THE TIME IS NOW - WE MUST UNITE!

Now is the time to stand together as a union for the future of all our members and our students. We must band together and fight for what we know to be right and wrong. When we stand by and do nothing, we become vulnerable to those who would bully and abuse us and our beliefs. They will use our weakness against us and continue to divide us until there is nothing left of what used to be a strong and prideful union.

I urge you to get involved, write and speak to your county supervisor, legislator, and assembly person; as well as, board members, friends, and family. We must educate the public on what's working and what's not working.

Union: is the state of being united or joined.
Solidarity: Harmony of interests and responsibilities among individuals in a group, especially as manifested in unanimous support and collective action for something.

What are you doing as a union member to promote solidarity? Are you looking beyond your classroom and/or building?

Are you aware of how current issues affect our brothers and sisters within our union, or are you just concerned with your working conditions? One of the key reasons unions the creation of unions came to be were that we wouldn’t be alone. One day you may be the one impacted and you won’t want to have to stand alone.

Does it bother you that unions are under attack in this country? It is hard for us who teach today to remember what it was for our brothers and sisters who fought so that we could have bargaining rights, and protections such as tenure and pensions. If you are aware, are you talking to your friends, family and neighbors about all we do? Are you explaining to them that our pensions are just deferred compensation?

Why are we accepting that some of our members have double the class size or additional classes? Why are we letting some of our members work in an atmosphere where they feel like they are walking on egg shells; not because of our new standards or student issues but because they are afraid of their being administrators and supervisors? Are you standing together and tall with your fellow members or are you staying on the down low and saying to yourself “I am glad it’s not me”?

Why is it alright that some union members who teach ELA and math (as well as their principals) will receive a state provided growth scores for a subcomponent of their APPR under Education Law §3012-c, is this a fair work environment for all our members?

How can we as a union justify par-taking in programs such as one that would pay teachers that are highly effective; when we know it is virtually impossible for our members working in 3 thru 8 ELA and math to achieve that level? This program will not help our union, but it will create animosity between our members and breakdown our solidarity. It is also important to note that this program is scarcely funded and would only pay an insignificant amount of money anyway.

Why do we fail to support one another as union members, are we afraid of retaliation, or do we just not care, until we are the ones needing support? When will we decide to act as one united union? More importantly what will it take for there to be solidarity as we begin to find ourselves being stripped of our current rights.

I’ll go out on a limb and say that we all chose the profession of education because we wanted to make a difference in the world; we wanted to help the next generation. Well, a generation of teachers created a union and fought for the rights we have today, to help us on this journey. Those rights were not sent down from some bureaucracy that said wow let’s do great things for these teachers, it took hard work and solidarity to reach this point.

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The 3 R’s: Remarks, Reminders, and Relief!

**Date to Remember:**
- Rep Council Meeting @ OP
- December 1st 3:45
- Half Day for Students
- December 11th
- School Closed
- November 10-11th
- Parent Teacher Conferences
  - 2 Weeks in November

**Issues Currently Being Discussed/Explored**
- *Workload/Year*
- *Subs - Lack of Subs and coverage*
- *Negotiations*

“Education... is painful, continual and difficult work to be done in kindness, by watching, by warning,... by praise, but above all -- by example.” -- John Ruskin

“Time is like a bank account you never know the balance of.”
Author Unknown

“You should always be aware of how you spend it!”
Me

**Definition of the Month Negotiate**

**Negotiate—verb**
1. to work or talk (with others) to achieve (a transaction, an agreement, etc)
2. to deal or bargain with another or others, as in the preparation of a treaty or contract

**Tip of the Month**

**Stay Flexible**

Many teachers agree that the number-one characteristic of a good teacher is flexibility or the ability to roll with the punches and not let the little

When we accept what’s fundamentally wrong with policies, legislation, and program implementations we are letting our students, and our fellow workers down. When we turn a blind eye to unacceptable behavior we become apathetic, we ultimately divide our union and lose the greatest power we have. When we are divided and apathetic to what is happening in our own back yard, idly standing by and watching our brothers and sisters go through situations that we wouldn’t want to be in, we have lost our solidarity, we are no longer union strong and union united. It is time we open our eyes to what is happening around us locally, in Albany, and nationally.
News from NYSUT

In the court of law - and the court of public opinion - NYSUT is taking aggressive steps to fight back against the so-called education reform groups that are trying to take away teachers' due process rights like tenure. The bottom line: For more than a century, tenure has allowed New York's teachers to do their jobs and advocate effectively for students, while protecting good teachers against unfair firing.

NYSUT swiftly filed a motion in state Supreme Court for the right to be heard in two lawsuits challenging New York state's due process laws that establish tenure. One of the suits was filed by the Partnership for Educational Justice, a group headed by former television host Campbell Brown, that has ties to Students First, the Success Academy Charter Schools and Wall Street billionaires. The suits are now combined.

The attorney general's office is defending New York state. NYSUT is seeking to intervene on behalf of seven representative teachers - including three New York State Teachers of the Year - who affirm that their ability to teach and advocate for their students would be jeopardized without the commonsense safeguards tenure provides.

"Tenure helps safeguard children's rights to an effective education because it provides teachers freedom to advocate for their students without fear of reprisal," said NYSUT President Karen E. Magee, who frequently advocated for resources for her students with special needs during her 30 years of teaching in Harrison.

NYSUT Reviewing Judge's Ruling in Tax Cap Suit

NYSUT attorneys are reviewing state Supreme Court Justice Patrick J. McGrath's ruling Wednesday against the union's challenge to the property tax cap.

In a statement to the media, the union said: "NYSUT believes strongly that the tax cap undemocratically deprives taxpayers of their constitutional right to determine local school funding levels, while exacerbating existing funding inequities that harm the state's neediest and most vulnerable students. It is very likely that NYSUT, as permitted by the decision, will continue its challenge to the constitutionality of the tax cap, the effect of which is worsened by the recently enacted tax freeze."

NYSUT Asks Court to Throw Out the Challenge to Tenure

NYSUT this week filed a motion asking the court to dismiss the lawsuit challenging state tenure law, arguing the suit is without merit and that its proposed changes in state policies would harm public education.

NYSUT's defense is "vigorous and unwavering against this meritless assault on public education and employment rights," said President Magee in a news release. The motion to dismiss was filed in state Supreme Court, Richmond County. Here's NYSUT's brief. Motions to dismiss also were filed by the UFT, the state of New York, New York City and the School Administrators of NYS. The case is to be argued Jan. 14 in Staten Island.
Protecting your family for the future

It’s important that your family members are financially protected throughout their lives. Have you stopped to consider what would happen to your spouse and/or children if you were to suddenly pass away?

Would your loved ones be able to continue to live in their home, pay regular bills and maintain a comfortable lifestyle? What about your final medical, burial or funeral expenses?

And it’s not a question of just having a life insurance policy... make sure you have enough coverage to provide for your family. Find a plan that’s right for you and your specific financial situation.

Plans designed specifically for NYSUT members

As NYSUT members, it makes prudent sense to look into the Term Life or Level Term Life Insurance Plans endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits. Both of these plans offer specific terms and rates designed exclusively with NYSUT members and their families in mind.

The Term Life Plan is available for NYSUT members and their spouses/domestic partners under age 85. If you are under age 65, you can apply for coverage from $25,000 up to $1 million at premiums negotiated specifically for NYSUT members.

Meanwhile, the Level Term Life Plan offers terms for 10, 15 or 20-year periods. The premium that you start with is projected to remain the same and the benefit amount will not decrease throughout the term — regardless of your age or health condition.

You can enjoy an additional savings of 15% on published rates if your local association has approved automatic deductions from your paycheck or pension check and you sign up for that benefit.

To learn more about the Member Benefits-endorsed Term Life or Level Term Life Insurance Plans, call 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

Member Appreciation Month is coming!

NYSUT Member Benefits wants to start the New Year off right with a celebration of the entire NYSUT membership.

It’s the strength of the more than 600,000 NYSUT members that makes it possible for Member Benefits to offer approximately 50 endorsed programs & services designed with you in mind.

This special celebration will be kicking off in January 2015 with the arrival of your new membership cards. This mailing will include a variety of special offers only available to NYSUT members.

These offers will continue into February 2015, which has been designated as Member Appreciation Month!

This will be a month filled with a series of special prize drawings for items donated by our endorsed program providers. To be eligible for these drawings, all you need to do is be a participant in our voluntary MAP Alert email service.

We will announce the winners of these special prize drawings exclusively on the Member Benefits website throughout the month of February.

For more details about this exciting event, visit the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Nov/Dec ’14