

SYOSSET RECORD

RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER, (REC)

SYOSSET TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

NYSUT #19-090R

Affiliated with AFT—NEA—AFL-CIO

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 2

APRIL 2021

Presidents' Message

It's been a while since our last newsletter, and we hope that all has been well with you and your family. While the pandemic has kept us apart, there's always hope that with the vaccinations and all the other safety measures in place, we will soon be back to hugging our families and friends and shaking hands with our neighbors.

The "new normal" does not feel normal in this challenging and disorienting time and so we've been taking one day at a time and hoping for the best. Certainly our colleagues who are in the "classrooms" educating our students, in-person and on-line, deserve all the praise and appreciation we can give them. They need to know that although we, as retirees, are no longer working beside them, we do understand their struggle and thank them profusely for all they do.

We would like to congratulate our newly retired colleagues and wish them the best as they begin this new chapter in their lives: Helen Lee, Jennifer Mulligan, Stephen Narnjo, and Maureen Sullivan. We celebrate with you and hope to meet you in the near future at our meetings and luncheons.

Because we will, once again, not be able to hold a general meeting in May when we elect our chapter officers, the REC/STA Planning Board has voted to postpone our elections and have extended the term of our present elected officers for one year.

Happily, the NYS Enacted Budget for 2021-2022 included many positive elements for educators. We'd like to thank all our members and colleagues who contacted their legislators to advocate, successfully, for the enhanced revenue

streams, fully funded Foundation Aid for our schools and the continued full reimbursement of our Medicare Premiums and additional Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount premiums (IRMAA) for NYSHIP retirees. Unfortunately, the state and city university systems still need additional funding but some financial progress has been made. The enacted budget may not be perfect but it is better than it has been for a long time. Our voices were heard.

We'd like to remind you that May 18th is the Annual District Election and Budget Vote. Please check the information available in your districts and vote.



Please stay safe
and take care.
Fritz and Matty



Items of Interest

- In response to the Biden administration's refusal to scrap 2021 standardized tests, the NY State Education Department is cancelling most of its spring and summer High School Regents exams. However, the following Regents will be administered as required by federal law: Algebra 1, English, Living Environment, and Earth Science.
- Students don't have to pass any Regents exam to earn their diplomas this year. Instead the students must pass their Regents-based courses by the end of this summer to earn the credits for their diplomas.
- State tests in English, Math and Science are slated to be given to NYS grades 3-8 this spring but they will be shortened (*cont'd on p.3*)

School and Community

Highlights of the Board of Education Meetings

January 11, 2021

- Board trustee Chris Ulrich announced his resignation from the Board because he was relocating to Florida. A citation in recognition of his commitment to the children and families of the Syosset community was presented by Nassau County Legislator Joshua Lafazan. Mr. Ulrich was also congratulated by the Board.
- Dr. Tom Rogers announced that NYS is allowing low to medium risk sports to proceed and gave an update regarding COVID testing for the learning community.
- The District's Pupil Personnel Department presented highlights of the alignment of the District's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) continuum and the progress on the social-emotional learning of students in relation to restorative justice.
- With regard to the Syosset Park Warehouse Project, the Board explained that the District does not have approval authority. They only have the opportunity to comment on the proposal Remedial Action Work Plan that is before the DEC and Town of Oyster Bay.

February 8, 2021

- The first Budget Informational Meeting was held prior to the regular Board Meeting
- Dr. Tom Rogers announced that Joshua Langman was named Class of 2021 Valedictorian and both Maiya Raghu and Jacob Rosenberg were named Salutatorian.
- The five Syosset students named 2021 Regeneron Science Talent Scholars presented their projects. Each student will receive \$2,000 and an additional \$2,000 per scholar goes to the high school in support of STEM education.
- Dr. Rogers reported that the Governor announced that schools will be permitted to have high risk sports starting February 1. Athletes will be tested periodically to check if anyone is sick. Sporting events have been livestreamed.
- An update regarding the Amazon Warehouse Project located on Robbins Lane and Miller Place was presented. [See Community News]
- Following the resignation of Trustee Ulrich, the Board decided to leave the seat vacant until the

Annual District Election in May.

- Ms. Tracy Frankel, Board president, informed the community of the initiatives the Nassau-Suffolk Board Association plans to advocate for on behalf of LI school districts during budget planning sessions in Albany.

March 15, 2021

- Legislator Joshua Lafazan announced that Nassau County agreed to transfer a portion of the Nassau County owned Stillwell Fields property to the school district through a framework agreement with the County subject to voter and County Legislative approval.
- Syosset residents will have the opportunity to vote on Propositions 2 and 3 on May 18 during the Annual District Election and Budget Vote. Several informational meetings are scheduled before the vote. [See Community News].
- Student Senate President Krish Pamnani gave an update on the activities in the high school.
- Dr. John Genova presented an overview of the the Mathematics Department's work, describing how the curriculum has been maintained during the transition of the virtual and hybrid environment.
- Dr. Rogers recapped the information on the Nassau County owned Stillwell Property and reported updates on Quarantine Rules, State Testing and In-person Instruction.
- A report on the proposed Nassau BOCES budget was presented

Our Sympathy

We mourn the passing of our colleagues **Bill Douglas, Estelle Goldin, Len Herman, Irwin Kleinman, Marion Lind, Teresa Mason, Anthony Millon, Judy Randall, Shirley Ray, and Joyce Simon.**

We extend our condolences to **Kay Ganz** on the loss of her husband, Leonard, **Katherine Kovins** on the loss of her husband, Thom, **Sue Bergstein** on the loss of her husband, Norman and **John Lind** on the loss of his mother, Svea.



Community News

Stillwell Fields Property

Legislator Joshua Lafazan announced at the March 15, 2021 meeting of the Board that Nassau County agreed to transfer about 35 acres of the approximate 300 acres of the County-owned Stillwell Field property, located on South Woods Road in Woodbury, to the Syosset Central School District. This will be facilitated through a framework agreement subject to voter approval and the approval of the County Legislature.

If approved by voters, the cleared part of the Stillwell Park Property of 35 acres would be passed to the Syosset Central School District from the County for \$1.00 and the County would retain ownership of the remainder 270 acres including the bicycle and equestrian trails. The District would also receive the \$3 million of County funding that had been earmarked to revitalize Stillwell Fields as was slated in 2019. In addition, the District would supplement this amount with \$5.5 million raised through bonds and \$2 million from reserves for a total investment of \$10.5 million. The money coming from reserves would not impact taxes.

Both the purchase and the school district funding would be subject to voter approval. If voters approve the purchase and the funding of the capital improvement project, the District would take over the management of the property which would include increased security with placement of surveillance cameras and security guard pres-

ence, groundskeeping and custodial maintenance.

The final propositions will be developed based on community feedback gathered from the community engagement meetings to be held prior to the district annual budget vote on May 18.

Amazon Warehouse Project

The Amazon Warehouse Project, located on Robbins Lane and Miller Place, involves the construction by Syosset Park LLC, of a warehouse to be used by Amazon as a last mile delivery facility. When the project was first announced, the Syosset Board of Education wrote a letter to the Nassau County Industrial Development Authority (Nassau IDA) stating that given Amazon's revenues and profits, it should not be granted tax incentives at residential taxpayer expense.

Items of Interest *(cont'd from page 1)*

versions. State officials have applied for a waiver from the federal government and as of this writing are awaiting a reply. Parents can still opt out. Schools will not be accountable for test results or participation rates.

- Dr. Betty Rosa is the Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York (USNY).
- Lester Young, a former Brooklyn principal with a 50-year career in public education, is the new Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents. His term will continue until March 31, 2022.

BABY BLUES



Credit: Newsday



Thank You

During these unprecedented times and in the face of incredible adversity, each of you continue to sacrifice and dedicate yourselves to our children, our families and our communities.

We thank all of the educators, school-related professionals, nurses and other health care workers who continue to demonstrate their unwavering compassion, dedication and commitment to our communities on a daily basis.

memberbenefits.nysut.org | 800-626-8101



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.