

News & Notes

VOL. XLV No. 7 • OCTOBER 2016

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At the September Meeting of the Board of Regents

After taking their traditional August recess, the New York State Board of Regents convened in Albany on September 12 and 13. A summary of noteworthy actions and decisions follows.

Principal Preparation Project

Deputy Commissioner John D’Agati presented a discussion item regarding an 18-month grant project funded by the Wallace Foundation to enhance the quality of school building leadership in New York State and, as stated by the deputy commissioner, “...to improve the alignment of principal prep with actual job demands.” Beginning in April 2016, the Principal Preparation Project engages teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, and deans of schools of education regarding five areas of focus:

1. Requirements pertaining to those who are seeking School Building Leader (SBL) certification.
2. Requirements for programs that prepare school building leaders.
3. Professional development, supervision, and evaluation for school leaders.

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October is Principals Month



On September 16, Governor Cuomo issued a formal proclamation declaring October 2016 as Principals Month in New York State.

SAANYS, with support from the New York State Federation of School Administrators and the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators worked with the governor’s deputy secretary for education, Jere Hochman, to develop the proclamation to celebrate public school principals. The content of the proclamation is intended to recognize the broad array of roles and responsibilities that are daily met by school leaders, working collaboratively with colleagues and engaging their respective school communities to ensure that every child has access to a high-quality education.

The issuance of the New York State Principals Month proclamation was done in conjunction with actions of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), and the American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA) to have October 2016 declared National Principals Month.

The New York State Principals Month proclamation is posted on the SAANYS website along with more information on National Principals Month. ■

LEGAL BRIEFS

Vigilance in Protecting Bargaining Unit Work

Reprinted from April 2013

Between the generally poor economic climate and the restrictions placed upon districts due to the 2 percent tax cap, districts are constantly looking for ways to save money. Unfortunately, one of the most common ways is through the downsizing of administrative staff, both at the certificated and civil service levels. When a position is abolished or merely left unfilled, the restructuring typically means more work for unit members. With the increase in mandatory duties, such as APPR and reporting under the Dignity for all Students Act, the ability to take on additional duties has become increasingly difficult. Most districts are cognizant of this fact and have been looking for ways to spread out duties due to lost positions while saving money. More and more frequently, it is being brought to SAANYS’ attention that districts are attempting to solve workload problems through either outsourcing work to independent contractors or by distributing the work outside of the recognized bargaining unit. Unless such distributions of unit work are negotiated between the district and the unit, they may very well constitute an illegal transfer of bargaining unit work.

In the event that the district transfers bargaining unit work, there is a limited window in which the unit can challenge the transfer. Specifically, the unit will need to serve a Notice of Claim upon the district within ninety (90) days of the transfer and an improper practice charge before PERB must be filed within one hundred twenty (120) days of the transfer. SAANYS is always prepared to prepare the documents on a unit’s behalf, even with short notice; however,

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Awards Program

SAANYS is proud to honor many exceptional New York State administrators with an annual awards program. This program was established to recognize educators who demonstrate outstanding leadership skills and have made exceptional contributions to the educational process.

For a complete list of the awards and criteria, as well as nomination forms, go to: www.saanys.org/about-us/awards.

NASSP Assistant Principal Deadline: November 16, 2016

SAANYS Application Deadline: January 31, 2017

A Shoutout for SAANYS’ 2016 Middle School Principal of the Year!

Chuck Schumer @SenSchumer - 29m
@JerichoMS is so lucky to have @donald_gately - he'd do anything to inspire his students' love of learning #poy16

SAANYS 45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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OCT 23-24 2016

SEE PAGE 5 FOR MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION



Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

One Step Forward, One Step Backward

Over the past six or seven years, there has been a relentless state of change in education. Evolving laws, policies, and practices governing standards, assessments, evaluations, and curriculum, just to name a few areas, present educators with ongoing professional challenges. Litigation both within and without New York regarding school funding, tenure, and bathroom utilization all threaten to further modify the status quo. Looming teacher shortages, a property tax cap, and charter school expansion all have the potential to continue to change the educational

landscape. The good news is that the changes do not appear to be slowing down (and I recognize the irony in that statement).

After the rushed implementation of widespread change, and the resulting public and professional pushback, SED is largely giving educators what they asked for: input into the development of learning standards (note that late in September draft ELA and math standards were released for comments); input into the development of assessments that are both developmentally appropriate and fairly related to specific learning standards; participation

in the development of an ESSA state plan; in building educator capacity; in examining principal practice, among other things.

It is important to remember that participation does not equate to getting one’s way, and not getting one’s way is not necessarily an indictment of the process. There are far too many stakeholders with widely varied views to expect any one of them to dominate the process. The engagement of the field has grown to the point that it’s difficult to keep up with the various ongoing efforts to move away from what was imposed just a few years ago.

This is a process that will have its own unique challenges. Not everything will

be smooth nor will every participant have motives that are pure. I have heard criticism of both the process employed and the extent of the changes, despite the fact that the process of change is far from complete. Nevertheless, there are bound to be those that are dissatisfied. That is inevitable given the number of people statewide impacted by this all important exercise. Nevertheless, there is a changed atmosphere in Albany that is a far cry from the top down approach of the recent past.

Unfortunately the changed atmosphere does not seem to fully extend to Washington, D.C. Draft ESSA regulations seek to punish schools that do not meet a 95 percent participation rate in state

exams. In addition, Title II funding, the primary source of federal dollars for educator professional development, has been proposed to be cut by 200 million dollars by the senate, with a more conservative house yet to weigh in.

The passage of ESSA was a positive event, but ill-considered regulations and a lack of meaningful financial support for professional development could undermine an otherwise worthy statute. That will invariably impact the work currently going on at the state level, and not in a positive manner. ■

Academic Language: The Heart of Reading Comprehension

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

The advent of new reading standards places a new and powerful emphasis on academic language. This is the language that students need to be able to do school work. It is comprised of discipline-specific vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, and applications of rhetorical modes of discourse that are related to a content area. Such modes include short and

extended responses and essays, as well as various types of report writing and presenting.

New generation standards pay little attention to surface understanding of content. Higher expectations and a deeper grasp of text now dominate. This is primarily reflected in a new generation of state testing in which students are requested to

make internal and external connections of texts. From grade 3 on, it is likely that students face challenges on objective and performance test items in which they have to connect or relate a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph to another part of the text. This challenge is daunting and requires a careful reading of the material in which word power and structural awareness are necessary conditions.

It is fair to say that a deeper understanding of text is an essential condition of reading; however, in the context of state testing it is not adequate. This is because the condition of comprehension must be displayed in writing.

So, while inferencing is important, it is equally critical to support drawn conclusions with details. Additionally, students must work with balanced texts, literary and informational, at appropriate levels of rigor. Therefore, the quality of content texts becomes an issue when past and current material may not support present reading challenges. Also, the use of select short passages is necessary to augment the curriculum, especially passages from social studies and science.

Finally, students must be given guided experiences in understanding the nature of deeper reading comprehension with performance opportunities.

Transformative instructional practices require a process for teachers of reading through, thinking through, and teaching through a text while being guided by the standards and the reality of the students’ status. For the student there is the need for doing. This requires regular opportunities to demonstrate deeper understanding, particularly within rhetorical modes of discourse.

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

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

News & Notes

School Administrators Association of New York State

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“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”
— Benjamin Franklin



September Meeting of the Board of Regents

continued from page 1

- 4. A computer-based tool to help school districts in recruiting and hiring school building leaders.
- 5. Adoption of revised Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards.

A Principal Project Advisory Team will meet over the next six months to address four questions:

- 1. How well do the professional standards for school leaders (i.e., ISLLC) align with the demands of the job?
- 2. How can feedback from the field about the current state of principal preparation translate into state-level changes that improve the preparation of school principals?
- 3. How can the state adjust its policies on professional development, supervision, and evaluation in ways that enhance the development of current and aspiring school leaders?
- 4. To what extent can school leadership quality be improved through real-time reporting of:
 - a. The identification of those aspiring to be principals and reporting on their progress toward placement.
 - b. School-based career placement changes over time for principals in New York State.

Three SAANYS representatives have been invited to serve as advisory team members:

- John McKenna, SAANYS board president and principal of Fletcher Elementary School
- Bergre Escorbores, principal of South Middle School
- Pamela Odom, principal of Grant Middle School

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Career Development and Occupational Studies Commencement Credential (CDOS)

Deputy Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green presented an item that was approved by the Board of Regents to amend Section 100.6 of commissioner's regulations, effective April 3, 2017, by establishing six criteria for the assessments that may be used under option 2 for the award of a NYS CDOS Commencement Credential. In order to be approved by the commissioner, work-readiness credentials must:

1. Measure universal foundation knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for entry-level employment across multiple industries and occupations and the assessment shall be reviewed at least every five years and be updated accordingly;
2. Be designed in consultation with workforce experts, such as, but not limited to employers, national business organizations, or federal or state agencies;
3. Be consistent with technical criteria for validity, reliability, and fairness in testing;
4. Be developed by an entity other than a local school or school district;
5. Be available for use by any school or school district in New York State; and
6. Be administered in accordance with assessment security conditions, directions, and procedures established by the commissioner.

2016 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math Assessment Results

Commissioner MaryEllen Elia presented a discussion item regarding the grade 3 to 8 English language arts and math student performance assessment data released by SED in July. The commissioner prefaced her presentation by pointing out that the department made a number of revisions to the tests (e.g., greater teacher involvement in reviewing test items and slightly reducing the number of items per test), and to test administration (e.g., allowing students who are productively working to complete their assessments without time limits), and therefore that performance data are not comparable with such data for the prior year. Given the changes in test development and administration, as well as the extent to which students opted out of testing, a number of Regents members strongly advised against any insinuation of improved student performance over the prior year.

Public and charter school students posted the following proficiency rates (i.e., levels 3 and 4) in ELA and mathematics:

Grade Level	2016 ELA Proficiency	2016 Math Proficiency
3	41.9%	44.1%
4	40.8%	44.7%
5	33.5%	40.1%
6	34.4%	40.1%
7	35.5%	35.9%
8	40.9%	23.8%
Grades 3 to 8	37.9%	39.1%

Based on state assessment results in 2016, the commissioner and Regents members agreed upon five areas of instructional need and future focus:

1. Support for performance of English language learners.
2. Support for students with disabilities.
3. Performance gaps by race.
4. Support for Big Five academic performance.
5. Performance statewide in the area of mathematics.

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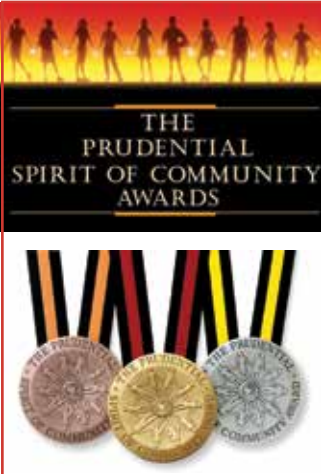


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For more information regarding the SAANYS legislative agenda, the New York State Board of Regents, the Educational Conference Board, or other government relations concerns, contact James Viola, SAANYS director of government relations, at JViola@saanys.org.



The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and Prudential Financial announce the 22nd annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for young people who have demonstrated outstanding community service over the past year. This program gives schools an opportunity to reward and shine a spotlight on students who have distinguished themselves through volunteer activities – and an opportunity to call attention to the role that schools play in promoting community service. Applications for 2017 awards are now open to students in grades 5-12 who have volunteered in the past year. Scan the QR code for more information. ■



BEYOND SURVIVING TO *Thriving* SAANYS 45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OCT 23-24 2016

At the Sagamore Resort on Lake George

Featuring:



SUSAN SZACHOWICZ
Retired Principal, Brockton High School

Sunday, October 23 – 5:00 pm

Author and leader of *the Strengths Movement in Schools*

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

A Q&A With:



MARYELLEN ELIA

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

Monday, October 24 – 8:00 am

Sponsored by Centric Learning

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

Workshops

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

Ed Camp



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

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

SESSIONS WITH SAANYS STAFF:

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

Education Programs, Services, and Planning

James Viola, SAANYS Director of Government Relations

Sponsored by SMP

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

Legal and Legislative Update

Arthur Scheuermann, SAANYS General Counsel

James Viola, SAANYS Director of Government Relations



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- Thriving Through Efficient Data Management
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- Teacher Engagement: A Model that Works
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- Assets Get Active: Utilizing the Forty Developmental Assets Within a High School Curriculum
- Implementing Consistent Grading Practices at the Secondary Level
- AXA Retirement Workshop

Scenes from PD



Scenes from Buffalo Summer LIFT NY Leadership Institute at McKinley High School August 23 and 24.



SAANYS/NYSCATE Google Camp August 29 in Hyde Park.



Shots from GST LIFT NY Leadership Academy September 21.

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them become what they are capable of becoming."
—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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SAANYS Professional Development Update



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

When we left off, I was just about to set off for Buffalo for a two day LIFT NY Summer Leadership Institute for the Buffalo City School District. This two day institute, which consisted of eight options for attendees over the two days, was developed and delivered at the request of our NYSFSA partners. Over two hundred attendees, including some participants from neighboring districts, participated in this professional learning experience which was exceedingly well received and resulted in requests to explore new ways to continue as a PD partner with the City of Buffalo community of educators. And

Buffalo is beautiful! If you haven't been there in a while, take a weekend (okay maybe not in January) and sample all this revitalized city has to offer!

Our Buffalo partners, most notably Crystal Barton and Dr. Fatima Morrell, made sure that everything ran like clock-work at McKinley High School, the spacious and sleek location of our two day institute. My fellow facilitators and I agreed that the level of tech support and Buffalo's onsite planning could not have been better. As for content, I was fortunate to be in the company of our partners from NYSCATE (Google and Microsoft Tools for Leaders), JP Associates (Leadership for a Changing Time), and Management Inc. (Using Data to Inform Instruction).

Like the other workshops, mine on *Honing Your Observation Skills* was repeated four times over the two days to give attendees a full slate of choices for each of the four sessions. The thing that distinguished these sessions for me was that each of the four groups included both Buffalo teachers and leaders together. When the topic is about using the established teaching rubric to truly set a tone of professional growth and reflection rather than focus on scoring and compliance, this mix in the room was the key to meaningful conversations and exploration of performance levels and what the oft used term 'student centered instruction' really looks and sounds like in district classrooms. The sense in each session was that continuing to operate in traditional siloed role groups, like so many other outmoded aspects of teaching and learning which are now being questioned and re-thought, is very limited compared to bringing teachers and leaders together for focused (and sometimes challenging) conversations around actual steps that lead to improved outcomes for students in classrooms. Like almost all of the work we are doing now, these Buffalo sessions were followed by online conversations that give attendees an opportunity to not only continue the conversation, but to extend the learning and pose any implementation questions to the presenters and the group for ongoing support. Thank you to Jeff Olefson of Olefson Associates, who has become a valued partner in making the online followup pieces a regular part of the process.

In another part of this big beautiful state of ours, the Greater Southern Tier Leadership Academy is going strong. This week marked the third of six monthly face-to-face gatherings, punctuated in between by online follow-up and support. These days feature a book study (we just completed *The Principal*, are beginning *Rethinking Grading* and looking forward to its author, Cathy Vatterott, actually spending the day with us in December), a 'sharing our stories' component focused on the theme of leadership moves to build capacity, and a core workshop. September's workshop featured Sara Fontana and Kelly Batrowney, both of GST BOCES, doing the first of two sessions entitled, *Suit Up for Change*. Using tools like Padlet, Plickers, Kahoot, and others to transform communication inside and outside of the classroom made for a lively and interactive experience for all of us.

We are gratified that GST BOCES, like Buffalo City Schools, chose SAANYS to develop their professional learning series. The opportunity to do ongoing work with groups of teachers and leaders in settings like these across our state and online is truly an honor. ■

LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message From
Jennifer Carlson
SAANYS Deputy General Counsel
JCarlson@saanys.org



Vigilance in Protecting Bargaining Unit Work

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it behooves units to be vigilant when it knows that a position is either being eliminated or that a retirement is taking place. When preparing documents on a unit’s behalf, we will be asking the unit for specific information regarding the transferred bargaining unit work. Significantly, we will need to know precisely what duties were performed by a bargaining unit member, when and to whom the duties were transferred, and whether the duties in question were performed exclusively by bargaining unit members prior to the transfer. Without details on the duties and the transfer, SAANYS cannot effectively put the district and/or PERB on notice of the challenged work in order to obtain a successful outcome. All too often, when an illegal transfer of bargaining unit work comes from the

abolition or vacancy of a unit position, the unit doesn’t become aware of the transfer until well after the position is vacated by the former unit member. This places the unit in the difficult position of trying to ascertain the extent of the transfer of bargaining unit work without the benefit of first-hand knowledge of the duties associated with the vacant position.

Looking toward budget time, if you know or have a suspicion that a position within your unit is either going to be abolished or vacated and left unfilled, it may benefit your unit to be proactive in obtaining information SAANYS may need to challenge an illegal transfer of bargaining unit work. While official job descriptions are ideal, many districts either do not

have official job descriptions or the ones they do have are inaccurate due to the piling on of additional duties over the years. If either of these situations is present in your district,

The unit will need to serve a Notice of Claim upon the district within ninety (90) days of the transfer and an improper practice charge before PERB must be filed within one hundred twenty (120) days of the transfer.

As always, cases involving the abolishment and/or transfer of bargaining unit work are very fact specific and have very limited timeframes in which action can be taken on the unit’s behalf. It is important to contact the SAANYS legal department as soon as you know of a transfer of bargaining unit work issue and provide us with as much information as possible so we may timely evaluate and take any and all necessary action on your unit’s behalf. ■



Commissioner Elia answers questions at the 5th Annual APPR Conference hosted by Educational Vistas, Inc. and SAANYS in Albany on September 27.


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Contract Settlements

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

Batavia Administrators Association, Region 12

Term: 7/2015 – 6/2018
Salary: \$2,700 in 2015-16; \$2,800 in 2016-17; \$3,000 in 2017-18

Health Insurance:

- PPO admin. contribution for 2015-16 is 16 percent; 2016-17 is 18 percent; 2017-18 is 20 percent.
- PPO D2 & High Deductible Plans admin. contribution for 2015-16 is 13 percent, 2016-17 is 14 percent, 2017-18 is 15 percent.
- After July 1, 2015 new members will be eligible for PPO D2 or high deductible plans.
- Addition of dental and vision plans. Premium contributions in 2015-16 will be 16 percent; in 2016-17 18 percent; and in 2017-18 20 percent.

403b Contribution by Employer:

- Each year contribution: \$2,150.

HRA Contributions by Employer:

- PPO Members: 2015-16 – \$950; 2016-17 – \$1,000; and 2017-18 – \$1,000.
- PPO D2 Members: 2015-16 – \$1,600; 2016-17 – \$1,600; and 2017-18 – \$1,600.

Sick Leave Accumulated Credit:

- Members hired prior to July 1, 2015 will be credited at rate of 1/220th of final salary for every sick day accumulated at time of termination.
- Members hired after July 1, 2015 will be credited at rate of \$400 or every sick day accumulated at time of termination.

Non-Resident Attendance:

- Children of administrators living outside the district may attend Batavia schools.

Health Care Buyout:

- Members hired prior to July 1, 2015 who opt out receive either \$1,250 (single) or \$2,000 (family).
- Members hired after July 1, 2015 who opt out receive only single buyout.

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Byron-Bergen Administrators & Supervisors Association, Region 12

Term: 4 years, 2015 – 2019
Salary: 4 percent in 2015-16; 3 percent each year in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19

Longevity (new provision):

- \$1,000 at tenure.
- \$1,000 at 10 and 15 years of service.
- Longevity made retroactive and longevity payments added to base salary.

Health Care:

- Member contribution rate is 24 percent (no change).
- Sick leave increased to 15 days per year (increase of 3 days).
- Sick leave may cumulate to 240 days (increase from 200 days).
- Opt-out payment – \$2,000 for family plan (increase of \$1,000); \$1600 for single plan (increase of \$800).
- Added language that the district will provide dental rider (was provided in past but no language).
- Provide vision care at same rate as health care contribution, 24 percent. (formerly member paid 100 percent).

Work Year:

- Vacation days increased to 22 days per year (increase of 2 days).
- Increase work days for elementary AP to include 10 additional days during the school year compensated at rate of 1/200th of salary.

Retirement

- Payment for up to 25 unused vacation days at rate of 1/240th (change from 1/260th).

Oakfield-Alabama Administrators Association, Region 12

Term: 2015 – 2019 (4 years: 3 years + 1 retro year)

Salary:

- 2015-16 retro: only 2 members affected - elem prin. plus \$5,000, MS/HS prin. 3 percent.
- 2016–17, 2017–18, 2018–19 = 3 percent each year.

Health Care:

- Contribution – 20 percent (no change).
- Opt out payment \$3,000 (increase of \$500).
- Creation of 105 H account on district contribution of \$1,000 annually.
- Creation of FSA option for members.
- Creation of Workers Compensation language with member receiving current salary during absence. No time limitation.

Work Year:

- Creation of work year for 11 month administrators.
- Increase vacation time – after 10 years additional 6 days, plus after 10th year, an additional day every 5 years.
- Language to ensure payment of up to 25 unused vacation days at separation or retirement from district.
- Payment for up to 5 unused vacation days annually of \$350 per day (increase of \$50)
- Administrators are not expected to report during emergency school closings unless specifically requested by superintendent.
- Combine sick and personal leave and increase total leave by 3 days.
- Added language of “member of household” to immediate family.

Grievance:

- Added binding arbitration by American Arbitration Association or Cornell, formerly with BOE.

Retirement:

- At first year of eligibility, exchange 75 accrued leave days for 100 percent single health care coverage for ten years (current practice but no language).
- Payment of \$175 per day after first 75 days to 105h account with a maximum of 240 days (remove cap of \$20,000). ■

2016 CALENDAR



OCTOBER
National Bullying Prevention Month
National Principals Month

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

Oct 10-14 *National School Lunch Week*

Oct 16 *World Food Day*

Oct 17-21 *National Character Counts Week*

Oct 17-21 *National School Bus Safety Week*

Oct 22 *Make a Difference Day*

Oct 24 *United Nations Day*

Oct 31 *Halloween*



NOVEMBER
National Native American Heritage Month

Nov 7 *Marie Curie's Birthday*

Nov 8 *Election Day*

Nov 11 *Veteran's Day*

Nov 12 *Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Birthday*

Nov 14-18 *American Education Week*

Nov 16 *Education Support Professionals Day*

Nov 17 *National Parental Involvement Day*

Nov 18 *Substitute Educators Day*

Nov 19 *Gettysburg Address Anniversary*

Nov 20-26 *National Family Week*

Nov 24 *Thanksgiving*

Nov 30 *Mark Twain's Birthday*

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September Meeting of the Board of Regents

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Changes to Measures of Poverty in the Foundation Aid Formula

Regent James Tallon Jr. and SED’s director of education finance, Brian Chechnicki, presented an item related to state aid. Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016 (budget bill) requires the commissioner of education to examine the process for determining the number of students eligible for the federal and state Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) program and other reliable measures of poverty that are used in the Foundation Aid Formula. A report of such recommendations was due to the governor and legislature by October 1, 2016.

The challenge depicted in the item is that FRPL data no longer reflect the full extent of student poverty due to schools that provide free lunch to all students, under the federal Community Eligibility Program (CEP). It is important to note that an under-representation of student need reduces the amount of aid for which school districts may be eligible – and it does not appear that there is another currently available means of collecting and reporting complete and accurate FRPL data. For this reason, it is expected that SED will submit a number of options in its Chapter 54 report, including the following:

- Use direct certification data as a replacement for FRPL.
- Use updated federal poverty estimates.
- Continue with the present course, and add save harmless for CEP schools.
- Require that all students complete income forms instead of using FRPL data.
- Department of Tax and Finance state income data.

Uniform Violent or Disruptive Incident Reporting System

Assistant Commissioner Renee Ryder presented an item to revise Section 100.2 of the commissioner’s regulations, effective July 1, 2017, in regard to the Uniform Violent or

Disruptive Incident Reporting (VADIR) system. Currently, schools must submit to SED the number of incidents in each of twenty categories set in §100.2(gg). The department then calculates the School Violence Index (SVI) which is the benchmark for determining which schools are persistently dangerous. In recent years, stakeholders have expressed concern that the categories do not accurately capture the types of incidents that occur in schools, and do not serve as a tool for schools to identify strategies to reduce incidents of violence and improve school climate.

Based on recommendations from the **NYS Safe Schools Task Force (SAANYS was represented on the task force by James Viola, director of government relations)**, a revised method was developed to collect incident data in a manner consistent with both VADIR and DASA. The current 20 categories will be reduced to the following nine categories:

1. Homicide
2. Sexual Offenses
3. Physical Injury
4. Weapons Possession
5. Material Incidents of Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying
6. Bomb Threat
7. False Alarm
8. Use, Possession or Sale of Drugs
9. Use, Possession or Sale of Alcohol

In addition to streamlining the categories of violent or disruptive incidents and in the interest of promoting positive school climates, in April 2015, the Board of Regents approved the development of a School Climate Index (SCI) which is comprised of school climate surveys, the revised VADIR/DASA data collection process, and rates of chronic absenteeism. During the 2016-17 school year, SED will pilot SCI in approximately 10 school districts across the state.

Assistant Commissioner Appointment

Chris Suriano was appointed assistant commissioner of special education, effective September 13. Since 2013, he had been executive director of specialized services in the Rochester City School District. Previously, he worked for the State Education Department in the P-12 Office of Special Education for almost 13 years, with his last position as coordinator in education of children with disabilities. He started his career as a special education teacher in the Livingston-Wyoming ARC.

For more information regarding the September meeting of the state Board of Regents, contact James Viola, director of government relations, by emailing JViola@saanys.org. ■

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Workshop: Monday, October 24th from 11:30 – 12:45 at the Sagamore. ■



The National Honor Society Scholarship

Applications for the 2016-17 program will be available soon. All senior members in good standing will be eligible to apply. Since 1946, more than \$13 million in scholarships has been awarded to outstanding NHS senior members. The scholarship program is supported by the parent organization of NHS, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

More information: <https://www.nhs.us/parents/the-nhs-scholarship?SSO=true>



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