

Inside this issue:

Know Your Contract 2

Member Wellness 3

The Tough Conversations

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States. If you teach anything related to social studies, you are no doubt being inundated with resources to use in the classroom. And yet, what should be a celebration feels like something else this year. The national political climate has made even the most even keeled classroom discussion feel like a potential "gotcha" moment. This, on top of everything else that public educators are tasked with doing.

These conversations need to happen, this is how democracy works. We need to demonstrate how to speak respectfully and how to listen, so that all are heard and valued. We need to provide our students with the skills to navigate the media landscape, to determine truth from misinformation. We need to provide context, to

understand connections between past events and current realities. And we need to empower our students to take informed action in their lives and their world.

As educators, we also have the power, in fact the obligation, to act. Yes, as citizens, but also as professionals. This year marks another anniversary, 50 years since Questar III (then RCG BOCES) formed our current configuration. There will be events marking this milestone including a combined gala/golf tournament this summer.

It is easy to forget that Questar is not separate from us. Collectively, we make up Questar. Our classrooms and programs simply cannot run without us. Yet decisions are often made that impact the classroom without our input. Rarely is this an intentional effort to disempower us, typically it's a result of a lack of understanding of our programs and how they work. It is incumbent upon us to speak up and advocate for our students, our programs and ourselves.

This can be intimidating, I get it, but if we don't who will? This does not have to be confrontational. It involves offering suggestions and feedback at staff meetings. It means honest conversations with our principals. It

can involve completing a survey or sitting on an organizational committee. It involves reading weekly email recaps and tuning in to town halls to stay informed. It could include attending an Association meeting or one of the monthly Questar Board meetings. There are numerous ways to be involved and for the administration to see that we ARE involved, as interested and active stakeholders.

Please consider what you can do, now and in the future. Our strength is in our numbers and we are stronger together. Thank you for all that you do to support our students, our programs and each other.

In solidarity,

Joal Bova

President, RCG BOCES Teachers' Association

Make sure you are receiving communications from us through a personal email. Check out our website at

<http://rcgboces.ny.oft.org/>

Follow us on Twitter @BocesRcg.

If you have not already created an online account, do so at

www.NYSUT.org.

Our Local is RCG BOCES Teachers' Association Local 10175. Once you log in, you will have access to a variety of membership benefits.



NYSUT’s voluntary MAP Alert email service provides weekly updates from NYSUT Member Benefits about the dozens of endorsed insurance; legal & financial;

and shopping, travel & personal programs available to NYSUT members.

Participation in the MAP Alert service brings a variety of perks, including:

- Early notification about new benefits & updates to existing programs.

- The chance to take part in exciting prize drawings such as Member Appreciation Event.
- The opportunity to make your voice heard by sharing your feedback about potential programs under consideration.
- Peace of mind knowing your email address will not be shared and you will not be inundated with emails.

Click [here](#) for more information

Know Your Contract

ARTICLE 11 - TEACHING CONDITIONS

11.1 Notification of Assignments

A. The Agency and the Association recognize the importance of each notification to employees of their assignments for the coming school year. Toward that end, the Executive Officer shall mail to employees notification of their tentative assignments, including the schools to which they will be assigned and the number of pupils assigned to them, by August 15 of each school year. If changes in those assignments become necessary thereafter, the teacher shall be notified, by mail, directed to his or her address of record with the Agency.

B. The Executive Officer shall make available to each teaching employee at the time of such notification of tentative assignment, all data on file for students who will be assigned to such employee for the coming school year.

C. Teachers shall be required to complete and return the records of their present students, with their comments, recommendations and evaluations of progress to date, to the Agency by the last day of each school year.



Access the full [contract here](#)



Another new year is upon us and with it comes the opportunity to take stock of where we are in our lives. NYSUT Member Benefits endorses numerous programs that can help with creating a plan to prepare for whatever the future brings.

CREATE YOUR PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR TODAY.

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Have you addressed any legal or financial concerns?

With our Legal Service Plan, you gain access to a national network of attorneys at a reduced cost; two, free hour-long consultations; and a legal security package containing a simple will, health care proxy, living will, and power of attorney. Meanwhile, our Financial Counseling Program provides access to certified financial planners that can offer unbiased financial counseling services.

Improving your financial acumen is a key part of building a successful retirement plan. Powered by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, our Financial Learning Center is a free online resource that offers monthly articles about dealing with debt, insurance, retirement, finances, and more.

Do you have an emergency fund?

Synchrony Bank offers several options to help grow your savings over time, including high-yield savings accounts,

money market accounts, and certificates of deposit. NYSUT members receive special rates above those available to the general public.

Is a new home or refinancing of your current home on your list?

NYSUT members can save up to \$2,700 on lender fees and closing costs with the UnionDirect Mortgage Discount Program from Mid-Island Mortgage. For more than 60 years, Mid-Island Mortgage has been helping union members with realizing the joy of homeownership.

Are you looking for assistance with credit and/or debt management?

Our partnership with Cambridge Credit Counseling can assist members with understanding debt consolidation and student loan repayment options. Members can receive a free, no-obligation consultation with a Cambridge certified counselor.

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