Sewanhaka Administrator Inducted as SAANYS President

SAANYS is pleased to announce that Dr. Regina K. Huffman, science chairperson of Elmont Memorial Jr./Sr. High School & district coordinator in the Sewanhaka Central High School District was inducted as president at the SAANYS Annual Conference in Lake Placid on October 14. Huffman succeeds Joyce Carr, supervisor of special education and student support services in the Elmina City School District. Huffman is a long-standing member of SAANYS, having previously served as representative for Region 2 (Nassau County) and currently as president of the SAANYS Board of Directors and Executive Committee. Huffman is also currently serving as the chair of the newly created SAANYS Board of Directors Diversity Committee. Huffman will serve as SAANYS president for 2018-19 until next October. A native New Yorker, Huffman earned her Doctorate in Administration and Supervision from St. John’s University. Huffman also holds a M.S. in Administration and Supervision, a M.A. in Secondary Education with a concentration in Geological Science as well as a B.A. in Biological Science. Huffman has worked to educate the children, professional staff, and parents of New York State for a little over two decades. She has an innate passion for teaching and learning. She never ceases to be thrilled when she observes that proverbial light bulb ignite when a student of any age, grasps a given concept. She recognizes that no single approach is the right one for every individual and only through continuous collaboration and dialogue will our educational system evolve to ensure a true learning community conducive to growth and success for all.

2018 Award Winner Elected as President-elect of NASSP

Peter Kruszynski, principal of Lancaster MS in Lancaster, NY has been elected to serve as president-elect of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Kruszynski has been an NASSP board member as well as a board member for SAANYS, serving as president of SAANYS from 2009-2010. Kruszynski was also the recipient of the 2018 NYS Outstanding Educator Award.

Commented SAANYS Executive Director Kevin Casey, “Peter’s exceptional leadership skills and educational experience will undoubtedly be a valuable asset to this already dynamic professional association.”

Scenes from #SAANYS18

SAANYS Member Named to National Assessment Governing Board

Paul Gasparini, principal of Jamesville-DeWitt High School in Dewitt has been appointed as one of five leaders from around the country to the National Assessment Governing Board to serve four-year terms, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has announced. Gasparini was a long-time member of the SAANYS Government Relations Committee and was the recipient of the SAANYS 2012 New York State High School Principal of the Year award.

The appointees will help set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the Nation’s Report Card. NAEP offers to the public and to education policymakers at the national, state, and local levels, objective data on student performance in nearly a dozen subjects. The information NAEP provides helps education stakeholders evaluate the progress of American education. The 26-member nonpartisan, independent Governing Board determines the subjects and content of NAEP tests, sets the achievement levels for reporting, and publicly releases the results.

For even more scenes, scan the QR code or navigate to http://wke.it/w/s/TaTD.

Summary of Recent Changes to Teacher Certifications and Mentoring

see page 3
SAANYS is currently in the midst of a statewide series of dinners for unit presidents and other representatives of their bargaining units. We began these dinner meetings with the intention of troubleshooting issues that teachers said would arise from the fallout of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Janus v. AFSCME.

We began each presentation with a brief overview of the Janus decision and how that decision could impact both SAANYS and local bargaining units. The information that follows generally reveal that while there remains the potential for disruption of unit operations, very little of that has been seen to date. The overwhelming majority of administrators see the value in being part of their local bargaining unit, and having that bargaining unit affiliated with a state-wide professional association. They have not been influenced by the DeVos affiliated interest group sending emails to “educate” public employees on the holding of Janus. These emails, financed by billionaires, urged our members (and members of other organizations as well) to quit their bargaining units and began the very day the Janus decision was announced. Apparently very few think the DeVos Foundation really has their best interests at heart.

What has impressed me most about these conversations is how seamlessly it seeped from unit to educational affairs. We discuss the current state of APPR and how it might change in the near future and possible legislative modifications to administrative tenure to align with the teacher tenure process for those who have earned administrative tenure and then take another administrative position. We discuss a variety of certification issues and how unit officers can help newer teachers and students interact around the content.

The overwhelming majority of administrators see the value of being part of their local bargaining unit, and having that bargaining unit affiliated with a state-wide professional association.

And, the same may be said of improving teaching—Current research by James Hiebert and James Stigler, based on high-achieving nations, shows a built-in system for improving instruction. The focus is on the common curriculum is essential, individual lessons are easily improved, and making knowledge is embedded in teaching modifications.

In achieving nations, the finding is not a motivation issue. It is the lack of a mechanism for improving. According to Hiebert and Stigler, the focus in the United States is on improving teachers by recruiting better qualified teachers, meeting higher standards for certification, increasing accountability, encouraging professional development, and making it easier to fire ineffective teachers. There is no evidence that evaluating teachers and holding them accountable for learning improves their teaching or their students’ learning. The finding is that teaching improvement is a learning issue, not a motivation issue. In achieving nations, the focus is on continuously improving through a school-based, collegial system of lesson study. The focus is on the way teachers and students interact with each other and the content.

To understand how a system of teaching works, the classroom lesson is the place to begin. The authors find four things that make teaching improvement possible: evidence-based teaching goals for students, curriculum, assessments, and professional development (PD).

Shared learning goals for each unit of study establish a common focus and curiosity about what is working best. While a common curriculum is essential, individual lessons may be tweaked as shared knowledge is embedded in teaching modifications. Lesson study by observation groups examine evidence of student learning as it happens.

In addition, unit tests are written collaboratively by teacher teams, given the same amount of time, and scored together as performance is compared among different classrooms.

Teachers whose students underperform get help from their colleagues. The PD focus is not on improving an individual teacher’s capabilities, but on improving the methods of teaching and related student outcomes. In this approach, the group takes responsibility for the success of lessons.

Implementation of a teaching improvement system requires a cultural change in American education. This may only happen when teachers, school district leaders, school boards, parents, and SED work together to support the four initiatives presented in this research.

References


Dr. Bruce H. Crowder is a senior researcher for Educational Vistas, Inc. Dr. Crowder may be reached at bcrowder@edvistas.com.

The statements and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect or interpret the opinion or philosophy of the School Administrators Association of New York State.
Summary of Recent Changes to Teacher Certifications and Mentoring

During SAANYS' Annual Conference in Lake Placid, attendees had the opportunity to ask Commissioner Elia any questions on their minds. A few questions related to teacher certification and teacher shortages. In order to address some shortage areas, SED has begun to provide increased flexibility in some certification areas. The following provides a brief summary of such changes, with links to the reports presented to the Board of Regents.

Certification Area: Health Education

Summary of Change: New Transitional K Pathway for licensed and registered health professionals (physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioners, registered nurse). Transitional K is valid for three years during which time such professionals could pursue an initial certificate.

Effective Date/Status: July 2018; for specific program and experience needs see https://bit.ly/2EfIk8S.

Any Area of Certification

Summary of Change: Expanded use of Transitional G certificate. Transitional G certificates previously allowed persons in STEM areas and with two years of teaching experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2yx2xJZ.

Effective Date/Status: March 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2EMkni1.

Summary of Change: Pre-professional teaching assistant certificate is available to individuals enrolled in teacher education programs. Such students may provide direct instruction under a NYS certified teacher. Valid for five years. Allows such students to fulfill student teaching while employed under the pre-professional teaching assistant certificate at the place of employment.

Effective Date/Status: March 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2EMkni1.

Certification Area: Special Education

Summary of Change: Expansion of grade spans for persons that hold a Students with Disabilities (SWD) Generalist. Expansion is birth-grade 2 expanded to grades 3-4; grades 3-4 expanded to prek-k; grades 5-9 and grades 7-12 expanded to grades 5-6.

Effective Date/Status: June 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2Hg6rpm.

Summary of Change:

- A person holding an initial or professional certificate in SWD Generalist grades 7-12 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-6; SWD Content Specialist in grades 7-12 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-6; SWD Generalist in grades 5-9 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-6; SWD Generalist in grades 5-9, SWD Content Specialist in grades 5-9, or Special Education Generalist in grades K-1, may be issued a Statement of Continued Eligibility to teach subject areas, in special classes without a certificate in the content areas.

- A person holding an initial or professional certificate in SWD Generalist grades 7-12 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-6; SWD Content Specialist in grades 7-12 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-6; SWD Generalist in grades 5-9 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 5-10; SWD Content Specialist in grades 5-9 may provide instruction to students with disabilities in grades 10-12.

- A person holding an initial or professional certificate in SWD Generalist grades 7-12, SWD Content Specialist in grades 7-12, SWD Generalist in grades in 5-9, SWD Content Specialist in grades 5-9, or Special Education Generalist in grades K-12, may provide instruction in subject areas in a special class in grades 7-12.

Effective Date/Status: Proposed effective date if adopted by the Board of Regents is February 2019. For more information see https://bit.ly/2y2xSIZ.

Certification Area: Computer Science

Summary of Change: Establishes a computer science certificate that spans all grade levels and grandfathers in those currently teaching computer science.

Effective Date/Status: March 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2Rl9QqU.

Certification Area: Mentoring

Summary of Change: Would require that mentoring continued on page 8
SAANYS Annual Conference – Another SAANYS Success

Our exhibits and sponsors provide a terrific way to learn about the latest education-related products and services – from evaluation resources and technology integration, to staff development and educational services to assist them in meeting their goals and requirements. As a NYS educational service provider, we are committed to helping clients take small, manageable steps to strengthen delivery of student-directed learning and professional learning library and providing authoritative, curriculum-aligned instructional strategies.

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April 25-26

Running a School Library with 1:1 Technology

April 30-01


May 07-08

Running a School Library with 1:1 Technology

May 07-08


May 21-22

Running a School Library with 1:1 Technology

May 21-22


May 23-24

Creating a Library in the 21st Century (K-8)

May 28-29

Creating a Library in the 21st Century (K-8)

May 29-30

StrengthsFinder 2.0 Certification

May 30-31

Running a School Library with 1:1 Technology

May 31-01

The Future of School Libraries in the 21st Century (K-8)

June 04-05

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June 05-06

Creating a Library in the 21st Century (K-8)

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It feels like the new school year has just gotten under way, but already the January Regents exams are just around the corner. At this time of the school year, it is critical that administrators turn their attention towards planning for the administration of those standardized tests, which includes training personnel. Failing to strictly comply with New York State’s stringent testing protocols can, and often does, become the basis for 3020-a disciplinary charges and/or license revocation proceedings. This happens all too often. In fact, SAANYS’ legal team does, become the basis for 3020-a disciplinary charges and/or license revocation proceedings.

The failure of a proctor to follow proper testing protocol will be imputed onto the school district and the administrators in charge of administering the tests, opening the district and individual administrators up to potential liability. Administrators are encouraged to work with their local BOCES to ensure that all personnel are adequately trained in advance of test days.

Second, all personnel must know and understand that photocopying of tests is prohibited. Despite the bold lettered warnings on the testing booklets, year after year SAANYS is contacted by members who have found themselves in legal trouble for failing to comply with the Board of Regents’ strict “no photocopying” policy. All teachers, administrators, or other personnel that may have access to the testing booklets before, during, or after the exams are administered need to understand that the testing booklets (or any part thereof) may not, under any circumstances whatsoever, be photographed, photocopied, or reproduced. In an age of cell phone cameras, this is particularly important and must be reinforced to prevent the integrity of the test from being undermined. Furthermore, administrators must ensure that secure safes are available after the exam is conducted for the safekeeping of all the completed testing booklets.

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Access to the safe should be limited to few personnel as is necessary, and administrators should consider using security devices such as cameras and alarms to ensure that no one gains access to the testing booklets. Another important thing to note is that the Board of Regents posts prior exams online, which can be used to get students familiar with the questions and exam structure (available at: http://www.nysedregents.org/). Although it should not need to be stated, providing answers or assistance to students in answering exam questions is strictly forbidden. Additionally, scrubbing of students’ grades on exams is absolutely prohibited.

Another critical step that must be performed is the identification of all students who are entitled to special testing accommodations. This often requires a full review of all Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Section 504 Plans. In addition to identifying which students will receive accommodations, separate testing locations must also be secured to ensure that all students will be properly accommodated. Further, qualified personnel must be available for any accommodations that require special training, skills, or certification.

It is of the utmost importance that if you are involved in a situation where something deviates from protocol, that you call the SAANYS Legal Department right away. Depending on your employment status, you may have the right not to answer questions by either the district or the state and you are always entitled to representation during investigations. The lawyers at SAANYS have extensive experience in these situations that can benefit you if there is even the potential for discipline.

If you have any questions or legal concerns related to the planning and administering of standardized tests, contact the SAANYS Legal Department.
This year’s conference at the Crowne Plaza in Lake Placid surpassed our expectations. The combination of a beautiful new location and venue, stellar fall weather, outstanding speakers and presenters, and over 400 attendees who were there to enjoy it all, both professionally and personally, made it a truly memorable event.

Commissioner Elia got us thinking on Sunday, October 14 as she shared her thoughts and answered our questions. There was a lot of nodding at the comment that politics and schools don’t mix, and acknowledgement of schools that are taking risks and accomplishing great things, like Elmira’s Community Schools Model.

George Couros, author of The Innovator’s Mindset and the blog, The Principal of Change, hit a home run with his lightning fast delivery of thought-sparking questions and ideas we could identify with, and his roots in real schools as a teacher and leader were obvious. The importance of focusing on what students can do, not what they shouldn’t do resonated with the group, as did strategies for not schooling curiosity out of our students. I have to say that my favorite vignette from his presentation was the one where he stood in front of an auditorium of high school kids who were invited to share feedback on a topic using their technology (BRAVE). Predictably, some pretty, um … rude insults directed at him came up in the mix of comments that appeared…. What to do? Shut down the assembly? Decide that kids are always going to find ways to misuse technology so we might as well go back to old school to prevent this from happening and cause an awkward moment? Nah! Keep moving forward and let the group handle it. Sure enough, a flood of comments from peers nailing the senders of the few rude comments, vaporized the negative in a sea of positivity and everyone moved forward. “We need to make the positives so loud, that the negatives are almost impossible to hear.” OK George!

On Monday, October 15, I had the pleasure of stopping in briefly at the 22 practitioner workshop sessions, all of which have received positive feedback in our follow-up survey. Here are some highlights:

- **Mindfulness:** Students write down intentions for the week on Monday and check in with them on Friday – practice being purposeful.
- **Path to a Trauma Informed School:** Do a data study to identify kids who are not involved in any school activities and follow up and connect.
- **Rethinking Discipline:** As you rank priorities in this area, building relationships with students and families is #1.
- **Embedding STEAM:** Got a school or community pool? Got kids? A Cardboard Boat Regatta is a real spirit builder.
- **Essential Service Personnel and Certified Staff** are “like the superhighway, as well as the side streets that connect all facets of the school community.”
- **Collaborative Culture Builders:** How did a 6th grade go from 9 percent to 41 percent proficiency in a year as a result of teacher led learning walks, feedback loops, and mastermind groups?

We are already planning our 2019 Annual Conference at the Sagamore in Lake George, on October 20 and 21, so mark your calendars!

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Summary of Recent Changes to Teacher Certifications and Mentoring

continued from page 3

needed to obtain professional certification occur during the first 180 days of employment, rather than the first year of employment.

Effective Date/Status: March 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2eqd8KX.

Certification Area: Early Childhood, Literacy, ELA

Summary of Change: Allows for individual evaluation for early childhood birth-grade 2, childhood education in grades 1-6, generalist in middle education in grades 5-9, ELA grades 5-9, ELA grade 7-12, literacy birth-grade 6, and literacy grades 5-12. Candidates are required to submit evidence of coursework and field experience. The Office of Teaching Initiatives reviews transcripts and determines validity.

Effective Date/Status: September 2018; for specific prior work experience needed and initial certificate requirements see https://bit.ly/2CEmlR2.

Certification Area: Substitute Teachers

Summary of Change: Provides flexibility to employ substitutes for more than 40 days beyond July 1, 2018.


Certification Area: Speech and Language Disabilities

Summary of Change: Would allow a person who completes a speech pathology and language program accredited by ASHA to obtain an initial certificate in Speech and Language Disabilities.

Effective Date/Status: October 2018; for more information see https://bit.ly/2CE560h.

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