



SPEAK OUT

ISSUE 7

JUNE 2006

PDta On Course for 2006-07



At the NYSUT Representative Assembly in May, President Dick Iannuzzi asked the delegates a series of questions that really

resonated with me. Where is NYSUT going? Is the union headed in the right direction? Is the direction one that benefits our members? Is the direction one that benefits the people we serve every day? Is the direction one that satisfies the mission of our organization? Has your support – your trust – been earned?

As President Iannuzzi continued his “State of the Union” address, I found myself asking those same questions in relation to our own local, the PDta. As I looked back upon the 2005-6 year, I believe PDta is headed in the right direction, one that benefits our members and the students and families that we serve every day. Your responses to the comprehensive PDta survey has enabled us to refine our goals for the future and set targets to further improve our services to you. We have implemented a number of improvements already, including an updated PDta website, additional articles in *Speak Out*, and several PDta-sponsored workshops.

PDta has also been actively involved in a number of important initiatives throughout the year. Many of them are highlighted in the reports of our

committee chairs printed in this issue of *Speak Out*. In addition to those, our involvement on the District Planning Team has been critical in the recommendations regarding our District-wide committee structure and organizational structure. Those recommendations will begin to be implemented next year. The District and PDta worked jointly to recommend the change to Benefit Resource, Inc. as the administrator of Flexible Spending and Health Fund programs. PDta negotiated the special transfer process that allowed for a smooth selection of staff for our two new middle schools. We have already begun the process to prepare for our next contract negotiation. Many of you

have been sharing your thoughts regarding negotiations by returning the input forms sent out by Vice-President Pam VanGraafeiland. One area that has already emerged as a PDta concern is the perception that the District commitment to cooperative decision making is waning. You will be hearing lots more on this subject and other issues related to negotiations next September!

I believe PDta has earned your support because we are an organization that is founded upon old-fashioned principles. We tell the truth. We

stand up for what we believe. We believe that it is our responsibility to advocate for the public good. We believe that there is no higher calling than caring, protecting, healing and teaching. No higher calling than the work you do every day! Another year is coming to a close. Please take time this summer to refresh, rejuvenate and relax.



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PDTA Committee



Grievance:

This proved to be a very busy year for the Grievance Chair. Besides the usual contract violations that are resolved quickly at the informal level, we had two formal filings. One involved an individual teacher and followed the process through the stages until it went before the Grievance Committee (Chair, President, and Building Reps). After careful consideration, the committee found that it could not find cause to support moving to the arbitration stage of the grievance process. The second grievance was filed by PDTA on behalf of the membership. We sought to protect the rights of members to insurance coverage when all sick leave has been exhausted. PDTA and the district reached resolution by negotiating contract language for future instances. Members affected this school year were not penalized.

Brenda Gibson, Grievance Chair

Communications:

This is the seventh and final issue of *Speak Out* for the 2005-2006 year. I am grateful to all the fine writers who have contributed insightful articles throughout the year. I am also grateful to all of the Communications Building Chairs for their efforts in distributing *Speak Out* quickly and efficiently. Finally, I would like to thank the membership for your comments and suggestions to make the newsletter even better in the future.

Bret Burrows, Communications Chair



New Member:

I'm sure it's hard to believe how quickly this year has passed. As the year comes to an end, take the time to reflect upon your first exciting experience! Enjoy the summer, but as you do, think about your successes, the challenges you faced and changes you would make as you begin the new school year.

The Teacher Center has a wide variety of workshops that are motivating and offer strategies and new ideas to implement in your classroom. Please take advantage of these offerings, perhaps beyond your PD day and your 6 hours.

Have an enjoyable and relaxing summer!

Caren Glassman, New Member Chair



Public Relations:

PDTA has just completed its fifth year as a Pittsford Food Cupboard Adopt-A-Shelf Partner. Once again each school was assigned an item for their staff members to bring in for a monthly collection. Your response was overwhelming! Thanks to your generosity the Pittsford Food Cupboard has been able to support as many as 85 families per week! Our eight buildings were able to collect a total of 1,645 items this school year. We will have nine buildings next year and I'm sure we will be able to reach our new goal of collecting over 2,000 items for the 2006 - 2007 school year! I am so very proud to be part of an association that not only nurtures the children of our community but their families as well.

I would like to give a special thank you to all the members who purchased 2005-2006 Entertainment books this year. Through your generosity we were able to once again donate to three community-service organizations in Pittsford: the fire department, ambulance, and Pittsford Youth Services. We were able to give each organization a check for \$100! With the balance of the money that we raised we were able to add to the PDTA Student Benefit Fund that we started two years ago. Once again we modeled the importance of community service and volunteerism for our students.

Last but not least, it was this committee's pleasant duty to award one \$750 scholarship from PDTA to a graduating senior at both Mendon and Sutherland high schools who will be pursuing a career in teaching. Giving away money to the future teachers of tomorrow is a great way to end the

school year! Thanks to all my committee members and you for a job well done!

Jill Drake, Public Relations Chair



Political Action:

Political Action was quite busy this year. We held a phone bank for our budget vote and Board of Education election. We had a very successful VOTE/COPE drive. We were able to raise a total of \$11,400.00!! This is up from \$8,660.00 in 2005. Thank you to everyone who contributed this year.

I especially want to thank the members of the Political Action Committee who worked so hard to make this year so successful: Sam Crawshaw (AC); Maryanne Maland and Teri Backus (JR); Karen Sturgis (MCE); Emma Ricci (PR); Sarah Shepard (TR); Jeanne McElhinney (PMS-E); Suzanne Ange (PMS-W); Mary Ellen Blanchard (MHS); Pam Danger and Lynn Smith (SHS). Congratulations on a job well done!!

Pamina Abkowitz, Political Action Chair



Professional Growth:

As Professional Growth Chair I represented PDTA on many district committees including ILC, Mentor Steering, Paraprofessional Steering Committee and the Teacher Center Policy Board. My job was to give PDTA a voice and provide feedback to the PDTA board members. The professional growth committee also reviewed and recommended funding for this year's Study Grant applications. Study Grant money was awarded to five PDTA members this year. A special thank you to all of the Professional Growth Building Chairs for their support during the Study Grant process.

Donna Nichols, Professional Growth Chair

Reports



Health and Safety:

This past year the PDTA Health and Safety Committee Building Chairs met each month to review ongoing health and safety concerns, and provide feed-

back to the District Health and Safety Committee. As a group they participated in the following PCSD initiatives:

1. Creation of Charter/Evaluation of the District Health and Safety Committee
2. Updating the Health and Safety Concern Form
3. Review of use of schools as Polling Places
4. Creation of a District Wellness Policy
5. Updating Safety and Security with the addition of video monitoring equipment installed in public access areas at secondary buildings.
6. Attendance at a Security and Safety Conference which provided information on how to maximize school safety through environmental controls.
7. A one-year pilot of an anonymous response system was reviewed for use during the 06/07 school year.
8. Review of Emergency Preparedness was completed with updating of the District Emergency Response Plan.
9. Land-line (red phones) were identified in all buildings for use as preferred first line response in the event 911 services are needed.
10. Construction Project Monitoring
11. Review of the District Alcohol Policy
12. Review of Blogs and Internet Safety Curriculum. Informational sessions held for parents
13. Initiation of contracted MSDS reporting service.

As we look to the next school year, the goals of this committee will include providing timely information to stakeholders, forwarding concerns to the District Committee and promoting wellness among staff and students. I thank all the Building Chairs for their commitment in serving on this committee for this school year.

Linda Khalil, Health and Safety Chair



Special Events:

Our three main events: The Benefits Fair, the United Way Campaign, and the District Retirement Dinner all went better than ever. I would also

like to thank the committee members at each building for all their hard work, but especially Amy Shannon for coordinating the United Way Campaign.

Kristen Dolan, Special Events Chair



Membership:

PDTA had a very successful membership drive. We now have 741 members enrolled. This success is entirely due to the efforts of the membership committee

and to the tireless work of our PDTA secretary, Betsy Stellrecht. Our dedicated committee this year was Joyce Paley, Annemarie Inzana, Mary Bailey, Debbie Bellisario, Sandy Sahler, Patti MacMullin, Toni Stevens-Oliver, Sheila Hickok, Suzanne Ange, and Keith Boardman.

Please help keep our records up-to-date. Notify the PDTA office of any name changes or moves over the summer.

Erin Ciccone, Membership Chair

Student Loan Consolidation

AFT members can lock in a fixed interest rate and cut their monthly student loan payments by half or more. Learn more about the program today by calling an AFT-dedicated loan counselor at **800/936-4976** or visiting **www.aft.org/aftplus/consolidation**.

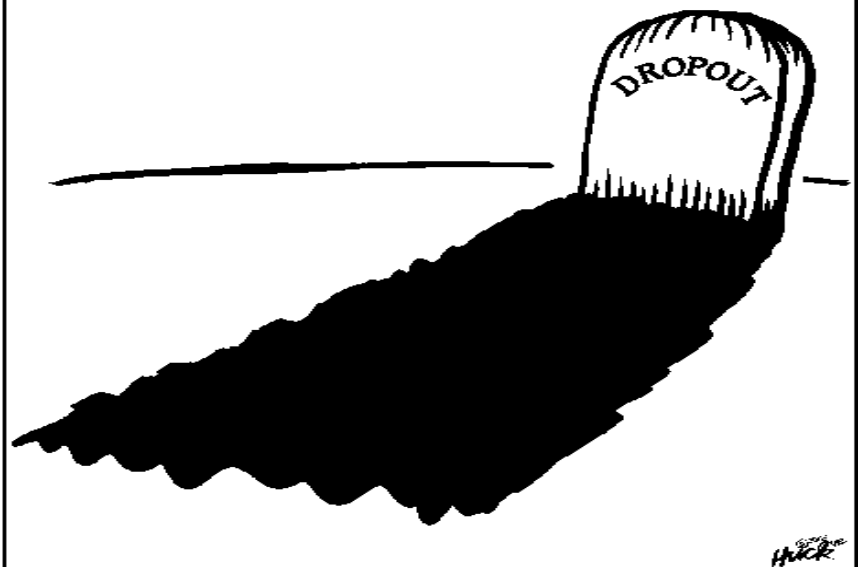
Brought to you by CFS affinity services. All participating lenders are equal opportunity lenders.



6/06



The more education and income people have, the less likely they are to have and die of heart disease, strokes, diabetes and many types of cancer.
-NEWS ITEM



Classified Ad:



Baldwin Piano for Sale, original value \$2400.00 selling for \$900.00. Excellent Condition, if interested Contact Gail Shears 223-5337.

Labor Night at Frontier Field

You, your families and friends are invited to join the Rochester Red Wings, the Rochester Labor Council and Preferred Care at the Sixth Annual Organized Labor Night at Frontier Field. This year, the event will take place on Friday, July 28, when the Red Wings take on the Charlotte Knights at 7:05 p.m. Gates open at 6 p.m.



In addition to prizes, there will be a special ceremony between the conclusion of the game and the fireworks show to highlight how organized labor "Gives Back" to local charities.

The Red Wings are offering discounted tickets: \$8.50 Premium, \$7.50 Upper Box or \$5.00 Reserved. To order tickets, call the PDTA office to request a form or you can order on-line at <http://redwings.bonzidev.com>. Type "unions" in the box marked "Enter your group password."

About Our Members:



Congratulations to Carmine Peluso (PMS), Jen Terenzi (JR), Craig Northrup (MHS) and Erin Schmitt (MHS) on the births of their sons, and to Mike Donner on the birth of his second daughter. We also congratulate new parents Mike Nerone (JR) and Arlene DeJoy (PMS); and David Wikiera (AC) who went to Guatemala to adopt a baby.



We wish a speedy recovery to Penny Vasile (JR), Michelle Rogachefsky (MC), Bev Hyatt (PR), Linda Lamontagne (PR), and Beth Gerlach (JR) as they recuperate at home.



We extend our sympathy to John Sacchitella on the loss of his father.

**Effective June 26
Barbara Shapiro's
PDTA Office
Telephone Number
Will be
Extension 1035 or
218-1035**



NYSUT and NEA/NY Unite

Dreams of statewide unity became reality on May 5 as Representative Assembly delegates voted unanimously to unite New York State United Teachers with the National Education Association of New York, creating a single statewide voice for public education, health care and working families.

"Unification means solidarity," NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi told cheering delegates. "It's a long time in the making."

While the road to the historic vote may have been a long one, it took enthusiastic delegates just seconds to approve a single resolution introduced by Stacey Caruso-Sharpe of the Amsterdam Teachers Association, chairwoman of the union's Constitutional and Bylaw Amendments Committee, and seconded by Michelle Bodden of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City, vice co-chair of the committee with Rod Sherman of the Plattsburgh TA.

As the strains of "United We Stand," by the Brotherhood of Man, filled the hall, Iannuzzi offered handshakes, hugs and high-fives to dignitaries joining him on the dais, including his predecessor, NYSUT President Emeritus Tom Hobart, an architect of unification, and NEA/NY President Robin Rapaport, whom Iannuzzi called "a trusted ally, seeking what is best for both unions."

"At long last, we'll walk the walk together," Rapaport told delegates. He noted that the combined membership would reap the benefits of both organizations and stressed "the history we make."

The vote represents the final step to bring more than 535,000 NYSUT members and 35,000 members of NEA/NY together as one union Sept. 1. NEA/NY delegates voted at their annual Delegate Assembly April 29 to approve the same unification measure.

The event had poignance for Hobart, who initiated unification talks during his administration. The retired NYSUT president returned to share in the celebration at the RA. "I couldn't be more pleased at the way it came out," Hobart said. "They're prepared now to start with a bang and go to new heights."

He praised Iannuzzi and Rapaport for coming to terms on a measure that both organizations could support. Pauline Kinsella, NYSUT executive director, said she looks forward to working with staff from both unions to ensure "a smooth and successful transition."

In his State of the Union address to delegates, Iannuzzi said unification would give the new organization "the strength we need to meet the challenges we face."

Source: <http://www.nysut.org/newyorkteacher/2005-2006/060525unification.html>



In Record Numbers, Voters Say 'Yes' to School Budgets

Voters cast a resounding "yes" vote for public education as nearly 90 percent of school budgets statewide were approved on their first chance at bat.

"This vote underscores the confidence that New Yorkers have in the direction of their local public schools," said New York State United Teachers President Dick Iannuzzi. "They set aside their very real concerns about rising property taxes and, in most places, showed they understand that education is an investment in their property values, in their schools and in their community's children."

On Long Island, voters in more than 100 districts approved their budgets; only 19 were defeated. Last year, voters rejected more than one-third of all Long Island school budgets, and 21 districts were ultimately restricted to contingency spending plans.

Nassau County voters chalked up victories for public education when they passed budgets in Manhasset and Port Washington, districts where a group calling itself Long Islanders for Educational Reform had urged "no" votes.

"Voters understood that school boards have been careful stewards of the public's money," said Iannuzzi. "With test scores rising and public schools making solid progress, voters resoundingly said they approved of the direction of public education in New York."

Districts where voters rejected school budgets can: resubmit the same budget for a second vote; offer voters an amended version; or adopt a contingency budget. If a district's budget is defeated a second time, the district automatically goes on a contingency plan, which this year would cap spending increases at 4 percent.

Source: <http://www.nysut.org/newyorkteacher/2005-2006/060525schoolbudgets.html>

Pittsford District Teachers Association

2006-2007 Representative Assembly Directory

Officers	
President	Barbara Shapiro, SHS*
Vice President for Administration	Len Chaput, SHS*
Vice President for Negotiations	Pam VanGraafeiland, PR*
Secretary	Andy Balch, MHS*
Treasurer	Joel Menchel, SHS*
Grievance Chairperson (non-voting)	
Brenda Gibson, JR*	
Building Representatives	
Allen Creek	Barb O'Brien*
Jefferson Road	Lisa Riley*
Mendon Center	Sue Ann McGrath*
Park Road	Marcia Brown*
Thornell Road	Bernadette Canfield*
Barker Road Middle School	Linda Traynor*
Calkins Road Middle School	Gregg Herman*
Mendon High School	Mike Donner*
Sutherland High School	Harold McAulliffe*
SRP Representative	
Karen Shield, SHS*	
Standing Committee Chairpersons	
Professional Advancement	Pam VanGraafeiland, PR
Professional Growth	Donna Nichols, MC
Communications	Bret Burrows, JR
Public Relations	Jill Drake, MC
Special Events	Caren Glassman, MC
Political Action	Pamina Abkowitz, TR
Membership	Erin Ciccone, PR
Health and Safety	Linda Khalil, MC
Assistant Building Representatives	
Jefferson Road	Kelly Jordan
Mendon Center	Mary Humphreys & Chris Burton
Park Road	Katherine Matychak
Thornell Road	Tracy Dickerson
Barker Road Middle School	Carrie Sackett & Geri Drooz
Calkins Road Middle School	Michelle O'Connor & Jeremy Duntley
Mendon High School	Amy Shannon, Steve Smith & Keith Boardman
Sutherland High School	Dwayne Cerbone, Marie LoRe-Geigel & Sandy Stein
Assistant SRP Representatives	
Constance Bader, PMS West	Annie McCarthy, AC
Andrea Johnson-Credit, PMS West	Gail Mulkeen, SHS, MHS
Maryanne Maland, JR	Sherry Tontarski, MC
Delegates	
#1 Barbara Shapiro, SHS	#4 Sue Gager, AC
#2 Andy Balch	#5 Dan Sanfratello, SHS
#3 Brenda Gibson, JR	#6 Karen Shield, SHS
Retiree Representative (non-voting) Nanette Sorrentino, 227 Elder Drive, Farmington, NY 14425	

* indicates member of Executive Committee