



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

APPR Update 2

The agreement will be fine-tuned over the summer.

Contract Information

This month's spotlight is on printing the contract.

Trivia Challenge

Win an ATA fleece.

PR Chair Farewell 3

The ATA's PR chairwoman is leaving.

Dutchess Outreach

ATA members received awards for their service.

Recognition Dinner 4

Retirees were honored at the annual event.

What's Going On? 6

Member accomplishments are highlighted.

One Voice Rally 7

Thousands attended the June 8 rally in Albany.

Calendar and Announcements 8

One Voice Unites Educators



Thousands of supporters of public education gathered at the Empire State Plaza in Albany on June 8 for NYSUT's One Voice Rally. Buses of educators from as far away as Long Island and Buffalo joined labor leaders, activists, parents, and students for a day of speeches and songs in an effort to bring attention to the issues that are plaguing public education today. See page 7 for more coverage of the event.



Photos by Sam Falk

APPR Process Will Be Fine-Tuned This Summer

Trivia Challenge

Last month's winners, selected at random from among the correct responses received, were **Janice Levinsky** from AHS, **Mindy Grey** from LMS, and **Alice Estevez** from Arthur S. May. They correctly identified **114** as the number of square miles Arlington covers. All winners are now the proud owners of ATA gear.

Be sure to look out for the next trivia challenge in September and you could win ATA gear too!

As another school year draws to a close we can reflect on Arlington's second year of involvement in the APPR process. Last summer a small committee of ATA members representing different subjects and grade levels met with administrators to hash out an APPR agreement that would be the best possible for our members while still adhering to the rigid requirements from the state. While we believe that we succeeded in this goal we can now fine-tune the agreement after seeing it in practice for a full school year.

All ATA members were recently given the opportunity to give their feedback about the implementation of the APPR process, either by meeting at the ATA office or through email. Of the 718 current ATA members, approximately 30 participated. All of their concerns will be taken into consideration when meeting with Superintendent Brendan Lyons over the summer.

These include:

- Setting up a process whereby teachers approve all locally-written pre- and post-tests they must administer to ensure that material assessed on the tests corresponds with what is covered

- Requiring that no observations take place within two weeks of the start of a new class.

We would like to thank everyone who offered their feedback on the APPR process.

Components of Arlington's APPR Scores:

- ✓ 20 points from student growth on state assessments or student learning objectives
- ✓ 20 points from locally selected measures of student achievement
- ✓ 44 points from one classroom observation using the Danielson rubric
- ✓ 6 points from one unannounced classroom observation
- ✓ 10 points from a professional growth plan

The strength of the ATA is when we all work together as one unit even though there are differences between our day-to-day jobs. We are a large organization and it is imperative that we have active participation from a wide range of members in order to effectively represent all of them. In the end, we are all educators and we are

in the course.

- Ensuring that untenured teachers will not have their observations (and pre- and post-conferences) too close together throughout the year.
- Clarifying the time frames that the observations and pre- and post-conferences must occur within.

all trying to do what is best for our students in spite of the ever-increasing number of mandates from the state.

Enjoy your summer knowing that the ATA leadership is still working for you and will be ready for whatever September brings.

-Sam Falk, Newsletter Editor

Spotlight on the Contract: Contract Printing

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.

"Copies of this agreement shall be printed at Board expense and a copy given to each teacher. The District shall provide the Association with an electronic copy of this Agreement."

Explanation: This provision (Article XXIV, page 39) states that all ATA members should receive a printed copy of any new contract. In addition, the district must provide an electronic version, which is then posted on the ATA's web page. Members have not yet received their copy of the June 2012 contract agreement because some details of it were not finalized until this month. The agreement has finally been signed by both the ATA and the district and printed copies should be available by September.

PR Chair Ends Her Tenure With the ATA



Photo by Siouxzanne Harris

PR Chair Kristi Bogaczyk organized a fun day of mini-golf on June 1 to benefit the AEF.

The sun was shining and the temperatures soared as over 80 golfers attended

the ATA's 9th Annual Miniature Golf Outing to benefit the Arlington Education Foundation. The day was highlighted by food, crafts, raffles, door prizes and, of course, miniature golf! For the 9th year in a row, Raymond Opticians sponsored this event at the gold level and helped us raise over \$2,500 for educational grants in Arlington. Special thanks to the many ATA members who volunteered their time and to the AMS National Junior

Honor Society who also helped to make this event a success. It was a great way to

end the year!

As Public Relations Chairperson for many years now, I have been able to see, first hand, the generosity of our members. Over the years, we have raised over \$100,000 for various organizations throughout our community. From days spent cleaning the highway to countless donations in honor of great people and charities, it has been a sincere privilege to be a part of such an amazing group of people who work tirelessly for the benefit of others. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in this capacity. I am forever grateful for the time I have spent here, and for the opportunity to bear witness to the kindness and generosity our members practice each and every day. I am a better person for having been a part of this district and our amazing association. I truly hope that our paths meet again.

-Kristi Bogaczyk, PR Chair

Local Charity Recognizes ATA Members

On June 13 AMS teachers Kat Spinelli and Jessica Streck and AHS teacher Colleen Napora were recognized by Dutchess Outreach for all of their work over the past two years in aid of the organization.

Dutchess Outreach is a local organization that strives to meet the needs of low-income people. They rely on community volunteers to provide services such as distributing food to hungry families and providing clothes for children in need.

The Volunteer Recognition Awards reception took place at the Henry Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the FDR Library in Hyde Park. In addition to accepting plaques for serving as school captains in the district's Cram the Classroom project, the women each received Dutchess Outreach's Extra Mile award for their work getting donations and coordinating volunteers to serve meals at the Lunch Box, Dutchess Outreach's food pantry.

According to Carol Beck, Dutchess Outreach's Volunteer Administrator, "The Cram the Classroom drive couldn't have taken place at a better time. We had a difficult time keeping food on our food



Photo courtesy of Colleen Napora

AMS teachers Kat Spinelli (left) and Jessica Streck (right) and AHS teacher Colleen Napora (second from right) proudly display their awards along with Dutchess Outreach's Volunteer Administrator, Carol Beck.

pantry shelves to meet the increasing demand. Just last year the food pantry provided 84,582 meals for 4,371 people, in-

cluding 1,160 children from throughout Dutchess County. That is an increase of 9,315 from the previous year!"

Retirees Say Goodbye

The ATA's annual recognition dinner was held on Friday June 14 at Christos in Poughkeepsie. Fifteen June retirees were honored. Many more photos of the event can be found at www.arlingtonteachers.com.

All photos by Siouxzanne Harris

Andrew Arenson – 27 yrs with Arlington LaGrange Middle, Social Studies
Defend your profession from the corporate and political forces trying to manipulate it for their own self-interest. Get angry and active!

Jean Arnold – 8 yrs with Arlington Vail Farm, Special Education
This is my 30th year teaching overall. It has been my passion for all of these years and I can't believe that I get paid to do something I love. My special education students are the "cream of the crop" and the cream always rises to the top. Therefore, I am fortunate enough to teach an exceptional group of students. I will truly miss my students, our dedicated Vail Farm teachers, out talented teaching assistants, and the supportive administrators. It is time to start a new chapter with our six grandchildren and my wonderful, retired husband.

Susan Birchman – 15yrs with Arlington West Road, Music
It was wonderful to have the opportunity to teach something that is such a huge part of me - music!



Traver Road's Recognition Dinner attendees

Christine Dempsey – 14.5 yrs with Arlington Traver Road, 2nd Grade

ical than I might say there are just-as-good teachers in other places, but I can attest that there are none better . . . anywhere.



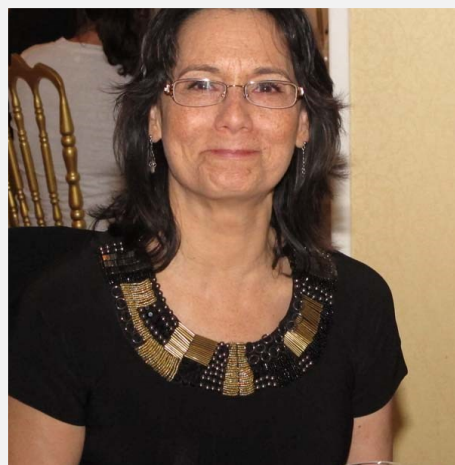
Karen Flaherty

Karen Flaherty – 19.5 yrs with Arlington Arlington Middle, Special Education
I have been fortunate to work with some of the best colleagues and I admire their talents, skills, dedication, perseverance, and compassion; they all show a warmth and love for their students and for teaching, and frankly, for each other. Someone more cyn-

Toni Forsythe – 39 yrs with Arlington LaGrange Middle, ELA/Social Studies
You have brains in your head./
You have feet in your shoes/ You can steer yourself/ any direction you choose./ You're on your own. And you know what you know./ And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go. -Dr. Seuss



Toni Forsythe



Christine Dempsey



Patrice Pettingill– 35 yrs with Arlington *Arlington High, Art*
I feel fortunate to have taught art for 35 years at Arlington. I leave this brave educational community with deep feelings of gratitude and pride. It has been an honor to share these years with so many dedicated and compassionate educators. Thank you Arlington.

Nancy Rifenburg– 29 yrs with Arlington *LaGrange Middle, Special Education*



Jan Wolff

that our schools need to be nurturing, child-centered learning environments - something that we were able to achieve in the past, but is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in today's political environment. However, Arlington educators have always been able to put the best interests of students first, and I have confidence that my colleagues will continue to fight to do just that. Always remember, tomorrow's democracy depends on today's education!

Nora Laffin

Betsy Knops- 32.5 yrs with Arlington *Union Vale Middle, Special Education*
We chose a unique and very gratifying profession. Don't let the aggravations and program changes make you lose sight of that. You are so important in the lives of the children you've been entrusted with; years from now they'll have forgotten about all of the testing, but they'll always remember your influence. Oh, and good luck with APPR!



Linda Robles

Linda Robles– 20.5 yrs with Arlington *Titusville, 5th Grade*
I am thankful for the years I have spent working with so many talented, dedicated teachers. I deeply believe

Teresa Valdes-Hebrank– 10 yrs with Arlington *Overlook, Speech/Language*

Jan Wolff– 8 yrs with Arlington *Arlington High, Home and Careers*



Veronica Lytle

Richard Krause– 18 yrs with Arlington *Arlington High, Special Education*

Nora Laffin– 18 yrs with Arlington *Vail Farm, Art*

Veronica Lytle– 17 yrs with Arlington *Arlington Middle, Psychologist/BOCES*



Arlington Middle School's Recognition Dinner attendees

2012—2013 ATA Officers

President

Bob Maier

First Vice-President

Greg Nieman

Second Vice-President

Steve Hertzog

Treasurer

Kathleen Blank Cicala

Chief Negotiator

Donna Doerrier

PR Committee Chair

Kristi Bogaczyk

Community Action Chairs

Betsy Marshall

Robert McHugh

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Media Specialist

Sam Falk

Éminence Grise Emeritus

Robert McHugh

Senior Building Representative

ASM — Johanna Pungello

BES — Anne Schillinger

NES — Elise Pattison

VFES — Pam Goetz

OPS — Anne Marie Beesmer

Traver — Siouxzanne Harris

JDWR — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Sue Ramsden

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@acsdny.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 Middle

AMS's music teachers led their students to victory at the Music in the Parks competition at Lake Com-pounce on May 31. Under the direction of Kimberly Handman the combined seventh and eighth grade orchestra received first place, as did the wind ensemble under the direction of Brian Fallis and the combined seventh and eighth grade chorus under Jodie McCaffrey. In addition, Michael Silless directed the concert band to a second place finish.

Arthur S. May

Physical Education teacher Chris Keenan was nominated for teacher of the year for the Taconic Region PTA. The recognition event was held May 29 at Villa Borghese. At the dinner Chris was presented with the Teacher of the Year award in honor of Helen Marchese. The award represents an individual's commitment to maintaining a positive working relationship between teacher, PTA, and families. Congratulations, Chris!

Teachers Anna Leigh and Kim Vallo will be launching their first ever Pre-K summer school in August, for which they received a PTA grant. The program will prepare incoming students for the rigorous year ahead.

During the month of April, ASM teachers, parents, and students read books online at WeGiveBooks.Org and earned 244 LeapFrog books for our first grade classes. It's a wonderful site for parents to read books online with their young children, supports early through independent

readers, and earns books for students in a wide variety of programs.
—Erica Dunn

LaGrange Middle

School psychologist Linda Dixon-Dziedzic co-authored a book coming out entitled *Education as a Tool of Empowerment*. Each chapter has assignments and practice activities to support learning objectives. Dixon-Dziedzic's chapter is "A Case Study of Empowerment in Middle School". LMS has been selected as a mentoring school through the National Mentoring Program in Dutchess County. Dixon-Dziedzic will be the mentee coordinator for the school. The purpose of the program is to improve advocacy and self-esteem for prospective students to attend college.

Noxon Elementary

Teachers Peggy Hansen and Elise Pattison competed as the ATA's team in the Literacy Connections Spelling Bee at Marist on May 29.

Arlington High

Math teachers Kerry Conway and Marissa Berryann, science teacher Tricia Muraco, and special education teacher Colleen Napora advised students organizing AHS's second annual Relay for Life event. The year-long planning process culminated in the 12 hour event at the high school track on June 15. In the end, they raised over \$44,000 for the American Cancer Society.



Many AHS faculty members helped to make the day a success at the Relay for Life event on June 15. The day's activities included teams walking around the track to raise money for cancer research and also many booths with activities for children.



The day began with a survivor's lap featuring AHS teachers Cindy Binnie (left) and Noreen Mills Martin (right) and long-time AHS substitute teacher John Jakobsen with his wife.

Photos by Colleen Napora

Rally Brings Thousands to Albany



Photo by Bob Maier



Photo by Bob Maier



Photo by Robert McHugh

I was one of the approximately 30 ATA members who attended the One Voice Rally in Albany on June 8 along with the thousands more who gathered. It was invigorating to stand shoulder to shoulder with so many others who are ready to proclaim, in one united voice, that they support public education and the teaching profession, and that they are determined to save both from those who seek to destroy them.

When the president of NYSUT, Dick Iannuzzi, began to address the crowd one of the first things he pointed out was a recent public statement made by State Education Commissioner John King who blamed our elected union officials for creating a "tense environment around assessments." King says that teachers are "concerned about being held accountable." So why would King put out a public statement so obviously and patently false? I believe it is because the public is beginning to understand that 10 years of failed education policy under NCLB and RTTT are not improving the education that our children are receiving. They are beginning to see that the only beneficiaries from 10 years of standardized testing are the testing industry, and perhaps those politicians receiving campaign contributions from business interests that want to keep public money flowing into their private coffers.

The keynote speaker at the rally was John Nichols who regularly writes for *The Nation* and often appears on the Ed Schultz Show on MSNBC. He said, "The current struggle to save public education is nothing less than a struggle to save our democracy in the United States." I agree with him. When the dollar becomes more powerful than the vote, and corporations can buy public policy and corrupt the political process, it is only through public education that students will learn the ways in which money destroys democracy. I am glad I attended the Rally on June 8. I hope to see 10 times as many defenders of public education at the next one.

-Betsy Marshall,
CAC Committee Co-Chair

Dates to Remember



JUNE

22nd—High School Graduation, 6 p.m., Dutchess Stadium

24th—ATA Night at the Renegades, 5:30 p.m., Dutchess Stadium

25th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO

25th-27th—NYSUT Leadership Conference, Cooperstown



2013-2014 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SCHEDULE

September 17

October 15

November 19

December (no meeting)

January 21

February 25

March 18

April 22

May 13

June 10



All meetings are at 4 p.m. in room 1432 at AHS

Announcements

**Thank you to the ATA's Communications Committee
for all of their help with *The Educator* this year!**

Amanda Sosnick - AMS

Erica Dunn - ASM

Anne Schillinger - BES

Betsy Marshall - JDWR

Dana Newsom - LMS

Elise Pattison - NOX

Anne Beesmer - OPS

Sue Ramsden - TIS

Tara Paradise Dwyer - TRS

Lori Mandy - VF

**Volunteers are needed to serve
dinner at the Lunch Box in
Poughkeepsie from 4 - 6 p.m. on
July 8 and 12 and August 9 and
12. Contact Colleen Napora at
AHS to sign up.**

**Stay in touch over the summer!
Like us on Facebook
or check out
www.arlingtonteachers.com for
forms, photos, calendars, and
more.**