in Queens, the fourth such center to open since the initiative was launched at the end of 2017 in partnership with the mayor's office. Each center serves as a central resource hub to support students with IEPs as they and their families craft a plan to move from school to post-school activities, whether that means preparing

for college, entering the workforce or attempting to live independently.

"These centers were essentially created to give students with IEPs a sense of transition and allow them to consider a number of avenues in terms of that transition," said Education Administrator Akile Stuart who serves as an instructional lead of the Bronx center embedded at Dewitt Clinton High School. "We're providing a pathway for them to understand some of

Continued on Page 5

Election Results Are In

CSA would like to congratulate the 2019-2022 slate of officers on their election. They will be sworn in at the next Executive Board meeting on February 13, 2019. They ran unopposed.

CSA would also like to congratulate the new Executive Board who will likewise serve from 2019 through 2022, starting February 1. Thank you to all those who participated in the election process. We also extend our deepest thanks to everyone who served on the Executive Board for the last three years. They have represented our union with commitment and integrity, and their leadership was fundamental to our recent growth and success.

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See List Of Executive Board Members On **P.7**

Raises And Lump Sum News

In February, CSA members working for the DOE will receive 25 percent of the retroactive lump-sum payment. This is in addition to the higher paychecks you are receiving this year, courtesy of our union contract. We are also happy to remind you that a 2 percent salary increase took effect on Sept. 6, and another 4% salary increase took effect on Oct. 6, 2018.



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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

You're Still Accountable For Decisions You Share

Shared Decision Making For A Stronger Team By Mark Cannizzaro

Strong school leaders know that any new program, policy or major organizational change is more likely to succeed when there is buy-in from key stakeholders. Although complete buy-ins are not always easy or even possible to achieve, outcomes are always more appealing when those around us have been heard and kept informed of the reasons for major decisions. Stakeholders want open, honest communication and the sense that a principal is willing to change course if someone comes up with a better idea.

As principals, we can successfully collaborate in a variety of ways, based on our style, preference and experience. Many of us use an informal process for collaboration, calling together trusted staff members based on their expertise or how a particular decision might affect them. Other decisions might be better discussed with the entire staff, the School Leadership Team, or the UFT consultative committee. The informal nature of this leadership style allows for the principal to decide when and with whom to collaborate and, after receiving input, arrive at the most informed decision.

I remember a chaotic situation developing in the congested hallways between periods when I was principal at I.S. 75. To improve student behavior, a team of us collaborated and came up with a system of scheduling students in teams with subject classes in close proximity to each other to reduce their movement and anonymity in our overcrowded building. This common-sense solution provoked some rebellion – “You can’t move me out of my classroom!” Several teachers had had the same classroom for over twenty years. But we went forward, the chaos ended, and everyone was pretty happy, even in their new classrooms.

Shared decision-making can deal with everything from traffic flow to student assessment to the uses of technology. As a rookie principal, I collaborated daily with my seasoned and well-respected literacy coach on curriculum, testing and staff morale. Her input and relationship with the staff helped me gain trust and navigate some potentially dangerous waters. She became my first gauge on school culture.

I remember several group collaborations. The special education department was one. We shared ideas around programming, professional development and student services, all of which contributed to the significant growth of the department. And the School Leadership Team was instrumental in establishing a homework and grading policy, a student dress code and a no-limousine policy for our “senior” dance. A variety of experiences like this helped me arrive at better decisions and forge strong relationships with the school community. My comfort level grew and over time, I was able to turn some decisions over completely, but always reserving the right of approval on others. I made a few decisions myself, but generally after at least some consultation.

A more formal model of collaboration, Shared Decision Making (SDM), is popular again (Some of you will remember that it was mandated in NYC schools in



the mid-1990s.) In this model a team of staff members meets regularly to identify needs and develop solutions. Usually, there are protocols to ensure respectful dialogue, input of all members and to avoid personal agendas. Procedures are in place for the occasions when impasse is reached. Most models call for the principal to settle an impasse while others call for outside intervention. In the spring 2014 issue of *Principal Matters*, Dr. David DeMatthews shares some practical tips for principals considering an SDM approach:

SDM models...have the potential to increase the quality of decisions and create a more ethical school. However, shared leadership and decision-making can be treacherous territory to navigate with numerous pitfalls, especially for inexperienced principals.

Teachers and staff must feel included but must also recognize that not all decisions can or will be made through a democratic or shared process.

When teachers and staff have influence over decisions, they are more likely to accept decisions and work diligently to implement those decisions.

A Shared decision-making process may not be appropriate if a principal feels that a certain decision is important and cannot be altered.

Prior to engaging in shared decision-making, a principal must have an awareness of teachers' values, commitments, areas of expertise and desired outcomes.

The moral of the story is to start slowly with SDM and build capacity rather than diving into an important decision through a shared process with limited knowledge about what will happen.

In any kind of collaboration, including any type of formal SDM model, make sure you're comfortable with the team. You do not need to find only individuals who think the way you do. In fact, a diversity of opinion that comes from a good place, is especially valuable. What is important, though, is that you know everyone well, their experience, expertise and commitment. You should also be very clear and comfortable with the types of decisions that will and will not go before the committee and what your role will be as far as being the final decision maker.

We each have a different leadership style and comfort level. The key is to know exactly what you are getting into and to be comfortable that it's the best path forward for your school and its students.

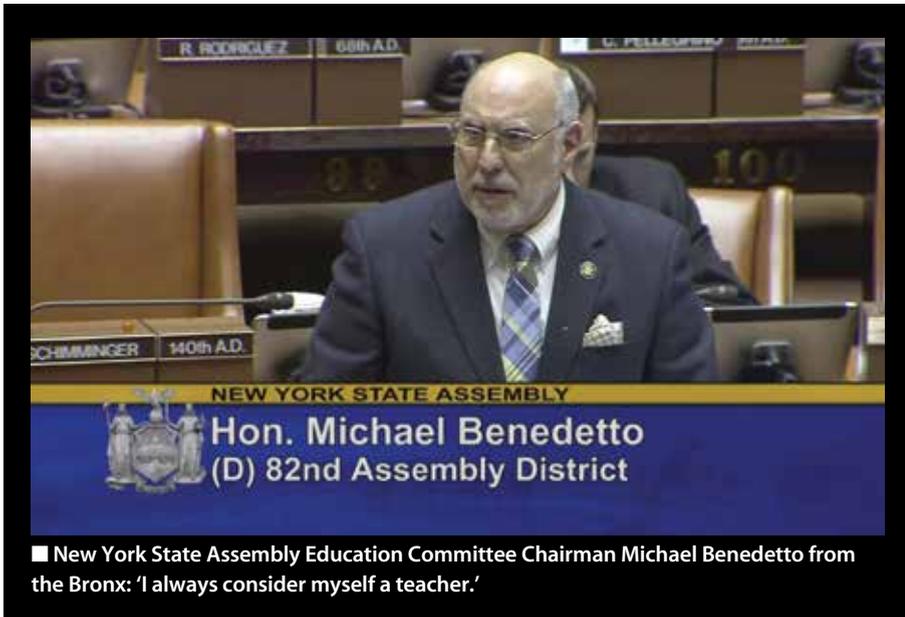
Remember, while decisions may be shared, accountability is not.

Mark Cannizzaro is president of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators.

Q AND A

Albany Panorama

A Conversation With Assemblyman Michael Benedetto



■ New York State Assembly Education Committee Chairman Michael Benedetto from the Bronx: 'I always consider myself a teacher.'

BY CHUCK WILBANKS

Michael Benedetto is the new chairman of the New York State Assembly's Education Committee, taking over for Cathy Nolan of Queens, who has moved into the role of deputy speaker. Born in the Bronx, Mr. Benedetto has lived his entire life there as well. In 1974, he became a teacher for children with special needs, and in 1977 began working at PS 160 in the Bronx's Co-op City, eventually becoming the coordinator of special education at the school in 1988. He served at the school until his election to Assembly in 2004. He spoke recently with CSA News editor Chuck Wilbanks about his new chairmanship and the educational issues likely to be hashed out in the state legislature during the coming months.

Congratulations on taking over the committee.

Thank you. It is exciting. During the 14 years I've served in the Assembly, I have told people I'm a teacher, that I always consider myself a teacher. This is the culmination of a long and satisfying career.

What should we expect in Albany this year?

As you know, the Education Committee can be a hotbed of contentious issues. I expect there to be a number of them this session. First and foremost – I want funding levels to be maintained and or increased.

Any particular numbers?

No numbers. I am having meetings

with my staff to look at numbers. I have appointments with the state Education Department and I'll be conferring with them and my staff.

What did you think about Gov. Cuomo's recent remarks that school funding is the primary responsibility of localities?

The governor says things, and I'm not really too sure what he means. His stand on these things tends to be fluid. I don't know why he said it, and I don't know specifically what he means. I'll wait and see what he says later.

Over and above that, there will be a lot of issues. We'll be looking at the quality of education that non-public schools are providing. Legislators and outside organizations have great concerns about non-public schools giving their students a sub-standard education.

You're speaking about yeshivas?

I don't want to single out yeshivas but they are part of that question. There are other schools as well and we'll take a look at them.

What are your feelings about the de Blasio Administration's efforts to change the admission requirements to the city's specialized high schools?

My feelings are my feelings and I won't let them interfere with the work of the committee. We all have personal feelings but we also have to consider the sentiments of our delegation, the Democratic Conference. Just like Speaker Heastie will speak out on certain issues, but on others he will stay

quiet because he wants to gauge the sense of the conference. There is discussion going on, and opinions are strong on this issue. It came up last year; this year we will have more time to discuss it and get the sense of the conference.

What's on the horizon for charter schools?

Charters are always an issue and they will be in the future. Whether we permit more to go forward will be on the table. So will teacher evaluations.

One issue on the minds of our members is school discipline policies that can deprive school leaders of the autonomy needed to make sensible decisions.

I've always thought that matters like this should be decided locally. I've also always thought that individual administrators know what they're doing in their schools. One of the bills I've had over the years is that charter schools should follow the same process as public schools. We want the process to be fair from school to school, but we don't want the principals to be handcuffed. There might be oversight, since we don't want any abuses. But administrators have to have the power to put sensible discipline in the school.

What does the future hold for mayoral control of the city's schools?

There has been some sentiment in my conference that we should do away with mayoral control and go back to some version of community school boards having more power. It's a major issue and we'll need to look for guidance through hearings. This might be an area where we hold hearings throughout the city.

It's been a big year for the Bronx, politically speaking anyway. You're the chair of the Education Committee, Marcos Crespo takes over at the Labor Committee, Carl Heastie is the speaker, Rueben Diaz is planning a run for Mayor...

It's always a good year for the Bronx. I'm prejudiced. But yes, things like this change over the years. It just happens that way, the unique things that happen in politics. While it might be looked at as a good thing for the Bronx, it's a good thing for the city and state in general. Marcos and I will take our cues from Speaker Heastie. He's been a good and fair speaker for the city and the state.

NATION

Education

FLORIDA:

Report Card Timing

Researchers for JAMA Pediatrics, who studied the timing of report card releases and calls to child abuse hotlines in 64 counties across Florida, recorded a nearly fourfold jump in verified physical abuse cases on Saturdays after report cards were sent home. Some suggested that educators be reminded that report cards may not be well-received; reflect on the way in which grade summaries are presented; and promote positive discipline. (Education Week)

NEW JERSEY:

PARCC No More

In a unanimous decision, a New Jersey court threw out the state's requirement for students to pass the PARCC exam to graduate. Students still have to take the exam, but it will not be a graduation requirement. A case had been brought by civil rights groups against New Jersey to stop the requirement which was adopted in 2016. The court concluded the testing conflicted with state law. (Education Week)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

Discipline Guidance

Guidance to protect students of color from being disciplined more harshly than their peers, was rescinded by US Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. The 2014 Obama-era guidance, which was non-binding, is the latest in a series of Obama-era revocations by DeVos including documents pertaining to transgender students, school diversity and sexual assault.

COLORADO:

Lowering Stress For Immigrant Students

Some students live with stress of the possibility of deportation, arrest, or being separated from their families. One Colorado history teacher, Kelly Cvanciger, said, "Trying to convince kids to actively participate in their education and learn geography when they face an uncertain future cripples our education system." Building relationships with students goes a long way toward making them feel safe. Cvanciger seeks to make herself approachable. A change she's made over the years to signal this is to move her desk to the back of the room to remove a psychological barrier between student and teacher. (Chalkbeat)

WASHINGTON:

Practicing Life Skills

Developmentally disabled students at Sacajawea Middle School are learning life skills by running "Thunderbean Coffee" at their school. Two days a week, they make coffee and deliveries around the school. A local business donated the coffee shop machinery and supplies. The students are learning both work and social skills through the burgeoning business. (kxly news)

— COMPILED BY
CHRISTINE ALTMAN

Change of Leadership at CSA's Black Caucus

BY YVROSE PIERRE

The Black Caucus of CSA held its first general meeting of the year at CSA headquarters on Nov. 14. The room was packed with existing and new members. CSA President Mark Cannizzaro, Grievance Director Dale Kelly, CSA Executive Vice President Henry Rubio and First Vice President Rosemarie Sinclair all spoke. Mr. Kelly swore in the new executive board members and his successor Dr. Reginald Landeau Jr.

Principal Landeau's MS 216 George J. Ryan School was named a National Blue Ribbon School in 2018, and he is a recent recipient of the US Department of Education's Terrel H. Bell award. Dr. Landeau is the first African-American man to receive this prestigious honor. The caucus seeks to share knowledge and information, to supporting our members and build great leaders. An educational conference will be held Feb. 26 at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, and a Legendary Leaders gala will be on June 8 at Russo's on the Bay in Queens.

An Insider's Perspective

Thinking Of Retiring? Start Preparing Now

Mark
Brotsky



The Next Chapter Of Your Life Is In Front Of You. Be Sure To Take Care Of This Business

If you are planning on retiring soon, this is the time to start thinking about what you need to do. Members of the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the Board of Education Retirement System (BERS) often, but not always, retire immediately after the school year ends. If you are considering this major step, you should begin preparing. Here are our suggestions on how to proceed.

Buy outstanding service credit. When you buy additional service credit, it generally means an increase in your pension calculation. If you have credit outstanding for purchase, you need to start that process before you retire. Refer to your most recent Annual Benefits Statement or a recent Total Service Letter from TRS or BERS to learn if you have service credit available for purchase. This also pertains to our members who have accrued time as a CUNY instructor. Once you retire, you can no longer claim this service.

Book a pension consultation. When you think you know when you would like to retire, you should contact Pat Agard here at CSA to request a pension voucher. At the same time, set up an appointment with a pension consultant. During this meeting, your consultant will help you complete necessary paperwork and provide you with detailed instructions on the procedure for submitting your retirement papers. Keep in mind CSA will reimburse you for up to three consultations – one a year.

Set up your health insurance. You will need to apply for health benefits (if applicable) by filling out an ERB form and submitting it to the DOE. Your pension consultant will assist you with this process at the final pension consultation.

Choose the right payment option. No mat-

ter your pension tier, you have several payment options when it comes to how you receive your retirement allowance. All the options provide you with monthly lifetime payments, but each provides a different death benefit, payable to one or more beneficiaries. The maximum payment option pays you the most but does not provide for any beneficiaries.

Keep in mind that you will have other death benefits to assign when you complete your retirement application. These include a lump-sum benefit under Death Benefit Choice #2 for members in Tiers 3, 4 and 6 and a fractional benefit for the month of your death.

Decide how to handle your TDA funds. If you have money invested in a Tax-Deferred Annuity Program with TRS or BERS, you will need to make a distribution choice when you retire. You may want to withdraw or roll over your TDA funds. You may want to maintain your TDA account at TRS or BERS by electing TDA deferral status at retirement. In that case, no distributions are required until you reach age 70½ as a retiree. While your money is still invested in the TDA, you continue to accrue the same interest rate as when you were working. Or you may choose to annuitize the account and receive a second monthly payment in addition to your pension check.

You can learn more about these choices by going to the TRS website or calling BERS at (929) 305-3800.

Consider any pension loans. Retirement is the last opportunity to pay off a loan balance under the Qualified Pension Plan, and it's also the last chance to take a new pension loan if you have an immediate financial need. Just keep in mind that the amount of your monthly retirement allowance payments will be permanently reduced as a result of any Qualified Pension Plan loan balance at retirement.

Get retirement payments electronically (EFT). If you are a DOE employee, your retirement payments are deposited in the same account in which you receive your paychecks — unless you instruct TRS/BERS otherwise.

File your retirement papers in person. We strongly urge CSA members to file their retirement applications in person at TRS or BERS — and start the process well in advance of retirement. The earliest you can apply is 90 days before your planned retirement date, and you may apply as late as one day before. Submitting your papers should not take more than two hours. Note that the DOE does not give you this day.

When you handle this process in person at the appropriate system office, TRS or BERS representatives can examine the documents, make sure they are filled out correctly, review your choices and answer questions. It's important that you have your documents completed and notarized before you visit.

You should start at TRS – 55 Water Street. Then come here to CSA to get your health form reviewed, join the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund and rejoin your union, CSA. From CSA, go to the DOE at 65 Court Street in Brooklyn, where you will submit a copy of the receipt you received from TRS along with your health form. The DOE then gives you a receipt and you walk out with the next chapter of your life in front of you.

Special thanks to Debra Penny, member of the NYC Teachers' Retirement Board, for her assistance on this article.

Mark Brotsky is Director of the CSA Retiree Chapter.

NYC Elementary School Sharing New Teaching Tools

BY CRAIG DIFOLCO

Yorkville Community School opened its doors to over thirty visitors in mid-January for a day of professional development in curriculum design as a part of the Department of Education's Showcase Schools program. Select members of the Yorkville staff led guided classroom visits and panel discussions to provide fellow educators with an overview of how their curriculum is organized around thematic units, how they integrate disciplines within the exploration of a comprehensive subject and how their students take an active role in the learning process.

Since its launch in 2014, the Showcase Schools program has featured close to 400 such visits, providing more than 10,000 educators the opportunity to learn about promising practices. Schools apply to be part of the program, and with the support of the Showcase team, educators learn how to design and facilitate activities and share what they've learned with their colleagues.

Yorkville Principal Samantha Kaplan applied to the program because she believed her school's practices might help other chil-



CRAIG DIFOLCO

■ Manhattan's Yorkville Community School hosted visitors in January.

dren, but she has seen benefits for Yorkville as well.

"It holds us accountable," she said. "When we present our practices to others it forces us to own those practices and allows us to celebrate the work being done in our classrooms. It has also enabled the team facilitating visits to build their own capacity."

Showcase visits all follow the same structure and flow. The morning starts with participants sharing their intentions

while administrators and staff communicate the school vision. Ms. Kaplan welcomed visitors with the story of how she came to be the founding principal of Yorkville, her experience learning to integrate students' interests into their writing as a teacher and designing curriculum as an AP, and her thinking as she crafted her proposal for Yorkville. Administrators that participate in the Showcase program work with a professional storyteller with the

hope that their school's story will help deepen connections with visitors and provide richer context for the practices they witness. Assistant Principal Stacie Lorraine then detailed how Yorkville has evolved since its opening and provided more background on the school community.

During the guided classroom visits that followed, visitors engaged with students and teachers during lessons and explored instructional materials that existed in every classroom: boards to help students visualize the writing process, thematic word walls, interactive bulletin boards for students to chronicle their research and learning process, as well as thematic unit libraries. Afterwards, participants sat with teachers in small groups to discuss the larger context and impact of the practices they witnessed and learn how Yorkville's cross-curricular approach emphasizes research and includes firsthand experiences in the surrounding neighborhood.

"It's wonderful to learn from someone in my district that shares a common philosophy," said Principal May Lee of PS 42, who brought along staff and her AP Olga Lipsky. "You know the visit

has been thoroughly prepared, and you see practices in their existing environment and culture, so you know you're seeing authentic learning."

The goal of each Showcase visit is to not only expose participants to inspiring practices but to provide them the means to adapt those practices to meet their own needs. In the afternoon, breakout sessions enabled visitors to focus on their "Bridge to Action," a practical plan to bridge what they had learned to what they hoped to incorporate at their own schools.

"Ultimately the goal of a Showcase visit is to expand a sense of what is possible and get participants to recommit to their responsibility to make it possible," said Milo Novelo, a senior director of the Showcase Schools program and a former principal. "It's about seeing practices with a sense of your own expectation and agency."

Yorkville Community School will host another visit on April 12. Upcoming visits at other schools will include topics such as Culturally Responsive Education, Redefining Discipline, and Social-Emotional Learning. Visit showcaseschools.org for more information.

COLLABORATION

Joint Performances, NASA Workshops, And Design Events In Staten Island

Continued from Page 1

we're different. They learn to become more compassionate and supportive, and they will tell you that nothing has impacted their life more."

On her Dec. 17 visit, Commissioner Elia was accompanied by Regent Christine Cea, who had previously presented the schools' "Just Say Hi" video at a meeting with the commissioner. The "Just Say Hi" campaign, launched by the Cerebral Palsy Foundation and the DOE, focuses on furthering the inclusion of students with disabilities in schools. New Dorp High School and Hungerford students worked closely together on the campaign, producing the video and hanging posters. The

schools chose to expand their lunch time "buddy" program as a result of the initiative, and their collaborative video was so impressive and moving that the Commissioner decided to pay the school a visit.

Another prominent example of the schools' collaboration occurred earlier this year when staff and students from both schools attended workshops led by NASA. They collaboratively built and tested components for an Arduino board that was launched on a weather balloon in upstate New York. Arduino is an open source computing platform that allowed users to record and track temperature, altitude and pressure as the balloon traveled through the

layers of the atmosphere.

After construction, students gathered together to host a livestream for the launch and celebrated as their balloon traveled over 100,000 feet into the stratosphere.

The strongest component of the collaboration between Hungerford and New Dorp students are their joint performances and presentations. In the past year alone, students from both schools have performed side by side at The International Festival, their spring production of Rent, their annual holiday show, and the Staten Island Borough Arts Festival. For their annual fashion show, New Dorp students designed clothing that was modeled by the Hungerford students.

New Dorp High School and the Hungerford School plan to continue and enhance their partnership in the coming year. Their goals include increased opportunities for parents to collaborate on a more formal basis, shared professional development between staff, and increased communication about the many opportunities available to students.

"This partnership provides our kids with a community high school experience and affords them opportunities they otherwise wouldn't have," said Principal McHugh. "It allows students from New Dorp the chance to learn more about students with disabilities and helps our students feel more accepted."

Initiative: Transition Centers For Public School Pupils With IEPs

Continued from Page 1

the resources and opportunities available to them, and we try to touch on everything that will support them with their goals and plans after high school."

Mr. Stuart is one of four EAs who currently serve these various transition centers. The Bronx center opened last fall, along with another located at Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn where Victoria Richard serves as the instructional lead. Donny Swanson works out of the Staten Island center which opened at the Michael J Petrides School in June, while Laurie Barnes-Holden is based at the Queens Family Welcome Center in Jamaica. At each center, these EAs are part of a team of six which also includes two teacher trainers, an office manager and director, as well as staff member focused on community engagement.

Schools are legally required to help special-needs students craft transition plans as they graduate high school and must designate a transition coordinator. The TCACs are walk-in centers that provide necessary resources and guidance for students and their families, and their professional learning catalogue includes opportunities for school administrators and staff, so that relevant personnel can aid students in the process. The learning opportunities are CTLE-approved and range in topics from career planning to effective communication strategies that enhance self-advocacy skills. There are opportunities for paraprofessionals, parent coordinators, and even for middle school staff related to high school planning. If a school has the need for specific professional development but the necessary personnel can't visit the center on the date it's scheduled, the center can also bring PD directly to schools.

"Our ultimate goal is simply to help

schools craft better and more meaningful IEPs," said Ms. Barnes-Holden, "which of course leads to the broader goal of achieving better outcomes for students with IEPs."

One of the most notable programs run out of the centers is the Training Opportunities Program (TOP), a year-round work-based learning program that connects students with local businesses. They accept students on a rolling basis and help provide students secure paid working opportunities so they can learn on the job. The TCACs often must educate businesses on exactly how they might work with students with disabilities and support them during the transition process.

"Developing relationships within the community has been one of most important aspects of our work so far," said Donny Swanson. "As students come in, their transition plans will look very different from one to the next. So it's our duty to know what different opportunities are available to them so we can support these children in the best way possible."

The centers also support students with IEPs as they apply for the Summer Youth Employment Program to increase their chance at acceptance into the city-wide initiative.

"This is a group of humble, incredibly passionate experts," said Jose Rios Lua, Communications Director of the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support. "We hope their colleagues will consider them as a valuable resource to lean on, engage with, and partner with, whenever they're needed."

For more information, email the appropriate TCAC: BKLYNtcac@schools.nyc.gov, BXTcac@schools.nyc.gov, QNStcac@schools.nyc.gov, or Sltcac@schools.nyc.gov.

"A Dream Deferred" Conference To Be Held In L.A.

As it does each year, the College Board will be hosting a national conference this March – called A Dream Deferred -- examining the future of education for African Americans, from K-12 through higher ed. CSA member Camille Jacobs, the AP for administration, safety, budgeting and personnel at Queens Collegiate, has been the event's co-chair for the last three years. Seminars, speakers and events are planned.

"The conference is about educational professionals looking to make a difference for African American students and their families," said Ms. Jacobs.

She also noted that in recent years, the city where the conference has been held had just undergone a significant event. "Last year it was held in Houston after Hurricane Harvey," she said. "The year before that was in Washington, D.C., after the election. Every time we come to do a conference, something has happened right before. It's almost a premonition."

This year, Los Angeles teachers went on strike, demanding a pay raise, higher school funding, smaller class size, limits on charter schools, more nurses, librarians and other supports, and less standardized testing. Ms. Jacobs said she had invited educators from the Los Angeles Unified School District to discuss the strike with the attendees.

The conference will be held at the Westin Bonaventure, March 13 – 15. Those interested in attending should visit dreamdeferred.collegeboard.org for details.

– CW

Your Union's Scholarships: Time Is Now

CSA is proud to announce the creation of a new annual scholarship for the child of an active CSA member. The scholarship prize will be \$10,000, awarded to one graduating high school senior per year, regardless of whether they attend a NYC public school, a public school outside of New York City, or a private school.

If you are an active member in good standing and have a child who is interested in applying, visit csa-nyc.org/member_scholarship to request an application. The application form and essay question will be mailed to you and must be returned to CSA by April 1, 2019. The essay question will include corresponding guidelines, and a selected committee will judge each essay blindly.

Meanwhile, CSA is continuing its tradition of offering one scholarship per borough to any child graduating from a NYC public school who will be attending college in the fall, including community college. The scholarship is intended for a student who shows leadership in school and or outside of school or might have overcome hardships to reach graduation. The award is not based on the GPA or SAT scores of the student. In fact, the student is not asked to list them or provide a transcript. CSA Scholarship guidelines ask you to choose a student who you believe shows potential and academic promise.

Each school may submit up to three student applications. One per

New, annual prize to be awarded to active CSA member's child

borough will be awarded and presented at a dinner at the LaGuardia Marriott, held during the first week of June. Each award is \$3,000.

There are three parts to the application that must be fully filled out: Application, Personal Statements and Supervisor Verification. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

The one-page application and requirements for personal statements are to be given to the students and must be filled out completely. Completed applications and personal statements must be returned to the assistant principal or principal no later than Thursday, Feb. 28, 2019, and the completed forms and documentation are due to CSA no later than Tuesday, March 12, 2019.

Do not have the student contact CSA. For more information, student applications and supervisor verification forms, please visit our website. Applications and student essays can be scanned and sent via email to scholarship19@csa-nyc.org or mailed to CSA, Attention Erminia Claudio, 40 Rector Street, 12th Floor, NY, NY 10006.

Questions? Feel free to email erminia@csa-nyc.org or call (212) 823-2025

– CW

For Spring, New And Updated ELI Seminars

BY ELOISE MESSINEO

Spring is a reawakening in many ways, and here at ELI we look forward to introducing new and updated seminars emphasizing current educational trends to help leaders of our school communities develop their skills. We roll out these ground-breaking workshops in the coming months. Sign up early. Remember, ELI is an approved CTLE Sponsor.

The Inclusive School Leadership Challenge: The caring, empathetic and responsible leader must establish a school environment

Upcoming Workshops

2/13 | *Brooklyn:*
Documenting for the Personnel File

2/14 | *Manhattan:*
Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric – MPPR

2/20 | *Manhattan:*
Dignity for All Students (DASA)

2/27 | *Queens:*
Emotions Matter – Practicing Social Emotional Intelligence

2/27 | *Manhattan:*
Encouraging Students to Become Self Directed Learners

For a complete list of workshops, go to <http://csa-nyc.org/eli/upcoming>. On social media, follow @ELI40NYC



■ At CSA's Executive Leadership Conference on Nov. 3, ELI Executive Director Eloise Messineo, Consultants Steve Duch and Cathy Paparelli and City Councilman Daniel Dromm.



■ South Korean science educators enjoyed a symposium on STEM education at CSA Headquarters Jan. 9 - 18.

where students can learn and flourish in an accepting milieu regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, learning disability or any acknowledged or perceived differences.

ELI offers leaders the following professional learning opportunities pertaining to the development of an optimal learning atmosphere in schools:

Creating An LGBTQ+ Inclusive School, A Guide For Leaders: This seminar is designed to offer resources to develop effective strategies to create inclusive school settings from grades Pre-K to 12.

Promoting Racial And Ethnic Equity For School Leaders: Frames the issues and explores strategies to promote equity.

Dignity For All Students Act (DASA): This course meets the requirements for harassment, bullying and discrimination prevention and intervention training.

Addressing Bullying and Cyberbullying in the School Community: Designed to help leaders understand the nature/impact of bullying in all forms.

Instructional Leadership Through The Lens Of Diversity: Changing school dynamics make it necessary for school leaders to expand their perspectives in learning and managing instructional best practices set to high expectations.

Supporting Educators Of Twice Exceptional Learners: Raises school leaders' awareness of students who are intellectually gifted and how to adapt programs to accommodate them.

Sign up early for these ground-breaking workshops. Remember, ELI is an APPROVED CTLE Sponsor.

RIBBON-CUTTING

Community Partnership, New Technology Center



■ Last month, Queens lawmakers joined Benjamin Cardozo High School administration, staff and students to celebrate the unveiling of a new technology center.

On Jan. 18, Benjamin Cardozo High School in Bayside hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil their new technology center. The lab features 35 new computers, printers and a Promethean board, and was made possible by an endowment from the George Subraj Foundation. George Subraj, who passed away in 2016, emigrated to the US from Guyana in the 1970's and founded Zara Realty with his brothers in Queens. The foundation, established in 1992 and now led by his son, Tony, has donated to several computer labs throughout the borough, but this is its first partnership with a New York City public school. The donation was made to the English department, under the leadership of AP Beth Kierez. Tony Subraj's wife, Vibha Lakhani, has been a teacher for fifteen years. Several members of the Subraj family attended the

ceremony, which was preceded by a special performance by apprentice dance students and followed by a robotics presentation by freshmen and sophomores.

Attending the ceremony were Sens. Toby Ann Stavitsky and John Liu, Assembly Members Edward Braunstein and David Weprin, and Councilmember Barry Grodenchik. The Subraj family took the opportunity to announce that their foundation will be donating an additional \$10,000 worth of iPads. "Without these community partnerships and the partnerships with our elected officials, we wouldn't be able to provide the kind of academic experience that we are able to," said Principal Meagan Colby. "Getting these devices into kids' hands matters, and our students thrive when they have state of the art technology to use in the classroom."

—CW

Election

Union's New Executive Board Members Will Serve From 2019 Through 2022

Membership Classification
Principal – Elementary School
 Anthony Cosentino
 Elisa Brown
 Paulette Foglio
 Javier Muniz

Principal – Middle and K-8
 Dr. Reginald Landeau Jr.
 Kenneth Zapata

Principal – High School/Alternative/Adult Education
 Michael Athy
 Edward Tom

Principal - Special Schools
 Desmond Park

Assistant Principal – Elementary and Middle
 Joseph Napolitano
 Joseph Simone
 Vincent Verdiglione
 Patricia Gil
 Diana Rodriguez
 JoAnn Bramante
 Joann Nurdjaja-Acuna
 Alejandro Fernandez

Assistant Principal – High School Administration
 Tammy Nin
 Melody Crooks
 John Moschetti

Assistant Principal – High School Supervision
 Rhonda Pekow
 Jeff Engel

Assistant Principal – High School Special Education
 Halley Tache-Hahn

Assistant Principal – Special Schools and Citywide
 Marcia Pitt

Education Administrators /CSE Chairs /DOE Early Childhood Directors
 Winnie Bracco
 Denise Schira
 Jay Findling
 Steven Birkeland
 Nickelos Grant

Supervisors of Speech/ Psychology/ Hearing/Vision
 Aminah Lucio
CBO Early Childhood Directors and Assistant Directors
 Sheila Willard

District Executive Board
Brooklyn Borough High School
 Richard Forman
 Lourdes Cuesta
 Gill Cornell
 David Newman

Bronx Borough High School
 Marie Guillaume
 Esther Fragosa
 Ramon Namnun

Manhattan Borough High School
 Eric Contreras
 Yecenia Cardoza-Delarosa
 Juan Villar

Queens Borough High School
 William Bassell
 Moses Ojeda
 Saida Rodriguez Tabone
 Edward Alvarez

Staten Island Borough High School
 Susan Barone

District 1: Darlene Cameron

District 2: Gary Shevell

District 3: Marlon Lowe

District 4: Lisette Caesar

District 5: Deborah Payne

District 6: Christopher Anest

District 7: Amy Andino

District 8: Sheila Durant

District 9: Luis Torres

District 10: Marybelle Ferreira and Emmanuel Polanco

District 11: Christopher Warnock and Denise Williams

District 12: Raymond Granda

District 13: Marian Burnbaum

District 14: Liza Caraballo-Suarez

District 15: Denise Watson

District 16: Karen Hambright-Glover

District 17: Rose Graham

District 18: Carolyn James

District 19: Stephaun Hill

District 20: Jaynemie Capetanakis

District 21: Dominick D'Angelo

District 22: Sal Paingankar

District 23: Ronda Phillips

District 24: Robert Quintana

District 25: Theresa Mshar

District 26: Michael Ranieri

District 27: Frank DeSario

District 28: Latina Tention

District 29: Estelle Moore

District 30: Clemente Lopes

District 31: Lisa Arcuri and Paul Giordano

District 32: Gail Irizarry

District 75: Kuvana Jones, Heather Leykam and Roderick Palton

District 79: Horacio Burrowes

LITIGATION

Complaint Alleges Success Academy Tramples Special Education Students

BY CHUCK WILBANKS

Are charter schools truly public schools, as they claim? They take public funding and share space in public school buildings, but do they accept and attempt to nurture all students? Do they conform to rules and laws meant to afford students and their families a measure of protection from arbitrary decisions?

A complaint filed in late November with the New York State Education Department suggests that, in the case of Success Academy, the answer is no.

Has a Harlem Charter School refused parents and students the right to participate in decisions about their IEPs?

Filed in late November by the non-profit group Advocates for Children of New York, the complaint alleges that SA schools in Fort Greene, Harlem, the Bronx and the Upper West Side have refused to comply with laws governing the rights of parents and students to participate in decisions about individual-

ized education programs, or IEPs. Such rules are covered by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, as well as New York State education law.

"The IDEA and New York Education Law provide that parents of students with disabilities attending charter schools have the same procedural protections as parents of students with disabilities at traditional public schools," the complaint notes. "But that is not the current reality. Parents of students with disabilities at schools managed by Success Academy... must now exhaust their administrative remedies by filing a due process request against the DOE to obtain a pendency order and, once obtained, file a federal complaint for a preliminary injunction."

The complaint portrays a culture of impunity in which Success Academy bosses and lawyers make educational decisions about children with special needs without consulting parents, relaying those decisions to school administrators. They ignore the rights of the students to remain in classes and grade levels until meetings have been held to sort out the students' Individual Educational Plans, or IEPs, the complaint said.

Typically, the students running afoul of Success Academy are struggling with practice exams for standardized tests,

and are therefore moved back a grade, said Rebecca Shore, director of litigation for Advocates for Children.

"We are talking about students who had their placements changed in the middle of the year, from fourth grade to third and seventh grade to sixth," said Ms. Shore. "They are students with disabilities who had rights to discuss changes of placement and rights to pendency [the right to stay in their current classes until a formal process has run its course]. They were placed in classes with younger peers studying material they had already studied. One student was so impacted, he felt like he was being punished. He no longer asks questions."

Advocates for Children also alleges that in the case of Success Academy, New York City's Department of Education does not enforce the law governing IEPs, essentially forcing parents to litigate so their children can receive protections they are due under law.

"Technically they are public schools," said Ms. Schor. "What that means is that they need to follow state and federal education laws, particularly those regarding special education, which is a fundamental right. That's what they're not doing for these students."

A decision is expected in the coming weeks.

Latino Caucus Membership And Scholarship Events Upcoming

The Spring General Membership Dinner Meeting will be held on March 15 from 5:30 – 8:30 pm at Giando's on the Water in Brooklyn.

The Scholarship Gala will be held on May 17 from 6 – 11pm at Terrace on the Park in Queens. (Members nominate students for scholarships; members are eligible for honor; tickets are sold.)

Teachers' Retirement System

January 2019 Unit Values

Diversified Equity Fund: 85.504

Bond Fund: 15.494

International Equity Fund: 9.587

Inflation Protection Fund: 9.582

Socially Responsive Equity Fund: 15.786

www.trsnyc.org

NATION Labor

TEXAS:

Citizenship Clinic

The local division of the Corpus Christi American Federation of Labor, along with other union groups, is providing a citizenship clinic for permanent residents seeking citizenship. There are some 8,000 permanent residents eligible; 1.1 million throughout the state of Texas. Though the process can be costly and time-consuming, the clinic provides professionals who help guide applicants through the various steps, free of charge. (KIITV)

INDIANA:

Brakes On Increases

The Governor proposed that teacher pay be studied in 2019, including how much is needed and how the state can ensure districts direct funds to salaries, with actual raises not coming for some time. Some legislators already advocated for raising teacher pay and do not see the need for the issue to be studied. The Governor also proposed eliminating \$30 million in annual performance bonuses for teachers and is not supporting an increase of state funds for pre-K. (chalkbeat.org)

NEW YORK:

Amazon Ire

Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) President Stuart Appelbaum discussed Amazon recently on the steps of City Hall, saying "Nobody can call themselves 'progressive' or 'pro-worker' or 'pro-union' if they accept or ignore Amazon's behavior." Appelbaum added that "it's incumbent upon our elected officials to say, if you want to be here, you must do better. If you want to be welcomed in New York you have to change your ways. Amazon, respect workers, respect communities." (laborpress)

VIRGINIA:

PTA Backs Walkout

Virginia teachers, who make \$9,000 less than the national average, are poised for a one-day strike in January to call attention to the conditions under which they work. The Virginia Education Association has not endorsed the strike but the Virginia Educators United, a collection of educators modeled on groups in Arizona and Oklahoma, is organizing it. The Virginia Parent Teacher Association has voiced its support. (Payday Report)

COLORADO:

Shutdown Ripples

As tens of thousands of federal workers were furloughed, the effect of the shutdown rippled to businesses that count on those workers. Twenty-eight government agencies are housed in 44 buildings in the Denver Federal Center. Restaurants frequented by federal workers experienced a slowdown. They are not likely to make up the revenues they lost during the shutdown. (Colorado Public Radio)

— COMPILED BY
CHRISTINE ALTMAN

Annual CSA Night At Yankee Stadium

CSA and the Retiree Chapter once again invite all members to attend CSA night at Yankee Stadium. The game will be Friday evening June 21 against the Houston Astros. The game starts at 7:05 pm.

We have two Tiers of tickets. The first Tier is the *All You Care to Eat* package featuring an all-inclusive food and non-alcoholic package with a main level ticket in section 234. Food is served when the gates open through the fifth inning. The menu includes: hot dogs, pretzels, sausages and Pepsi products. The price of this ticket is \$101.

The other Tier is the Audi Yankees Club. These seats are

located in left field on the suite level. The Audi Club features a dining lounge and offers sweeping views of Yankee Stadium. This package offers all-inclusive gourmet food during the game, a dessert station and nonalcoholic beverages. The price of the Audi Yankee Club is \$182 per ticket.

All profits go to the CSA Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Fund is now a recognized 501 C-3 charity. Bring the kids, nieces, nephews, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends.

To order, call the Retiree Chapter at (212) 823-2020. Note: Monument Park is open until 45 minutes before game time and the Yankees' Museum is available until the end of the eighth inning.

GARY GOLDSTEIN

Travel Desk

Explore On Land Or By Sea

Caribbean Sailaway

February 16 - 23, 2019

Sail from Ft. Lauderdale to Grand Cayman, Roatan, Belize and Cozumel. This is a seven day cruise aboard the elegant Caribbean Princess.

RATES: Begin at \$1,024 pp including port and government charges. Air is not included. Reserve now for additional perks on this sailing.

Northern Lights

February 18 - March 2, 2019

Depart Bergen, Norway aboard the elegant Viking Sky cruise ship. Experience a land where dawn and twilight merge (Aurora Borealis), the Sami legends and dog sledding. Visit Bodo, just north of the Arctic Circle and much more (see video at Vikingcruises.com).

RATES: All verandah vessel begins at \$5,574pp dbl plus air. (Viking has promo air of \$995.) Rates are subject to availability at time of booking.

Iceland - Fire And Ice

April 18 - 26, 2019

Tour Reykjavic, the Golden Circle natural wonder, Thingvellir National Park, Gulfs Waterfall, Snaefellsnes Peninsula and more, whale watching (if available). We have been given 42 seats. These will go quickly!

RATES: \$4,049-dbl; \$4,699-single; \$3,999 triple guaranteed (space available) until 10/19/2018 - Includes sightseeing, lodging, baggage handling, 6 dinners, 7 breakfasts, rt air from NY JFK (inquire about other departure cities). Insurance available.

Escape To Bermuda

April 21 - 28, 2019 (Spring Break)

Sail from New York to Bermuda on Norwegian Cruise Line's newest vessel. Gratuities and beverage package included!

RATES: Inside- \$1,411.85 pp dbl; Window - \$1,651.85 pp dbl; Verandah- \$1,801.85 pp dbl; Mini suites - \$1951.85. We were given limited space as this is a holiday sailing.

Alpine Lakes, Trains

July 8 - July 17, 2019

This inclusive land tour (air included) features cruises on Lakes Como and Maggiore and scenic trains in Switzerland and Italy. It also

includes 12 meals. Enjoy stunning alpine views including the Bernina Pass. Tour Lucerne and Zermat.

RATES: \$4,899 - Insurance and upgraded coach air not included.

Back to Alaska

July 12 - 19, 2019

Board the Celebrity Solstice in Seattle and sail to Ketchikan, Tracy Arm Glacier, Juneau, Skagway and Victoria, British Columbia arriving Seattle July 19.

RATES: Inside \$1,482.03 pp dbl; Verandah \$2,287.03. Ask for discounted air, pre and post trips and single, triple and optional insurance rates.

Galapagos Islands

August 8 - 18, 2019

Cruise approximately 12 islands aboard the Celebrity Expedition. Depart US - Quito (air not included); stay two nights at the JW Marriott; Aug. 10 fly Quito-Baltra (included). Board the ship for 7 nights; return to Quito for a night at the Marriott; return to US Aug. 18.

RATES: Begin at \$7,139 pp dbl; call for suite rates.

Paris and Normandy

August 18 - 25, 2019

Sail the beautiful Viking Rolf (Viking River Cruises). Embark the vessel in Paris and sail the Seine visiting Vernon, Rouen, Les Andelys, and the Normandy Beaches bearing witness to our heroic troops who landed during WWII.

RATES: Deep discount rates begin at \$2,774 double. Additional discounts may apply including current air promo of \$395 (may expire anytime) roundtrip from NY/NJ. Paris extension is available. Call or email for application.

Sail Norway, Iceland

August 25 - September 9, 2019

London to London. Board the Pacific Princess for 15 days, visiting 9 ports. The Pacific, a deluxe vessel, accommodates only 700 passengers.

RATES: Begin at \$4,744 pp dbl.

Canyon Country

October 22-29, 2019

Arizona and Utah. All inclusive

land/air from New York (call re other departure cities.) We begin in Scottsdale and journey to Sedona, Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Bryce Canyon, Zion National Park and unwind in Las Vegas. Includes rt air, transfers, lodging, sightseeing, 6 breakfasts, 4 dinners.

RATES: \$3,349 double; \$4,249 single; \$3,299 triple.

The Plains of Africa

January 30 - February 12, 2020

Journey to a Continent never easily forgotten! Explore Kenya and its wildlife against a background of stunning vistas. Program includes rt air from JFK, 11 game drives, most meals, Karen Blixen House, visit to the Samburu Tribe, Masai Village and Game Reserve and much more. This is a Collette small group Explorations program with 18 seats available.

RATES: \$6,449 dbl; \$7,649 single; Add optional insurance; Pre (Tsavo National Park) and Post (Tanzania) available. Request the brochure.

Spring Break

February 15 - 22, 2020

Sail with us on the brand new SKY Princess sailing from Ft. Lauderdale, to Grand Cayman, Roatan, Belize City and Cozumel. Go on the web to SKY Princess and watch the video of this spectacular new vessel.

RATES: Begin at \$989 pp. These are introductory rates and will not last!

Dubai to Rome

May 19 - June 8, 2020

Why 2020? This is Oceania Nautica's most popular itinerary and will sell fast. Depart for Dubai May 19, 2020; overnight onboard the vessel; sail to Salalah, Oman; cruise the Red Sea, Aqaba, Jordan; Luxor, Egypt; Suez Canal; Jerusalem, Israel for two days; Crete, Amalfi/Positano, Italy and disembark in Rome. Pre and post trips available; perks subject to availability.

RATES: Begin at \$3,799 pp dbl; add air and insurance. Call for rates for verandah and higher.

For more information, contact Gary Goldstein at ggoldstein@csa-nyc.org

The Welfare Fund Dr. Doug V. Hathaway

Prescription Reimbursements, Catastrophic Stop-Loss Benefits



After Insurance Coverage, Helping To Pay Costs Associated With A Spouse's Surgery

Question: I am a retiree who just became Medicare eligible in September. Will I get my \$40 per month reimbursement for the drug rider for the entire year?

ANSWER: No. You will get a check in early February for the four months of 2018 that you were Medicare eligible. The CSA Retiree Welfare Fund will reimburse 80 percent of your prescription drug co-payments, after the \$100 deductible, for all prescriptions you obtained from January through August.

Question: I am an active CSA member. My husband just had major back surgery, and I have received over \$20,000 of bills for anesthesia, surgeons, and other costs where GHI only paid a very small amount. How can I get GHI to pay the rest of these bills?

ANSWER: You probably will not get more from GHI, but we can help with that \$20,000 amount. Please send us a copy of the doctors' bills and the explanation of benefits statements received from GHI. We will review what GHI paid and see if we can get them to pay more. Once we have received all we can from GHI, we will

process through our Catastrophic Stop-Loss medical benefit. Under this benefit, the first \$1,500 of unreimbursed expenses is taken as a deductible. The next \$1,250 in allowable charges is reimbursed at 80 percent. (You absorb another \$250 in unreimbursed costs and the welfare fund reimburses you \$1,000.) We then reimburse 100 percent of allowable charges to a maximum of \$50,000 per year, \$250,000 lifetime. Assuming the doctor's fees are reasonable for this part of the country, you will only have \$1,750 in unreimbursed expenses to incorporate within your household expenses. Please remember that, ultimately, you are responsible for the doctor's bill, so I recommend you let them know that you will be reimbursed most of the costs, ask for their patience, and arrange to pay them the \$1,750 that will not be reimbursed.

Question: I am a retired AP who is not yet Medicare eligible and enrolled in the GHI-CBP health plan. A friend told me I could get my prescription drug co-payments reimbursed. How do I do this?

ANSWER: Your friend is correct. Simply make a copy of each of the four quarterly reports you received from Express Scripts/GHI showing your co-payments for 2018 and send them to the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund. We have an arrangement with New York City and GHI that allows us to receive prescription history electronically. Once we receive it, and verify that it is complete, we process the reimbursements in the order they were received. We are scheduled to receive the file by mid-February, so our reimbursement checks should be out by the end of March.

Dr. Douglas V. Hathaway is CSA Welfare Fund Administrator. You can email him at dhathaway@csa-nyc.org.

In Memoriam

■ **DOLORES VANISON BLAKELY**, 80, died on Aug. 10, 2018. Dolores was a resident of Morningside Heights at the time of passing. As a supervisor, she last served as Assistant Principal at Francis Lewis High School in Queens. She is survived by her stepdaughter, Lenore Domond, of Fort Worth, Texas; her aunt, Mrs. Carlyle P. Keller, of Cambria Heights, New York; and numerous cousins and a host of other relatives and close friends.

■ **DONALD FREEMAN**, 73, died on Sept. 4, 2018. He was a teacher at two Bronx High Schools, followed by Middle College High School in Long Island City. He went on to serve as a Guidance Counselor at Newtown High School, in Queens, before returning to Middle College High School as a Guidance Counselor, and then as Assistant Principal. Finally, he served as Principal at Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School in the Bronx. His daughter Heather said he loved what he did and was dedicated to his students throughout his career. He was also a winning softball coach, taking his Middle College High School PSAL team to the championship. His daughter said his principal at the time joked that, "If it weren't for the softball team,

students wouldn't have gone to school." Mr. Freeman, a resident of Douglaston, NY, is survived by his wife, Maria; daughter and son-in-law, Heather and Brian.

■ **MICHAEL A. MULLEE**, 97, died on July 30. Born in the Bronx, he attended Stuyvesant High School, received his undergraduate degree from



Michael Mullee

Syracuse University and MA degrees from Hunter College and Teachers College, Columbia University. He served in the Army during World War II. Mr. Mullee was a teacher at P.S. 114 and principal at P. S. 88, both in the Bronx. His daughter

Marguerite Mullee Lampman said that after her father's death, their family received messages from students he had taught more than sixty years ago. "He was a beloved educator who kept in touch with his students for many years," she said. After his retirement, he continued his passion for education by teaching classes in English as a Second Language in White Plains, NY. He also founded and led sing-along groups at the Grinton Will Library in Yonkers, the Crestwood Library and the Fountains Senior Residence in Millbrook, NY. In addition to his daughter, he is survived by his wife of 65 years, Theresa, his other daughter Joan, grandchildren Nicole, Laura and Michael and great-grandchildren Luna, Eli and Eva.

■ **FLORENCE NIZIN STARKMAN**, 93, of Aventura, FL, died on July 24, 2018. Florence was an AP, Supervision, at Seward Park HS. She married Bernard Starkman after her retirement and the two moved to Florida in 2015. Her husband said she was well-regarded from the top down and numerous teachers were still in contact with her. She is survived by husband Bernard, as well as two sons from her first marriage, two grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Send obituary notices to CSA News Editor Chuck Wilbanks at chuck@csa-nyc.org.

New APPR Law 'Like A Bandage On A Broken Leg'

Continued from Page 1

the state's students opting out of the tests.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a charter school backer and a longtime fan of high-stakes testing, recently acknowledged the depth and breadth of public opposition to the testing regime.

Now, the new law will return a measure of control to localities, but with the 50 percent requirement still in place, high stakes testing looks destined to continue.

"The statewide APPR was problematic from the beginning, and CSA has repeatedly advocated for changes to the evaluation law," said CSA President Mark Cannizzaro. "We had hoped for a full repeal, as we still have concerns that this legislation could actually lead to an increase in student testing. As is, this bill feels like a bandage on a broken leg, and I fear we're going to be talking about this year after year."

Mr. Cannizzaro's concerns were shared by lawmakers and other educators. Sen. Robert Jackson, for example, a newly elected Democrat from New York City, voted for the bill argued that it does not go far enough, and urged further work on the issue. He said he would introduce a bill to do away with the 50-percent requirement. Republicans as well criticized the legislation, including Sen. Andrew Lanza from Staten Island and Assembly Member Edward Ra from Franklin Square.

The new measure was pushed by the New York State United Teachers, and had the support of the UFT. It passed the Assembly by a vote of 125-6, and the Senate 60-0.

The state legislature also passed the so-called Dream Act, which allows state-aid for college to flow to children of illegal immigrants.

HONOR

Three Kings And Godmother Too



On Sunday, Jan. 6, Maria Ortega, principal of John Ericsson Middle School 126, was honored as La Madrina Internacional (International Godmother) at the 22nd Annual Parade for Los Tres Reyes Magos (Three Kings Day). She was nominated by her District 14 colleagues Tommy Torres, Brian De Vale, Los Tres Reyes Committee president Radames Millan, and Angie Filomeno of the Filomeno Foundation in recognition of her work with the community and her contributions to public education. Ms. Ortega was joined at event by District 14 Superintendent Alicja Winnicki, district staff, fellow principals, students and their families, as they celebrated the holiday and displayed their Brooklyn pride.

— CRAIG DiFOLCO

RETIREE Chapter

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Gayle Lockett

Go Forward With Trust, Dedication



Your Faith In Us Will Not Be Misplaced As We Continue With Our Mission

Your Retiree Chapter (RC) officers and I would like to thank you for showing your continued support for our work on your behalf.

In January, our slate was unopposed and we were re-elected to serve as RC officers for another three years. You can rest assured that your faith in us will not be misplaced as we continue our mission to further improve what our union can provide.

Our lobbying efforts in the state legislature and City Council are always aimed at the protection of your existing benefits which can be diminished when laws change. Playing the role of "watchdog" is a serious matter.

We also periodically evaluate what supplemental benefits the RC can provide in an effort to offset some of the rising costs of some of your medical needs.

As you may have heard, we have been working diligently on establishing a new unit in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. We were very fortunate that

several of our retirees joined. Rajinder Kaur, a former Retiree Chapter Executive Board member, volunteered to be the unit leader and Monette Russell, will serve as the treasurer. Other members on the steering committee are Carol Ilderbrando, Virginia Berrios, and Barbara Neis. Second Vice Chair John

Several retirees have joined and we've found a leader for a unit in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

Oricchio, and Retirement Chapter Director Mark Brodsky, RC Director, attended their first steering meeting and provided information on setting up a new unit.

Meanwhile, we continue to look closely at what we can offer to enhance your cultural interests through various trips, workshops and hobbies.

Even though we are retired, always remember we are still part of a powerful union and labor force! May 2019 bring us all good health and happiness to enjoy our well-earned retirement.

In Unity,
Gayle Lockett

Legislation Forum For Manhattan Lawmakers



■ RC Director Mark Brodsky, RC Chair Gayle Lockett, Manhattan Unit Chair Stanley Wilson, RC Vice President Nancy Russo, and Executive Board Member Dee Dee Goidel discussed many topics with legislators.

BY MICHELLE DEAL WINFIELD

The political dedication of CSA's retirees was on full view in mid-November when the Manhattan RC Unit held a legislative Forum for area lawmakers. Senator Brad Hoylman, Assemblymembers Linda Rosenthal, Dan Quart, Inez Dickens and City Council members Carlina Rivera and Keith Powers gathered to discuss the recent elections. Mitra Lutchman – CSARC Legislative Liaison was the moderator. An AP English and Government class from the Manhattan Comprehensive Day and Night School were pleased to hear the discussion. Manhattan Unit Chair Stanley Wilson organized the event.

The topics focused on the security of our retiree benefits and the continuation of rent stabilization laws and the fairness in property taxes for co-ops. Bicycle safety was a concern for senior pedestrians. All invited guests collectively pledged to support CSA in maintaining the benefits we all earned.

Assemblymember Quart was adamant that New York City schools receive full funding.

Linda Rosenthal agreed to resubmit housing bills to help correct the rising cost of rent stabilized apartments. "At present, every year the rent is increased 7.5 % a year. That's outrageous," she said. "Social Security doesn't go up that high."

Sen. Hoylman noted that he has joined forces with Assemblyman Harvey Epstein on legislation to regulate air quality during MTA construction. Assemblywoman Dickens, who had just recovered from shingles, urged all members over 50 years of age to get a Zoster vaccination. Carlina Rivera provided an explanation of which bikes were legal and needed to be registered. She insisted, "E-bikes are illegal and should not be on the streets. Bikes called pedal-assist are legal. The bike gives the rider a boost while pedaling."

The group was joined by CSA Director of Political Affairs Gabe Gallucci, CSA First Vice President Rosemarie Sinclair, CSARC Director Mark Brodsky, CSARC Chair Gayle Lockett and others. Kudos to the Chairperson Stanley Wilson and the committee for their time planning this forum.

Your Officers, Board Members

Retiree Chapter Officers

- Gayle Lockett
Retiree Chapter Chair
- Joseph Rosenberg
Executive Vice Chair
- John Oricchio
Second Vice Chair
- Stanley Wilson
Treasurer
- Janice Imundi
Secretary

Executive Board / Advisory Committee

- Eathelle Clay
- Mary Covington
- Eugenia Ellsworth
- Marvin Goodman
- Juanita Johnson
- Manfred Korman
- Roz Manning-Allman
- Jim Mehlman

- Vincent Navarro
- Allen Nilsen
- Richard Oppenheimer
- Dee Dee Goidel
- Leonard Sterman
- Constance Testa
- Lucille Vecchiarelli
- Patricia Weston-McNabb
- Rosa Smith-Norman
- Candice Scott
- Renee Shulman
- George Young

Executive Board Alternates

- Angela Carey Adams
- Arlene Becker
- Jennifer Boone
- Miriam Martinez Diaz
- Debra Handler
- Sharon Thompson



Solidarity

Support For Striking Actors

■ CSA members joined SAG-AFTRA striking actors protesting Bartle Bogle Hegarty LLC (BBH), a global advertising agency owned by Publicis Groupe. SAG-AFTRA has been picketing BBH offices in New York and Los Angeles for several months in an effort to force the company to uphold their contract obligations. The protests have, not surprisingly, had a theatrical quality, including mock bake sales, like the one shown here in October. Lt. Gov Kathy Hochul and Sen. Brad Hoylman joined the picketers as well. A SAG band played while union members handed out t-shirts, cupcakes and cookies, many remarked, "We are having a bake sale to ask BBH, where's the dough?" Shown here with protesting actors are CSA retirees Steven Porter and Suzanne Muller. — MDW

RC Regional Units

BROOKLYN

We returned to the Callahan Center at St. Francis College for our November 2018 unit meeting where Dr. Douglas Hathaway was our presenter. The movie club outing to the Alamo Draft House to view A Star is Born was well-attended. Members and their guests enjoyed the food, ambiance and dancing at our December holiday luncheon at Garguilo's on Dec. 19. Members' generous donations of educational books and toys were delivered to Kianga House, a 22 year-old transitional family shelter located in the Crown Heights community of Brooklyn, on Friday, December 21. Our next Unit meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, at 10 am at St Francis College. Our annual Barclay Center Brooklyn NETS game is scheduled for Monday, April 1. Member cost: \$95; Guests: \$105. Be on the lookout for the flyer and respond ASAP as seats are limited. — ROSALYN ALLMAN-MANNING

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA

I want to thank all of our members who attended the Health and Welfare Meeting. CSA First Vice President Rosemarie Sinclair brought greetings and informational updates from the New York office and Welfare Fund Administrator Dr. Douglas Hathaway provided the latest information on our health care plans and benefits. Please be reminded that our annual luncheon will take place at Benvenuto's on Feb. 13, 2019 from 10 am to 3 pm. The day starts with a continental breakfast and meeting, a cocktail hour and luncheon with live music for your dancing and listening pleasure. For information regarding any event, feel free to contact me at gcleflt@gmail.com or (561) 964-8865. — LOIS TURETZKY

SUNCOAST

If you haven't marked your calendars --- here are our next two important dates: On Friday, March 29, we will hold our CSA Retirees Brunch 10:30 am at the Heritage Oaks Country Club, the same venue as our luncheon. At 10:15 am on Friday, April 26, we will enjoy a historic tour and luncheon at the Vinoy Hotel in St. Pete. To reach me, call 646-387-2652 or email cindysal6687@gmail.com. — CINDY SALOMONE

NEW JERSEY

We held our holiday luncheon on Dec. 12 at the Briosio Ristorante in Marlboro, NJ. The restaurant was recently renovated, but it still has charm and ambiance. Although there were other parties there, the dining room is large enough that it felt like it was a private space just for the twenty of us to sit, eat and talk. The food was excellent - from bruschetta, eggplant salad and homemade pasta to double-cut pork chops and grilled salmon. We each brought a toy to donate to Tuesday's Children, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping kids affected by terrorism and traumatic loss. I hope everyone has a healthy New Year! — MARGO LEVY

GEORGIA

We ended our year with our annual holiday luncheon, held at the Cherokee Run Golf Club in Conyers, Georgia. Members, their families and friends enjoyed themselves playing holiday games and dancing. Gail Jenkins and Melba Parks planned the event. We are looking forward to kicking off 2019 with our Book Club meeting on Feb. 1. We will be discussing Becoming by Michelle Obama. Our annual spring meeting will be on April 24, 2019. More information will be forthcoming. For information about the Georgia Unit contact Georgia Harrison at rossmis2@aol.com. — GEORGIA HARRISON

MANHATTAN

You should have received your trip information about our Spring 2019 trips. Please make out a separate check for each trip to Manhattan Unit-CSARC and mail to: Suzanne Muller, 4 Stuyvesant Oval-12 A, New York NY 10009 — STANLEY WILSON

Island Paradise

Retirees Visit Grenada



■ During a recent CSA Caribbean cruise onboard the Celebrity Summit some CSA members visited the world famous De La Grenade Factory in St. Paul, Grenada. We were privileged to observe the factory which manufactures exotic jams, jellies, spices and nutmeg. Our host was our own Glenda Harry, Assistant Director of the CSA Welfare Fund. We sampled first hand a variety of these delicious products. Grenada, located in the Central Eastern Caribbean, is a true island paradise with some of the most beautiful vistas and people. — Gary Goldstein

Staten Island

First Wednesdays Group



■ The Staten Island Retiree Unit of the CSA holds a luncheon on the first Wednesday of the month at the Staaten Restaurant in Staten Island. Ten members participated on a cold and nasty January day.

Welcome New Members

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Brenda Acevedo | Rachel Dahill-Fuchel | Thelma Kramer | Linda Pough |
| John Agnello | Glenn Devino | Helen McConnell | Yolanda Ramirez |
| Felix Batista | Anna Giudice | Joan Mitchell | Cornell Reece |
| Stacey Berger | Florence Gorsky | Jorge Moore | Myrna Shackler |
| Sharon Cahr | Barbara Hecht | Irene H. Nash | Carol Silverman |
| Alba Carlucci | Barry Kevorkian | Helene Nieman | Michelle Swann |
| John Curry | Nilda Kraft | Robert O'Brien | Diana Tancer |

Borough Briefs / In The Schools

Compiled by
Craig DiFolco

New Student Courtroom For Gifted Kids

On Dec 14, the **Mark Twain Intermediate School for the Gifted and Talented** hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to mark the opening of their new student courtroom. Councilmember Mark Treyger, who helped secure funding for the project, attended with other notable guests, and members of the debate team showcased their argumentative skills. The courtroom will be used daily for a *Law and Debate* class that all students cycle through, as well as mock trials, conflict resolution and school community meetings. "At Twain we are very passionate



■ Councilmember Mark Treyger and Karen Ditolla, Principal of the Mark Twain School for the Gifted and Talented join students to celebrate the opening of a new facility.

about preparing our young people to face the challenges of the 21st Century," said Principal Karen Ditolla. "Students must be able to articulate

their thoughts and ideas clearly, and this court room will certainly foster the development of these skills in a very relevant way."

Brooklyn (DIST. 13-23,32)

Staten Island (D-31)

Giving Is The Gift

Throughout the holidays, students and staff from **IS 7** provided gifts to elementary school students from **PS 3, PS 19, and PS 21**. As they hand-delivered the presents, they read to the younger students and sang holiday songs. "Not only was it a wonderful occasion for the students who received gifts," said Principal Nora De Rosa, "it was also a true lesson for our students in the joy of giving."

Manhattan (DIST. 1-6)

Holiday Cheer

On Dec. 21, **The Park Terrace School, PS/IS 18** kicked off holiday celebrations with a Mexican Paranda, a tradition to welcome the new year. Nia Franklin, 2018 Miss NY and 2019 Miss America, was *Principal for the Day* and performed for students with jazz pianist Eli Yamin and opera singer Diva Jones, who conducted voice lessons. "We believe that having a solid arts program can strengthen a child's educational experience, hook them into learning, and provide another opportunity to be successful," said Assistant Principal Donna Maguire.

Send Borough Briefs to Craig DiFolco at Craig@csa-nyc.org.

Queens (DIST. 24 - 30)

Student Leaders

Earlier this school year, **Middle College High School** formed the *House of Representatives*, a student leadership group committed to improving their community. On Dec. 19, twenty students visited SCO Family of Services in Jamaica to donate 456 toys to children living in the residential program. Students led this initiative from beginning to end, collecting toys and wrapping gifts in order to bring joy to children living in foster care and to raise awareness of others in need. "This new initiative has already exceeded our expectations," said Principal Socrates Ortiz Jr. "The House of Representatives are well on their way to becoming productive citizens of the global community."



■ Middle College High School students formed a group which collected, wrapped and presented hundreds of gifts to children in a local foster care program.

Bronx (DIST. 7-12)

Investigation And Then Presentations

All semester, seniors from **Crotona International High School** have investigated various issues affecting their community, and on Dec. 13, they presented video projects at the Belmont

Library. In social studies and video production classes, students were tasked with reporting on the topics of crime, segregation, or sanitation, and spent weeks crafting videos to showcase their findings. "There's such incredible value in authentic, interdisciplinary projects that relate directly to our students' lives and their communities," said Principal Shweta Ratra.



■ PS/IS 18 closed the year by fostering an appreciation for different cultures as well as a love of a music. The school was graced by a visit from Nia Franklin, (in red) 2018 Miss New York and now 2019 Miss America, who performed alongside other musicians for students. Connie Mejia, second from left, is Principal. Assistant Principal Donna Maguire is third from right.