

News & Notes

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www.saanys.org

The Passing of Past Commissioner Richard Mills

SAANYS joins administrators across the state in expressing our condolences to the family and friends of Commissioner Richard Mills on his passing at the end of last week. Commissioner Mills' vision to utilize and focus the various institutions – libraries, museums, higher education, and public schools – on common goals was masterful and underscored the power of focusing multiple state educational entities on common goals. Commissioner Mills was steadfast in his commitment to thinking in terms of a P-16 educational system to comprehensively address the needs of students in our state. We are appreciative of his leadership and dedication to education in his tenure as commissioner. See companion article by SAANYS Executive Director Kevin Casey on page 3. ■



Announcing Personal Finance Webinars Series

Financial Fridays



Grab your lunch and join us the first Friday of each month at noon for Financial Fridays with AXA. These short 30 minute online sessions are meant to offer tips and ideas for securing your personal financial success.

Each Friday centers around a new topic. See page 5 for more details.

- Your Family, Your Future - Jan 5
- Basics of Taxes - Feb 2
- Pension Maximization - Mar 2
- Student Loan Forgiveness - Apr 13
- Social Security, Medicare, Long-Term Planning - May 4
- Planning for College - Jun 1 ■

Call for Submissions

2018 SAANYS Annual AWARDS

Application Deadline: January 2, 2018

see page 4 for more details

For additional information contact:
Susan Jaronski, sjaronski@saanys.org

Celebrating Excellence in School Leadership

November Meeting of the Board of Regents

A Report from Cindy Gallagher, SAANYS Director of Government Relations

The Board of Regents met in November with items for discussions ranging from the results of pilot projects on school climate to new processes for the review of capital projects. A few highlights from the meeting are as follow:

Promoting Healthy Schools

This presentation highlighted pilot projects from the Buffalo and Schenectady City School Districts that implemented initiatives to improve school climate. The discussion focused on the importance of school climate, restorative practices in schools, and implicit bias.

A few of the practices to improve school climate that the districts implemented included:

- Establishing mental and physical health clinics.
- Saturday academies.
- Creation of mindfulness rooms.
- Establishing trauma sensitive schools through designated and trained teams, accompanied by comprehensive training throughout the district.
- Shifting mindsets to view disruptive behaviors, not so much as incidences requiring interventions, but rather diagnostic opportunities.

District results include significant reductions in disciplinary events and improved academic results. The chart (see page 3) was presented to frame a discussion on restorative practices.

Moving toward restorative justice practices was undertaken with an understanding that current practices were not providing desired results for students. Data presented to reinforce this predisposition included:

- Youth with discretionary suspensions are three times more likely to drop out of school.
- Youth with a first arrest are two times more likely to drop out of school.
- Youth with a first arrest and a court appearance are four times more likely to drop out of school.
- Youth with juvenile court involvement are seven times more likely to have adult criminal records (Sweeten 2006).

The concluding part of the presentation focused on the need for students to gain increased social and emotional competencies. In districts where instruction included skill development in these areas, students had an eleven percent point gain in academic performance.

For every one point increase on a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) scale in kindergarten, students were:

- two times more likely to attain a college degree (presumably after completing grades above kindergarten) and
- 54 percent more likely to earn a high school diploma, and 46 percent more likely to have a full time position by age 25.

More information on this presentation can be found by scanning the QR code on the right.



Certification

Another item that may be of interest was the proposed regulations regarding transitional certificates. The proposed regulations would:

- Allow candidates employed under a pre-professional certificate to complete the student teaching program requirement in Section 52.21 of the Regulations while continuing to be employed by that district.



Palmyra-Macedon Superintendent Dr. Bob Ike Named 2018 New York State School Superintendent of the Year



New York State Council of School Superintendents News

The Council has announced Superintendent Dr. Bob Ike of the Palmyra-Macedon CSD has been named the 2018 NYS School Superintendent of the Year.

Council Executive Director Dr. Charles Dedrick said, "Bob Ike is respected statewide as an educational leader and always exemplifies the best of our profession. As a member of our Executive Committee, he is a thoughtful and informed leader providing keen insight on key issues affecting our state. As the chair of the Snapshot Committee, he also understands how important superintendent leadership is to a school district's success to provide students with a comprehensive educational experience."

Learn more at: <https://www.nyscoss.org>

Why Do You Love Public Education Photo Contest

The School Superintendents Association

AASA announces the 2017 I Love Public Education Photo Contest. Suggested themes for the submissions are success stories in public schools, equity in education, and the future of public education. Contestants are invited to capture an inspirational moment and submit it for the chance to win up to \$1,000.

The deadline for submitting entries is December 11, 2017, 11:59 pm PST. The winning contestants will be notified on or about January 15, 2018. The winners will be acknowledged at AASA's 2018 National Conference on Education on Thursday, February 15, 2018.

Learn more at: <http://lovepubliceducation.org/aasa-photo-contest/>



Executive Viewpoint

Kevin S. Casey, Executive Director

Commissioner Richard Mills

Former Commissioner of Education Richard Mills died unexpectedly on November 1, 2017 while hiking in the Adirondack Mountains. He served as commissioner of education in New York State from 1995 to 2009.

The commissioner of education is responsible for all education in New York State. Additionally, the commissioner regulates professions, libraries, museums, and public broadcasting. The breadth of responsibilities is both impressive and daunting, and it is hard to imagine persevering for fourteen years in that stress and responsibility-filled position.

A commissioner of education is hired by, and reports to, a seventeen

member Board of Regents. Members of the Board of Regents are elected by members of the state legislature as a whole, (given the distribution of seats between the parties, this process in effect gives the selection of members of the Board of Regents to assembly democrats, as long as they vote as a block) which adds to the inherently political nature of the position. Politics is also present in that the State Education Department, while having some independence of governance, is dependent upon the state and federal governments for its funding.

Commissioner Mills is probably best known for his implementation of standards-based reform, which was a source of

some controversy. That reform was not limited to students, as standards applicable to teachers and school leaders also increased under his watch. He also helped close the achievement gap and increase high school graduation rates.

I never worked for Commissioner Mills and I can't say I knew him well, but we did have a few interactions that made an impression upon me. Shortly after I first became executive director of SAANYS in June of 2006, his office called to invite me to a one-on-one "get to know you" meeting. I confess that this temporarily inflated my sense of self-importance, until the realities of the world later deflated it. I can remem-

ber studying up on the education issues of the day in preparation for the meeting. Commissioner Mills had a reputation of sometimes being direct, impatient, and sometimes even a little cold in his personal interactions, so I prepared for our initial meeting as if it were an exam.

When we met he could not have been more gracious. He asked me about my background, my interests, and my family. We talked about restaurants in the vicinity of Columbia University where he had earned multiple graduate degrees. I found him easy to speak with. At the conclusion of our meeting I expressed surprise that we had not spent any time at all discussing the education issues of the day. He told me that there would be plenty of time for that, but that it was more important to get to know the people that you worked with. I always appreciated that personal approach.

In all of my subsequent interactions with him, Commissioner Mills remained

gracious. He spoke at a couple of SAANYS conferences, and met with our Government Relations Committee several times a year where he would drill down into great detail of the issues he wanted to discuss. He did not always accept our advice or agree with our positions, but he would always engage, and in the exercise of engagement would reveal genuine curiosity, intellectual prowess, and professional integrity.

Being the commissioner of education is one of those positions where your choices impact many, and many will vocally disagree with you. There are too many competing interests to satisfy all, or even most of them. I think the best that one can do is to act with integrity, speak respectfully but directly, and to advance what you believe to be in the best interests of children. I believe Commissioner Mills met that standard. ■

Review & Response to 2018 NYS ELA Testing Design

Sponsor Opinion Piece by Bruce H. Crowder, Senior Researcher, Educational Vistas, Inc.

At the moment just about everyone is aware of the state's decision to move from three to two days of ELA and math testing this school year. This is not a surprising move due to the upheaval of implementing Common Core and related assessment without adequate time and assistance.

My focus is on the ELA

design. While the reduction in testing time is welcomed by most, it does bring with it certain challenges. First of all, here is a depiction of the new ELA design for 2018.

In 2017, NYS ELA testing grades 3 and 4 had 31 MC items (six of which were field tested) and seven SR items, plus two ER items. Grades 5 through 8 had 42

Grade	Session (Book) 1	Session (Book) 2	Total Writing Tasks
	Reading Items	Writing Tasks	
Grade 3	4 *P (24 *MC)	3 P (6 **SR/1 ***ER)	7
Grade 4	4 P (24 MC)	3 P (6 SR/1 ER)	7
		Literary	3-4
		Informational	3-4
Grade 5	5 P (35 MC)	3 P (6 SR/1 ER)	7
Grade 6	5 P (35 MC)	3 P (6 SR/1 ER)	7
		Literary	3-5
		Informational	3-5
Grade 7	5 P (35 MC)	3 P (7 SR/1 ER)	8
Grade 8	5 P (35 MC)	3 P (7 SR/1 ER)	8
		Literary	3-5
		Informational	3-5

*P=passages
 *MC=multiple-choice test items
 **SR=short-response items
 ***ER=extended-response item

MC items (seven of which were field tested) and sev-

en SR items plus two ER items. I should note that in grades 4 through 8 one of the ER items required a response to paired passages. How this will play out in 2018 is unclear with only a single ER.

What is clear in the new ELA testing design is that writing tasks will focus on three passages which will require a deep reading understanding of the texts and command of textual evidence to support inferential questions. In addition, SR items should require no more than three sentences in a student's responses. Scoring state assessments to date shows that students do not appear to understand that an SR prompt only calls for an inference and two supportive details from a text. And, of

course, the response is to be written in complete sentences.

Finally, an extended-response item means precisely that. Extended-response questions require students to demonstrate their ability to write a coherent essay using textual evidence to support their ideas. This task is a challenge for many students, and it would be helpful if they knew how to plan for it. In so many instances the ER planning page is empty or shows a lack of planning knowledge. ■

Dr. Bruce H. Crowder is a senior researcher for Educational Vistas, Inc. He is a former New York State assistant commissioner for school improvement services.

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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* denotes Executive Committee

CAPITAL UPDATE

November Meeting of the Board of Regents continued from page 1

Traditional vs. Restorative Approaches	
Traditional Approach	Restorative Approach
School rules are broken	People and relationships are harmed
Justice focuses on establishing guilt	Justice identifies needs and responsibility
Accountability = punishment	Accountability = understanding impact and repairing harm
Justice directed at the perceived offender; the victim is ignored	Offender, victim, and school all have direct roles in the justice process
Rules and intent outweigh whether outcome is positive or negative	Offender is responsible for harmful behavior, repairing harm, and working towards positive outcomes
Limited opportunity for expressing remorse or making amends	Opportunity given to make amends and express remorse

- Allow persons with graduate degrees and postsecondary teaching experience, in any certificate area to obtain a transitional G certificate. Currently, only individuals with a graduate degree and postsecondary teaching experience in a science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) field are eligible to pursue a Transitional G certificate. (NYSED Summary).

The regulations are intended to be adopted at the February 2018 meeting following a required public comment period. ■

NYS My Brother's Keeper Community Network Reaches Significant Milestone with More Than 20 Member Communities Across NYS

The New York State My Brother's Keeper Community Network reached a significant milestone and now includes more than 20 member communities, State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia announced. The program recently added connections with Poughkeepsie and East Ramapo, the 20th and 21st communities to join the growing initiative to improve outcomes for boys and young men of color.

"Reaching more than 20 My Brother's Keeper communities is a substantial milestone," said Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa. "It's a testament to the important work being done to bring greater equity and opportunity to New York's students, particularly students of color. Poughkeepsie and East Ramapo are welcome additions to our MBK network."

To join the MBK Community Network, a community formally accepts an invitation from the Board of Regents and makes a commitment to support the national MBK milestones and the six New York State MBK goals. Upon becoming a member of the statewide network, a community gains the support of NYSED's Office of Access, Equity and Community Engagement Services to help build a community initiative and develop a local MBK action plan.

The MBK communities, as well as other school districts, use grants awarded by NYSED to implement programs and strategies to help boys and young men of color succeed. For example, the Buffalo School District used the MBK Challenge grant to start a summer internship program allowing students to earn a stipend while working on developing professional skills. In Hudson, the Family and Community Engagement Program (FCEP) grant helps to fund a mentoring program that teaches middle school students discipline, perseverance, and structure while focusing on academic improvement and career exploration.

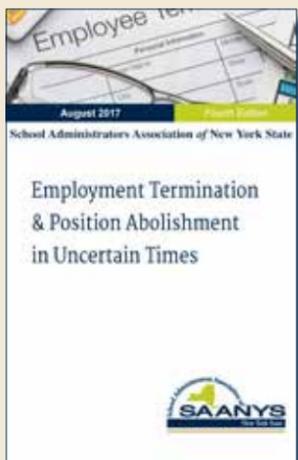
In 2015, the New York State Board of Regents convened a Blue Ribbon Committee consisting of state, regional and national experts including practitioners representing education Pre K-20, community based organizations, youth development, health, elected officials, and state-wide professional organizations. The committee was charged with examining the educational challenges and opportunities boys and young men of color face on a daily basis and to recommend strategies to address the challenges and expand opportunities to increase their educational successes. SAANYS is proud to be represented on this committee by Executive Director Kevin Casey. ■



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

Congratulations Retiring Members

Susan Carter
 Gary Caufield
 Douglas Damiani
 Tracy DelGrego
 Susan Dorfman
 Cynthia Drake
 Diane Ellsworth
 Beth Foels
 Deidre Hallinan
 Mary Halpin-McNamara
 Ann Hamlin
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 Paul Schoeneck
 Rosemarie Sekelsky
 Anthony Sinacore
 Frances Sinobio
 R. Michael Smith
 Nancy Sommer
 Carolyn Thomas
 Beverly Ziegler ■



New Updated Edition Available for Download!

School districts and BOCES may pursue employee termination for either disciplinary or for budgetary and programmatic reasons.

This guidebook, updated for 2017, is designed to describe generally the legal processes involved in termination and members' related legal rights. *Download a copy of the booklet at:* <https://saanys.org/legallabor-relations/legal-references>



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naesp 18

JULY 9-11 · ORLANDO, FL
Orlando World Center Marriott



continued from page 1

U.S. Army Pro Football Hall of Fame Award for Excellence

Launched in January 2012, this Award for Excellence Program seeks to highlight the nation's top sophomore, junior, and senior high school athletes who exemplify similar strengths to that of U.S. Army soldiers, and who not only excel athletically, but also excel academically, and are active in their communities. All nomination information must be submitted via email to USArmy@ProFootballHOF.com by midnight EDT January 12, 2018.

Learn more at: <http://bit.ly/2hBLotK> ■

2018 SAANYS Annual AWARDS

Call for Submissions



Now Accepting Nominations!

Leader in Digital Education Award

This award recognizes a SAANYS member who has demonstrated exceptional, creative leadership in harnessing the potential of technology to further teaching and student achievement. The candidate will have demonstrated excellent organizational and communication skills in supporting and promoting such innovative digital practices for his/her learning community.

Outstanding Educator Award

This award is given annually to a SAANYS member who has made outstanding contributions in New York State schools. Potential criteria include: outstanding leadership in public education; exemplary service to professional organizations; and/or noteworthy writing and/or research in the field of education. Recognition of SAANYS members of various roles, responsibilities, and titles is encouraged.

Leadership and Support Award

The SAANYS Leadership and Support Award was established to recognize the outstanding leadership efforts of those members whose responsibilities require leadership through support services to fellow administrators across and between buildings and districts. Such administrators may be employed by BOCES or in other cooperative efforts. These positions include non-instructional and support positions that promote and encourage collaboration among multiple buildings and/or districts.

Irving Schwartz (Retiree)

Irving Schwartz was one of the founding members of SAANYS. As an NASSP coordinator, he served on the SAANYS Board of Directors through 1994. He supported SAANYS as a Nassau County regional representative for many years, retiring in 1999. This award is given to a SAANYS member who, in retirement, has made significant contributions to the welfare of the association, public education, and/or the greater community.

K-12 Building Principal Award

This award is in recognition of the unique characteristics of a K-12 building and the related demands, expectations, and challenges of a principal in this multi-level environment. It is given to a SAANYS member who is a successful K-12 principal and recognized educational leader who has been a practicing administrator for at least 3 years.

Friend of Education Award

This award was established to honor an individual who, or a group or organization that, has contributed to the general support and advancement of outstanding public school education in New York State.

SAANYS is the official state affiliate to the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and their annual awards programs.

SAANYS/NAESP Assistant Principal Award

The NASSP National Assistant Principal of the Year program annually recognizes outstanding middle level and high school assistant principals who have succeeded in providing high quality learning opportunities for students. These assistant principals are acknowledged by their peers for the exemplary contributions they have made to the profession. From these state winners, three finalists are named as contenders for the National Assistant Principal of the Year award. The NASSP National Assistant Principal of the Year is selected from among the finalists.

SAANYS/NAESP Elementary School Principal Award

This award is given annually to a SAANYS/NAESP member who has distinguished herself/himself as an elementary school principal.

SAANYS/NAESP Middle School Principal Award

This award is given annually to a SAANYS and NAESP member who has distinguished herself/himself as a middle school principal.

SAANYS/NASSP Principal of the Year Award

The NASSP National Principal of the Year program recognizes outstanding middle level and high school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession. NASSP honors all State Principals of the Year at the Principal's Institute held each year in Washington, D.C. From these state winners, three finalists are named as contenders for the National Principal of the Year award. The NASSP National Principal of the Year is selected from among the finalists. Candidate must have served as a principal at one or more middle level or high schools for three or more consecutive school years. Middle level and high schools are defined as those containing some portion of grades 6 through 12.

**Application Deadline:
January 2, 2018**

SAANYS is proud to honor many exceptional New York State administrators with an Annual Awards Program. Each year SAANYS recognizes nominees with an award and banquet held in their honor.

For additional information contact Susan Jaronski at: sjaronski@saanys.org.



Learning from and sharing with one another is the best possible way to grow professionally.

SAANYS is fortunate to have a wide range of practitioners with proven expertise and experience to support your professional development needs. Let SAANYS help you plan everything from an administrative team meeting during the school day, to an after-school or full-day workshop, to an administrative retreat or superintendent's conference day for you or your teachers. These are all options that can take shape with SAANYS PD Your Way.

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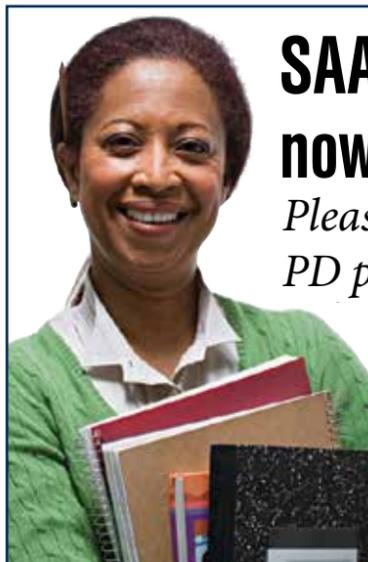
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Scene from the Syracuse CSD supervisors and managers' professional development day.

SAANYS Professional Development Update



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

Recently we held our first “Lessons Learned” session here at SAANYS. The idea, to bring seasoned administrators together with newer colleagues to share hard earned wisdom, came originally from Gene Gordon and our Region 6 retirees. They were looking for a way to reach out to colleagues still in the trenches to share perspectives on the kinds of thorny issues that many of us encounter during the course of our years as school leaders.

I would facilitate a panel discussion which would include Gene, Bonnie Tryon, Peter Griffin,

Bruce Ballan, Ed Balaban, and Barbara Goldsmith. We began by meeting months ago to plan the program. We decided that we would each contribute a ‘classic’ kind of scenario that despite the advances in technology and all of the changes and demands that school leaders face now, still persists: How do you handle negative factions among faculty that try to undermine good work? What if you and your superintendent or board disagree on tenure recommendations? What if you are a new administrator drowning in paperwork and stuck in interminable meetings that keep you away from the things that matter most? Sharing the lessons learned regarding leadership, relationships (we have to say it three times: relationships, relationships, relationships...) and navigating dicey challenges that demand reasoned and thoughtful responses would be the focus of our workshop.

We held it at a convenient time after school from 4:30-6:00pm, served some nice refreshments, and focused on true conversational interaction between participants and panel members, rather than a ‘sit and get’ format. It is precisely that sparkly interaction that made this event such a success. We were able to focus on two scenarios chosen by the attendees (“Faculty Factions” and “Never Enough Time”). The time flew and everyone left with new ideas, hope, and strategies. One panel member cautioned that nothing will kill a good thing more than the principal starting off with “I had this great idea last night...” Rather, creating a culture where ideas from staff, students, and parents are honored and encouraged is a much better way to go. This from an assistant principal: “I felt stuck in my office doing paperwork, like I was missing out on what was happening out in the building. Now I set up a small desk in a hallway, take my laptop, work on that paperwork while being right in the middle of the action and able to see and greet students and staff.” Wow. A simple thing that makes a huge difference!

Everyone agreed that this was time well spent. Here are some comments:

“Networking with current and former administrators was great. Having access to the wealth of knowledge and experience on the panel was awesome! The best part was practical advice and feeling that I am not alone!”

“Being a principal can be a lonely world. I liked hearing that I am not alone as I come across difficult situations. It was great hearing from experienced leaders.”

“The format encouraged good dialogue about best practices.”

“We could have used more time – it flew!”

Thank you to our panel members and participants who made this event such a success.

We are planning a second “Lessons Learned” session in March, learn more at saanys.org. ■

Lessons Learned 2.0
Experienced administrators sharing their hard-earned wisdom
March 13, 2018 SAANYS Headquarters

Financial Fridays



A SAANYS lunch & learn series

Webinar

Grab your lunch and join us the first Friday of each month* at noon for Financial Fridays with AXA. These short 30 minute online sessions are meant to offer tips and ideas for securing your personal financial success.

JAN
5

Your Family, Your Future

Nowadays there are so many issues that young families need to juggle, from the financial obligations of raising a family while still planning for your long-term financial future. This seminar will go over some ideas to best help you prioritize your goals and provide balance for your future.

FEB
2

Basics of Taxes

Tax time is upon us, and it always provides us with an opportunity to review our investment and income strategies to ensure that we are maximizing our retirement plans. The seminar provides an overview of basic tax concepts including pre- and post-tax definitions, Roth options for savings alternatives, and others.

MAR
2

Pension Maximization

Your New York State Pension is one of the most important assets you will have in retirement. Planning for how to navigate the myriad choices that the pension system offers is not something that should start just before you retire. Pension Maximization is a retirement planning strategy that can secure a maximum pension benefit for you, while still providing for a spouse/family benefit. This presentation reviews how the strategy works, the decisions that are required at retirement for pension plan participants, and the importance of planning early.

APR
13

Student Loan Forgiveness*

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

MAY
4

Social Security, Medicare, Long-Term Care Planning

The Social Security and Medicare system is one of the most important, and often misunderstood, retirement systems out there. Making the right decision is critical to your retirement planning. This seminar provides helpful information about the Social Security and Medicare system and how to maximize your benefits. We will also discuss Long-term Care planning and how to coordinate benefits in the ever-changing retirement environment.

JUN
1

Planning for College

As educators, you all know the value of a quality education. As costs rise faster than inflation with no relief in sight, properly planning for educational expenses while balancing the need for day-to-day budgeting and long-term savings is critical. This seminar will provide a brief overview of the need to plan ahead for a college education and the types of planning vehicles available, including UGMA/UTMA, Coverdell savings accounts, and 529 plans.

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LEGAL BRIEFS

A Message from the SAANYS Legal Department



Elliot Raimondo
SAANYS Counsel
eraimondo@saanys.org



Thinking About Retirement

Around the holidays, many of us have the opportunity to spend more time with family and loved ones. In the case of SAANYS members, these opportunities frequently lead to thoughts of retirement and spending even more time with those we care about. It is in this atmosphere that we frequently receive a host of questions regarding the retirement process.

In addition to any private retirement savings, SAANYS members, as public employees, are generally part of either the New York State Teachers Retirement System (TRS) or New York State Employee Retirement System (ERS). Most often, instructional titles will be in TRS while all others, such as Civil Service titles, will be in ERS.

To be eligible for retirement depends upon the system you are in. Both systems use tiers, based on date of hire, to govern when a member is eligible to retire without penalty. For ERS members in Tier 1, individuals may retire at age 55 or older without penalty. ERS Tiers 2-4 members who retire between the ages of 55-62

with 30 or more years of service credit may also retire without penalty. In addition, those members in Tiers 2-4 may retire at age 62 or older without penalty regardless of years of service. For those members in Tier 5, to retire without penalty a member must be age 62 or older and 63 for Tier 6.

For TRS Tier 1 members employed prior to July 1, 1973, to retire without penalty, members may retire at any age with 35 years in the system, or at age 55 or older with 5 or more years of service. TRS members in Tier 2-4 may retire either at age 62 or older with any amount of service, or at age 55 or older with at least 30 years of service. For TRS members in Tier 5 retiring without penalty involves retirement at age 62 or older, or at age 57 with 30 years of service. Finally, to avoid penalty, Tier 6 members must retire at age 63 or older, with 30 years of service. To find out your individual tier you can ask your employer's personnel department, your applicable retirement system, or the SAANYS Legal Department.

After finding out if you are

eligible to retire in either system, the next step when contemplating your retirement decision is to look at your individual or unit contract and see if there are any retirement incentives or due dates for when to give notice of retirement. Many contracts have incentives or penalties for giving notice at a certain date.

How the retirement systems calculate your pension is then calculated off of a general formula using your final average salary. For ERS Tiers 1-5 this final average salary is based upon average wages for the past three years of employment. For Tier 6, it is based off of average wages from the past five years of employment. The following types of wages count as final average salary in the eyes of ERS: contractual salary, holiday pay, longevity, overtime, and vacation pay with certain exceptions. Note, Tier 6 members are not permitted to count vacation days as wages. With sick days, they may be counted as salary if your employer has chosen to offer the optional sick leave benefit as provided by Section 41 (j) of the New York Retirement and Social Security law. All other forms of compensation do not count for retirement purposes. This includes retirement bonuses, health insurance buybacks, and salary raises of more than 10 percent during the final average salary time period.

For TRS members, a similar system exists for calculating final average salary. For members in Tiers 1-5, hired prior to April 1, 2012, the final average salary will be

It is important to consult the applicable retirement system, SAANYS, and the district before submitting one's retirement paperwork.

based on average wages from your highest three consecutive years of employment, which may or may not be your last three years of employment. For Tier 6 members, the average is based upon the last 5 years of employment. Similarly, wages include: contractual salary, holiday pay, longevity, vacation pay with certain exceptions, and overtime. Other applicable monies in TRS are wages from instructional time, including: coaching, the excellence in teaching program, forms of compensatory time, and tutoring. Generally, all instructional time will count for purposes of retirement. The 41(j) rule also applies to TRS, allowing employees of participating employers to count accrued sick days towards retirement. Like ERS, retirement bonuses, health insurance buybacks, and 10 percent increases to salary during the final average salary period are not eligible for the calculation. In addition, members in the system have the right to request an ac-

counting from their applicable retirement system. This accounting will give the member data on their estimated state pension during retirement and the sources of such money.

It is highly recommended that members request this accounting a few years before they decide to retire so that they may plan accordingly. Further, if there are any discrepancies in the accounting

then the member may be able to rectify them proactively. Therefore, it is important to consult the applicable retirement system, SAANYS, and the district before submitting one's retirement paperwork. Happy retirement planning! ■

Contact a
SAANYS
Attorney



During normal
business hours,
call 518-782-0600
to speak with a
SAANYS attorney.

After Hours Pager:
1-800-978-6055
Be sure to include your area code
when leaving your number.

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LEGAL HIGHLIGHTS

The SAANYS Legal Department - Working Tirelessly for Members Statewide

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

REGION 1

SAANYS assisted an administrator's rebuttal to counseling memo.

REGION 2

SAANYS presented to a bargaining unit on the legal and negotiations services offered to SAANYS members.

REGION 4

SAANYS settled a case with a Memorandum of Agreement for the unit's benefit.

REGION 5

SAANYS assisted potential members with information regarding the formation of a unit under PERB.

REGION 6

SAANYS reviewed a Memorandum of Agreement for a member that provided for an equitable salary increase for a member in exchange for the unit negotiating right to consult and have input on any new hire's starting salary.

REGION 7

SAANYS negotiated a separation agreement.

REGION 8

SAANYS filed an improper practice charge relating to transfer bargaining unit work.

REGION 9

SAANYS submitted a Memorandum of Agreement for a member taking a leave of absence to try a new position.

REGION 10

SAANYS submitted a demand for arbitration relating to a unilateral change in evaluation procedure.

REGION 11

SAANYS assisted a member in preparing a rebuttal to a counseling memo.

REGION 12

SAANYS assisted a member with an issue regarding possible failure of the district to grant tenure and possibility of a JUUL agreement.

SAANYS
Personal
Legal
PLAN

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

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

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

1-800-832-5182

Be prepared to present your membership ID #.

School Administrators Association of New York State

Exclusive Member

SAANYS Benefits

Supporting your professional and professional needs.

Legal Advice and Assistance

SAANYS' Legal and Labor Relations Department offers comprehensive, aggressive representation on job-related matters, with no dollar cap. Attorneys are available directly and immediately. A 24/7 pager is available 800-978-6055 for access to an attorney, even during the evening and on weekends.

Labor Relations Services

Services include advice, assistance, and representation throughout the entire negotiation process. Negotiators and teams are provided with extensive resources, including multiple research databases of salary information.

Professional Growth and Mentoring

SAANYS helps members meet their continuous learning needs and requirements through a year-round, comprehensive professional development program. SAANYS also offers individual and group mentoring by highly trained mentors. In an effort to keep members current and informed, membership also includes two award-winning publications (News & Notes newsletter and the Vanguard & Practices magazine), and various online communications and services.

Government Relations

Members can be assured that their voices are heard loud and clear on issues such as education funding, tenure, mandates, retirement issues, education reform initiatives, and federal policy. A member-composed government relations committee establishes the legislative priorities for the association and lobbies those issues on behalf of fellow educators.



\$10,000 Term Life Insurance Policy
Plus, Voluntary Group Insurance Options and a Free Financial Profile

Through a partnership with AXA, members can receive competitive rates on life, disability, long-term care, and more. In addition, a full array of retirement services is available, including a complimentary financial profile and comprehensive financial planning services.



Career Center at saanys.org

This online database of school leadership positions is free to job seekers. Members receive a monthly email alert highlighting recently advertised vacancies. Members also receive a 20 percent discount on job vacancy postings.

Abenity Discounts

Abenity is a national discount provider partnering with SAANYS to bring members savings on travel, restaurants, home and garden, apparel, movies, theatre, sporting events, and more.

Personal Legal Services Plan

This program offers members significant discounts on non-work related legal issues through a national legal services provider. Upon enrollment the plan includes a simple will and phone advice and consultation.

Online Defensive Driving Course

A discounted defensive driving online course provided through the National Safety Council. Members are eligible for up to a 10 percent discount on auto insurance and a reduction of up to 4 points.

National Affiliation

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



Auto and Home Insurance from Liberty Mutual

As a member of SAANYS, you can receive exclusive savings on your auto and home insurance. To learn more about Liberty Mutual insurance or get a free, no-obligation quote, call 800-524-9400 or visit www.LibertyMutual.com/saanys.



Sprint Discount

Sprint offers a variety of wireless products, services and solutions along with a 19 percent discount on select data services and other promotional offers to NYS school administrators and employees. More information at: www.sprint.com/nyeducation.



BOSE Discounts for Educators

BOSE offers special pricing on select products for educators – call 1-800-277-5014 and mention the “educators’ program.”



Learn more about all of these benefits at saanys.org/membership/membership-benefits

For additional information, visit www.saanys.org.

2017 CALENDAR



Dec 10 *Emily Dickinson's Birthday*

Dec 10 *Human Rights Day*

Dec 12-20 *Hanukkah*

Dec 15 *Bill of Rights Day*

Dec 16 *Boston Tea Party Anniversary*

Dec 17 *Anniversary of Wright Brothers' Flight*

Dec 21 *First Day of Winter*

Dec 25 *Christmas*

Dec 25 *Clara Barton's Birthday*

Dec 26-Jan 1 *Kwanzaa*

Dec 29 *Wounded Knee Massacre Anniversary*



Jan 1 *New Year's Day*

Jan 1 *Emancipation Proclamation Anniversary*

Jan 1-3 *Japanese New Year Festivities*

Jan 6 *Epiphany*

Jan 7 *Christmas Day (Orthodox)*

Jan 15 *Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Observance*

Jan 21-17 *National School Choice Week*

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

Jan 28 *Christa McAuliffe Day*

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Farmingdale CSD Students Selected for All State and All National Performing Groups

Farmingdale School District students were recently selected by the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) to participate in All State and All National performing groups. Eight outstanding students were hand-picked by judges to perform in these elite groups and three students were selected as alternates.



In order to compete for this recognition, students prepared a musical piece to perform at the annual NYSSMA festival and receive a rating. NYSSMA levels range from 1-6 with level 6 being the most difficult. ■

Have questions? Need assistance?

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

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Ambassador Opportunity with WEF - USA

World Education Forum - USA

Promoting quality education for all children

SAANYS would like to pass along notice of an opportunity that may be of interest to some of our active or retired members. The World Education Forum - USA (WEF) is seeking an ambassador from each state, who would help promote the organization's mission of increasing the number of children who have access to public education. The WEF influences national policy decision-making on a global scale by setting standards for educational investments for all countries, and they establish relationships between schools and initiatives, programs and projects aimed at improving education.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Darrell Rud, Past President of NAESP, at dc11rud@gmail.com and visit <http://wefusa.net>. ■



New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

Applications Now Being Accepted for the New York State Teacher of the Year Program

Application Deadline: February 1, 2018

The New York State Teacher of the Year program, now in its 48th year, is administered by the New York State Education Department. It is affiliated with the National Teacher of the Year program, which is administered through the Council of Chief State School Officers and sponsored by leading education associations.

Let a great teacher know that they are making a positive impact on their students and school community, nominate them for the 2019 New York State Teacher of the Year Program. Remember, anyone can nominate a teacher. Great news – the application is now only five pages! Scan the QR code to download the application.



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- Save Up To 25% Off Car Rentals with Budget
- Save 40% Off Retail on all 2014 Inline Bicycles
- 15% Off Oil Changes & Service at Over 1,900 Locations Nationwide
- Up To 28% Off Premiere Movie eTickets with Instant Download
- Save Up To 15% at Over 75,000 Hotels Worldwide in the Travel Center
- Up To 10% Off Single Day, Multi-Day, & Park Hopper Admission
- Take An Additional \$120 Off DirecTV's Best Offer

A message from a SAANYS corporate sponsor



Since 1993, Educational Vistas, Inc. (EVI) has been providing schools and districts with both software products and services. Over the course of 24 years, we have developed leading educational management systems and in-district services that are assisting schools to improve student performance and the educational entity as a whole.

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

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

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

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

SAANYS Career Center



Visit SAANYS' Career Center at www.saanys.org. Simply click on the "Career Center" button on the homepage.