



THE EDUCATOR

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Strategic Planning 2

ATA members recently participated in the district's goal-setting process.

Trivia Challenge

Win an ATA fleece.

APPR 3

Arlington's APPR plan has been submitted to the state for approval.

Contract Information

This month's spotlight is on short term leave.

What's Going On? 4

Member accomplishments are highlighted.

Energy Committee 5

Vail Farm teachers help save energy.

PR Update

Money was raised for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Holiday Party 6

See pictures from the recent event.

Calendar and Announcements 8



New National Board Certifications Announced

Just before the Thanksgiving weekend, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) delivered the scores to the candidates for the 2011-2012 year and gave 10 more Arlington teachers something more to be thankful for- a passing score and achievement of the gold standard of accomplished teaching.

The candidates came from several different buildings, certification areas, and grade levels representing a cross-section of ATA membership. These individuals spent more time than they may want to count last year engaged in what many describe as the most intense and effective professional development experience of their career. Candidates need to create four portfolio entries based on instructions and guidance

from the National Board during the school year. The four entries produced during the year include video recorded

2012 National Board Certification Recipients:

- Theresa Daleo-Stock-- AHS
- Mary Deady-- AHS
- Rhapsody Mancini-- AHS
- Sue Pung-- AHS
- Tina Tamweber-- AHS
- Debbie McCaffrey-- ASM
- Robin Romano-- BES
- Linda Simoneau-- BES
- Margaret Romano-- LMS
- Diana Judge-- TRPS

lessons, examples of student work, documentation supporting professional accomplishments, reflective and

analytical written work, and a few other assignments provided by the National Board. The entries are carefully packed up in the early spring and shipped off to the assessment center where they are scored by specially trained NBPTS evaluators. It takes months for a candidate's work to be scored. In the meantime, there is still a computer-based content test that the candidate must complete before the end of the school year at a participating test center. This involves six essay prompts that the candidate responds to, with up to 30 minutes to compose each response. These completed essays are read by teams of trained evaluators. More than five months after finishing the last task, and well into the following school year, the
See Certification on Page 3

Vail Farm Energy Committee Feels the Heat

In addition to being busy hosting the annual ATA Holiday Party, some of the Vail Farm faculty have been helping out the Arlington Energy Program by starting an Energy Committee. The committee consists of teachers Liza Burgos, Pam Goetz, Steve Kubicek, Jon Nix, Augie Scagnelli, Jason Venier, and Head Custodian Dave Mazzacone, along with Jacob Lawrence, the District Energy Specialist. The heating systems in Arlington's 12 schools all work in different ways. At

Vail Farm classrooms have adjustable thermostats that



Photo by Jacob Lawrence

Vail Farm Teachers Steve Kubicek (left) and Jason Venier are members of their school's Energy committee.

ers on the Vail Farm Energy Committee reported that the unit ventilators in their classrooms were malfunctioning, blowing out extremely hot air that raises the temperatures in their rooms to uncomfortable levels within minutes of being turned on. The result has been that the custodial staff and many teachers have had to resort to completely turning them off during the day.

control ventilators. During their first meeting, the teach-

As part of a series of experiments, Venier and Kubicek agreed to place temperature data loggers in
See Heat on Page 5

Trivia Challenge

Answer the question below correctly and you could be the proud winner of ATA gear!

Which school district in NY state is first alphabetically?

Last month's winners, selected at random from among the correct responses received, were **Steve Reynolds** from Beekman and **Darlene Swartz** from OPS. They correctly identified **Christopher Eachus** as the physics teacher who was a NY state senate candidate. They will be the proud owners of ATA fleeces. Answer this month's question and you could win ATA gear too!

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to rmchugh@acsdny.org by December 21st. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Shifting the Focus: District Sets a Plan

On December 3, 4, and 5, 31 members of the Arlington community gathered together to create a draft strategic plan for the future of the Arlington Central School District. The goals of the strategic planning effort are to help shape and revise our district mission and to implement plans that reflect the hopes and dreams of our entire Arlington Community.

Gathering together on those three days was the first step towards identifying our core values, creating a district mission, and developing objectives and strategies in order to empower students to thrive in today's changing world.

When asked to be a part of the core planning team, I did not know what to expect. I felt a responsibility to voice my concerns and values on behalf of my Arlington community. I feared I might have values and opinions that were not shared by other community members. I wondered if members of the Board of Education would have the same hopes and dreams for the future of our students. I wondered if I would be able to openly share my true opin-

ions and experiences as a teacher with principals and the superintendent.

I was very tentative as we began. I was surprised, excited, and curious as I realized I was surrounded by diverse individuals from the Arlington community. In addition to teachers there were parents, longtime community residents, college professors, high school

day. I was exhausted... and exited. I have never felt more productive and passionate.

So what exactly did we accomplish? On behalf of everyone in our Arlington community, we attempted to answer the question: "When students collect their diplomas on graduation day, what would you like them to thank you for?" Our answer is embedded with

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in our mission: To empower all students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who willingly contribute to their community, and lead passionate, purposeful lives.

As we enter 2013, the strategic planning team will present the culmination of our efforts to answer this question to the Arlington Community. Redefining our mission and transforming words into action is not an overnight event. Our initial plan is a five year plan that will unfurl slowly. It is a plan based on a mission I can support with confidence because it is focused on what matters most to all of us: empowering all students.

--Sheri Altieri, UVMS & VF

Start Retirement Planning Early

For those ATA members nearing the age of 55 or with 30 years of service thoughts of retirement may be more than just a daydream. While you are the only person who can know for sure if it is time for you to retire, there are many resources available to help you consider all of the aspects of that important decision, such as how your finances and health care will be affected.

The New York State

Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) website at nys-trs.org is a good place to start. Once you have created an ac-

One-on-one consultations with a NYSTRS representative are available in Kingston on January 8 and 22.

count and logged in you will have access to resources such as a benefit estimator.

One-on-one consultations are also available for you to ask benefits questions directly

to a NYSTRS representative. The next sessions available locally will be held in Kingston on January 8 and 22. You can sign up by calling the NYSTRS at 800-348-7298, extension 6100, or through the "My Tools" tab after logging in to the NYSTRS website.

The deadline for announcing a June 2013 retirement is February 1. Call ATA president Bob Maier at the ATA office at 845-454-7002 for guidance through this process.

Certifications Announced

Continued from Front
teachers finally can access the scores for their portfolio entries and test center exercises to determine if they have gathered up enough points to earn the ten year certificate of National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT). Nationwide, roughly half of the candidates do not earn a passing score in their first year of candidacy. However, the National Board does have a system in place where the candidates can determine which specific portfolio entries or test center exercises they can select to retake to earn a passing score in the subsequent two years. In many regards, the National Board is a very comprehensive organization committed to helping motivated teachers reach their professional development goals.

Thanks to NYSUT and NYSED sponsored grants coupled with available funds from the Arlington Central School District, the cost of participating in this program is at most \$350 (the unsubsidized cost is well over \$3000.) Upon certification, the NBCT gets a \$3000 stipend for the duration of the certificate (10 years, with an opportunity to recertify.) Also, some colleges (for a fee) award nine graduate credits for the completion of National Board certification. This provides more than \$600 more annually in salary credits. These financial rewards are sim-

ilar to those offered by neighboring school districts.

For those interested in pursuing National Board Certification, there are many resources available to help in the decision making process. First, feel free to contact a current NBCT. They are happy to answer your questions and discuss your goals. The National Board website (nbpts.org) has a wealth of information and resources for potential candidates. Also, watch MyLearningPlan later in the school year for an information session hosted by Arlington NBCTs for individuals interested in learning more about the National Board candidacy process.

In the Arlington School District we have an established candidate support provider program operated by Arlington NBCTs who have completed a NBPTS candidate support provider training program. Arlington currently has the capacity to effectively facilitate cohorts of 40 or more candidates with the number of trained candidate support providers available. Although the candidacy process described above may have sounded grueling, Arlington NBCTs agree that ATA members have the skills, knowledge, and ability to successfully complete this yearlong documentation process. What have you got to lose?

--Steve Hertzog, ATA 2nd VP, NBCT

APPR Plan Has Been Submitted to the State

After many of months of negotiations and fine-tuning, a complete Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plan was submitted to the New York State Education Department (SED) by Arlington's Deputy Superintendent Brendan Lyons with the approval of the ATA. This was done by filling out a very lengthy form on SED's website. Every aspect of the plan must both comply with state law and also be phrased in the correct way in order to be approved.

As of the end of November, Arlington's APPR plan had been reviewed by SED and sent back to the district with some minor logistical corrections to be made before final approval. The ATA is in the process of making recommendations to the district for these corrections so that the revisions can be submitted in December. Arlington has been appointed a specific SED employee to handle its APPR plan in order to expedite the process and it is expected that the revised plan will be approved by SED well before Governor Cuomo's January 17 deadline.

Spotlight on the Contract: Short Term Leave of Absence

Each issue of The Educator spotlights a particular part of our contract in an effort to make our members more familiar with their rights and the terms and conditions of their employment. Until the new contract that was approved in June 2012 is published we will be featuring segments from the previous contract that will remain unchanged. If you have a section you would like to see featured, email sfalk@acsdny.org.

"Teachers shall be entitled to the following temporary leaves of absence with pay each school year:

1. One (1) day for religious reasons which require absence during school hours.
2. Two (2) days for the purpose of visiting other schools with the permission of the principals of the schools involved.
3. Time necessary for appearance in any legal proceeding connected with the teacher's employment or with the school system, except for suit of teacher or teachers against the District.
4. Absence because of quarantine or childhood communicable disease traceable to contact made in school.
5. In addition to statutory benefits, a maximum of ten (10) days per school year for persons called into temporary active duty with any unit of the United States Military Reserves or the National Guard, provided such obligations cannot be fulfilled on days when school is not in session, less benefits received for such service."

Explanation: According to this provision of the ATA contract (Article XVII, page 23), teachers are entitled to several forms of paid short term leave beyond the use of their sick days and personal days. Each teacher can be absent from school for religious reasons one day per year. Typically this has involved the celebration of religious holidays (Yom Kippur, Eid al-Fitr) on days when school is in session. Teachers have the right to two days per year to observe and collaborate with teachers in other schools. This is dependent on the permission of the schools' principals. If a teacher is required to stay home because of a doctor prescribed quarantine as a result of a contagious disease acquired at school, he or she may be entitled to a paid short term leave and not have to use sick days. Teachers are also entitled to paid short term leaves of absence in the event of military service and required testimony in district legal cases.

2012—2013 ATA Officers

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AMS — Carmine Anastasio

LMS — Steve Bronzi

UVMS — Donna Curran

AHS — John Filor

AHS — Noreen Mills Martin

What's Going On?

"What's Going on" is a monthly feature of The Educator. It highlights noteworthy accomplishments by ATA members. Do you know of a colleague who deserves recognition? Let The Educator know by emailing sfalk@acsdcny.org. We can't know what's going on at all of your schools without your help!

Congratulations to the following ATA members for their contributions to the Arlington community and beyond.

Arlington High School

Music teacher Jonathan Handman was recently awarded the 2012 American Prize in Orchestra Performance in the high school division. This award is designed to recognize and reward the very best in the performing arts in the United States in schools and churches, and at community and professional levels.

Teachers throughout AHS participated in a "Door Wars" competition organized by English teacher Rhapsody Mancini to both celebrate the holiday season and raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project. Classroom doors were decorated with the theme of "patriotism and holiday spirit" and students and faculty could vote for the winners of several different categories by placing change in jars set up in the Main Office. The winners will be determined as the jars with the most money in them on December 18 and all money will be donated.

Arlington Middle

English teacher Kat Spinelli recently chaired a school-wide clothing drive to raise money for the PTA. Donated clothing was bought by a company called Fashion Republic at a per pound price, with proceeds going directly to the PTA.



Union Vale Middle

Under the direction of social studies teacher Mike Tucci, the UVMS faculty and staff participated in a basketball game that served as a fundraiser for the eighth grade Washington, D.C. trip. In addition to the game, there was face painting, raffles, faculty music performances, and food. Taking one for the team were English teacher Jamie Tall and social studies teacher Matt Reilly, who had pies thrown in their faces.

In order to increase attendance at the basketball game and promote a sense of community male faculty and staff participated in "Bro-ember" by not shaving for the entire month of November (as shown in the photo above.) Students were to be able to mimic the faculty by purchasing \$1 mustaches to wear to the basketball game, but the mustaches did not arrive on time due to Hurricane Sandy. Ultimately students were able to wear their mustaches to school on November 29 and money from the mustache sale went to provide assistance to the victims of Hurricane Sandy.

Beekman Elementary

Fifth grade teacher Adrienne Pisciotta and first grade teacher Linda Penn recently raised money to help in the fight against breast cancer by holding a "Walk On the Wild Side" fundraiser. They sold pink hair extensions and pins.

LaGrange Middle

English teacher Laurie Bryant has written and produced LMS's fall drama *Unplugged* about a town that must forgo their electronic devices for 30 days and see if they can survive. It was quite a witty production and really made students and staff think about the way technology affects them in their daily lives.

The LMS Community Service Club, led by math teacher Melis-

sa Timmins, enthusiastically participated in the district-wide Cram the Classroom drive that ran for four weeks and collected everything from baby food to paper goods. In a huge effort, the club was able to collect two boxes of baby supplies, over 60 rolls of toilet paper, and four boxes full of toiletries. The success of Cram the Classroom has inspired club members to continue their mission with more vigor.

The Building Community Committee is responsible for several activities at LMS every year that serve to unite the faculty and staff. In November they hosted a Thanksgiving feast. Faculty members brought in their favorite dishes to share and four turkeys were prepared

See What's Going On on Page 5

Vail Farm Feels the Heat

Continued from Front

their classrooms for a few weeks. Both teachers kept track of their own use of the unit ventilators over that time period. Initially, the goal was to turn on the unit ventilators and monitor how well they functioned during the school day, but this plan was quickly scrapped after temperatures

rose to sweltering levels of over 80°F in just a few minutes. Instead, Venier experimented by running his unit ventilator over a weekend, while Kubicek kept his turned off. The results were dramatic. While the building

was unoccupied, Venier's classroom temperatures rose to 100°F, but Kubicek's classroom temperature stayed between 68-71°F. This showed that an incredible volume of hot water was being sent around the building in the middle of the night over weekends, wasting hundreds of gallons of heating oil per month.

After the results from this experiment were shared with Vail Farm principal Dottie Patriot and the new District Director of Facilities Carmine Crisci, immediate action was taken. The boilers were re-adjusted so that hot water would be created based on outside air temperature, helping to reduce the tem-

perature of the water being sent around the building. Plans are also in the works for modifying hot water temperatures during unoccupied times, which should help to further save valuable district energy dollars. While conditions in

the buildings are still far from perfect (some rooms are too cool while others are too warm), the work done by the Vail Farm Energy Committee has already made a big difference. Teachers, administrators and staff at other schools are encouraged to form their own Energy Committees to help communicate and solve energy-related problems.

Winter Break Shutdown List:

- ✓ Turn off, unplug, or set back all energy-using items
- ✓ Clean out and unplug small refrigerators, microwaves, coffee makers and other small appliances that have a light or (non-vital) clock.
- ✓ Pull down window shades to help hold heat in the building
- ✓ Turn off lights and close doors on your way out.

ATA Public Relations Committee is on a Mission

The mission statement of the ATA's Public Relations committee states that their primary focus "... is to support and improve our community, not only by providing exemplary education to the students within it, but by participating in community events and raising funds and awareness for important causes." Committee chairperson Kristi Bogaczyk and her team of teachers representing each Arlington school strive to accomplish this mission with events throughout the school year.

After starting the year by participating in the Arlington Street Fair in September, the committee turned its focus to charity work for the winter. They decided this year to rotate their fund drive recipients. Instead of the annual Blue Jeans for Babies dress-down day that supports the March of Dimes, a new event was planned to aid St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

ATA members at all schools had the opportunity to make a small donation to purchase a sticker to wear while dressing -down on November 20 to "Stick Together Against Cancer". As a result of this event the ATA raised over \$2000 to support pediatric cancer treatment and research at St. Jude.

In the coming months look for many more opportunities to help out the Arlington community through the ATA Public Relations committee. The next event that will take place is the annual Jackie Higgins Memorial SPCA drive, which is being planned for January. A "Leading to Reading" book drive will be held in February.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Public Relations committee and their upcoming events email chairperson Kristi Bogaczyk at kbogaczyk@acsdny.org. The more people participate, the easier it will be to succeed with their mission.

What's Going On, Continued

Continued from Page 4

at school. Other recent activities included a door decorating contest and "pay it forward" cards where each faculty member got a card in their mailbox and they had to write something nice that another teacher is doing and then put the card in that teacher's mailbox.

West Road

Third grade students led by music teacher Susan Birchman celebrated Veteran's Day in a very special way at West Road. On November 16, 105 children

sang for a packed audience of veterans from American Legion and VFW posts from across the area. In addition to the patriotic songs that were performed, veterans were honored in displays that included a red paper brick "Wall of Honor" filled with the names of our cherished veterans, and a POW/MIA table. A Purple Heart explanation was added to the program for the first time this year. This celebration has become an important tradition for our community as well as for the children and staff at West Road.

ATA Holiday Party 2012



Photos by Siouxzanne Harris



These photos and many more can be found on the ATA's website at www.arlingtonteachers.com

Dates to Remember



DECEMBER

24-31st—Winter Recess - No School

JANUARY

1st—Winter Recess - No School

8th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Beekman

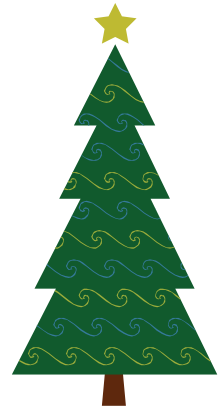
15th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

18th—Professional Development Half Day

21st—Martin Luther King Day - No School

22nd—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Vail Farm

22-25th—Regents Week



FEBRUARY

1st—Deadline for June 2013 Retirement Decisions

12th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., ASM

18th—Presidents' Day - No School

19th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

26th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Noxon



Announcements

Stay informed! *Like* us on Facebook or check out www.arlingtonteachers.com for forms, photos, calendars, and more.

Do you need help preparing a grant? Call the ATA Office for help from one of our volunteers.

**The staff of
The Educator would
like to wish all ATA
members a happy and
healthy
holiday season.**

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on January 11 and 14 and February 8 and 11. Please contact Colleen Napora at cnapora@acsdny.org to sign up. Donations of cups, mugs, plates, silverware, and food are also welcome.