



THE CENTRAL NEW YORKER

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K-12 schools are underfunded for both special and general education students

By Lynn Davis, RC 7 member and Web Master

This letter was written in response to a commentary printed in the local newspaper which claimed that the educational system is unsuccessful in working with disabled students. This letter details why this is happening.

The main answer is money. In 2018-19, school districts in New York state spent around \$51 billion dollars on K-12 education. Almost one-third of that money went to special education; \$15.8 billion was spent on around 490,000 special education students, while around \$35.5 billion was spent on 2.7 million general education students.

The average per pupil expenditure for general education students was \$13,367, while the average per pupil expenditure for special education students was \$32,359.

NYS spends an asymmetrical amount on special education. While it would certainly be valuable to increase special education funding, there is only so much money collected in taxes. To increase special education funding, it would most likely come at the expense of the money spent on general education.

This begs the question, is the funding for general education adequate? The answer to that is no, it is not. One goal of New York state K-12 general education is to get students to successfully pass a minimum number of 22 classes/credits and pass six Regents Exams to receive their diploma. While this is a lofty goal, it takes money and instructional time to make it possible. It's expensive to offer and fund this level of general education.

These lofty general education requirements would be fine if all the students were going on to college. However, across the United States, only around 70% of high school graduates go to college. Worse, the overall [dropout rate](#) for undergraduate college students is 40%. (Ironically, 30% of the dropout rate comes from college freshman dropping out before their sophomore year.) Based on those figures, it appears that the K-12 education requirements are not getting all general education students' college ready. (Or, perhaps, colleges have unrealistic expectations of their incoming freshmen — but that's a totally different discussion.)

While many students will not attend and/or graduate from college, neither are school districts getting general education kids ready to be carpenters, plumbers, auto mechanics, etc. Why is that?

Again, a big part of the answer is money. School districts would have to spend a lot of money to set up and maintain a state-of-the-art auto repair shop in their schools and hire the appropriate state-certified instructors. Districts would have to do the same to offer courses in plumbing, carpentry, electrical work, construction, etc. Districts do not do this, yet roughly 58% of their students either never go to college — or go but don't graduate. Obviously, many of that 58% would benefit from those non-college courses.

Special education suffers from the same lack of funding as general education, and for essentially the same reasons. School districts don't have the resources to offer the courses and hire all the experts needed to meet the individual needs of each special education student.

Readers should not have a knee-jerk reaction to these numbers and place blame on the individual school districts. They can only spend the money given to them by the state or voted on by the local taxpayers. While school districts would love to give all students an individualized education program designed to enhance each child's specific talents, the reality is that society is not yet ready, willing, and able to pay the price.

2021 – 2022 MEETINGS

December 14 – Bellevue CC, Syracuse
See reservation form on page 3.

March 15 – TBD May 17 – TBD

April 19 – TBD June 21 – TBD

As a NYSUT retiree from a school in *Cayuga and Onondaga Counties*, you became a part of Retiree Council (RC) 7 of NYSUT. Through this group and your local chapter (if your local has one), you can stay informed and active as a union member and ensure your benefits are protected in retirement.

NYSUT has one of the most active and successful union retiree programs in the country. The NYSUT Retiree Services Program, part of Program Services, was established by NYSUT to help its retirees organize and to act as a service provider for those retiree groups. You can find additional information at NYSUT.org or this link: <https://www.nysut.org/members/retirees>

Make sure your information is up-to-date with NYSUT and RC 7. If you have a new address, phone number, or email address, please email AnneMarie.Voutsinas@nysut.org or leave a message at 315-431-4040 ext. 40.

RC 7 members who are in Florida for part of the year or all year can partake in Florida events. Contact Judith.Kalb@nysut.org for more information!



From the President's Desk...

Loretta K. Donlon

This issue of The Central New Yorker has a guest columnist, our RC 7 Immediate Past President, Margo Buckingham. Margo also serves as one of our delegates and is a representative to the NYSUT Retiree Advisory Committee. I would also like to take a moment to remember Allene Ayling, a retiree from North Syracuse, who served as the RC 7 President prior to Margo. May she, and all of our deceased members, rest in peace.

Happy Anniversary - sort of. In 1991, the Representative Assembly passed an amendment to NYSUT's Constitution that provided prepaid retiree membership along with full participation, voting rights and a more formalized structure. That was the birth of Retiree Councils, and this year marks the 30th anniversary. Central New York's retiree group, however, got started well ahead of that. In 1982, Bob Doyle, an NSEA retiree and longtime member of RC 7's Executive Board, and Dave Grose from STA started contacting and gathering retirees from districts around the NYSUT Election District 7 area. They met monthly at the Syracuse Teachers Association offices. Bob and Dave were also part of NYSUT's Retiree Organizing Committee, a statewide group, and in those meetings they "unabashedly picked the brains" of others who were even further ahead in organizing retirees. It was a year before they finally wrote a Constitution and elected officers. It is that group of early Central New York retiree leaders that you see in the photo at the top of RC 7's web page.

Today, Retiree Councils are a structural part of NYSUT. (Chapters are part of their locals.) We have Councils that cover the state, higher ed, and even Florida. We have three large-area directors (Loretta Donlon is our ED 51 Director) and one At-Large, all of whom sit on the NYSUT Board. Each Retiree Council has RA Delegates (ours are Loretta, Candy Johnson and Margo Buckingham) who have complete voting rights at the Representative Assembly where NYSUT policy is determined. They also attend area meetings with in-service delegates. Your voice and your issues are out there in many ways.

As members of Retiree Council 7, you are part of a strong group with a proud heritage. Congratulations to us all!

Have You Sent in Your Participation Fee?

Active membership in Retiree Council 7 is open to every NYSUT retiree of any NYSUT represented group in Election District 7. ED 7 is comprised of all units in Cayuga and Onondaga counties. Active members are those who have paid RC 7's participation fee of \$10 per year and, if required by the local, payment of local retiree fees. **Associate membership** is open to the spouses of active members.

One important note: If you are retired from Jordan-Elbridge, Liverpool, North Syracuse, Port Byron, or Syracuse City, your RC 7 participation fee is collected with the dues for your local retiree chapter and then forwarded to us. You should not use the form here or mail dues directly to us. This is a change from previous years. Participation fees are accepted at any time. However, **to be able to nominate your child or grandchild for one of our June 2022 scholarships you must pay your participation fee by December 31, 2021.**

Retiree Council 7 Membership Form 2021 - 2022

Name _____

Address _____

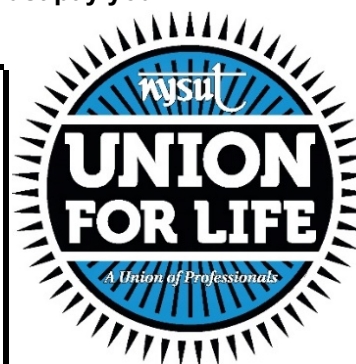
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

District retired from _____

Position _____



At the time of this publication, there is still uncertainty as to holding our in-person meetings. Events may change due to current conditions. If we must cancel an event upon directive of NYS, Onondaga County, or NYSUT, checks received will be shredded. It is critical that we have your email on file. Check our website and facebook page for updated info.

Please mail membership form with your \$10.00 check payable to **NYSUT RC 7** to:
 RC 7 Membership Chair NYSUT Regional Office
 4983 Brittonfield Pkwy E. Syracuse, NY 13057

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NYSUT, AFT, NEA, AFL-CIO

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Loretta Donlon, ED 51 Director

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Join Us on **Tuesday, December 14, 2021**, for the RC 7 Luncheon at
Bellevue Country Club, 1901 Glenwood Ave., Syracuse
 \$28 per person

Registration @ 11:30 • Meeting @ Noon • Lunch @ 12:30 • Program after Lunch

TRIO PRESTO, a local group of flutists, will provide entertainment.

Entrée Choices:

- Pan Roasted Tilapia** with tomato relish and rice pilaf
 - Chicken Breast** with artichoke hearts, tomatoes, lemon, and whipped potatoes
 - Roast Pork Loin** with cider reduction and whipped potatoes
- All entrees include garden salad, seasonal vegetables, dessert, coffee, tea, and water.

Directions: Bellevue Country Club is located near the intersection of Bellevue Ave., Glenwood Ave., and Velasko Road. From Syracuse, take 690W to Geddes St. Turn left and continue on Geddes to Bellevue Ave. Take a right onto Bellevue and a left onto Glenwood. The restaurant is on the left. From the Auburn, take Rte. 20 E to Skaneateles, turn left on Rte. 321N to Old Seneca Tnpke. Turn right - the road becomes Rte. 175. Turn left on Velasko Rd. and follow the directions from Syracuse.

IF YOU REQUIRE PARKING ASSISTANCE, PLEASE INDICATE ON FORM.

Reservation Form RC 7 Luncheon - December 14, Bellevue Country Club

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

If you require any device or accommodation as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or need a dietary accommodation, please contact Mary Hanus at mary.hanus@gmail.com.

Please indicate entrée choice below. If including multiple reservations, indicate names clearly next to meal choice.

_____ Tilapia _____ Chicken _____ Pork

Number of reservations _____ at \$28. Amount enclosed \$ _____ Check # _____ Cash _____

If you need Parking Assistance, please indicate here: _____

Please send reservation form and a check payable to **NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 7** to:
RC7 Luncheon Chair, NYSUT Regional Office, 4983 Brittonfield Parkway, E. Syracuse, NY 13057
Reservations must be received by December 5. No one can be seated without a reservation.

**SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE OBSERVED.
 MASKS COVERING NOSE AND MOUTH MUST BE WORN (EXCEPT WHEN EATING OR DRINKING).**

We Remember Fondly ...

Baldwinsville

Diane Canino
 William Walser Jr.

Jamesville-Dewitt

Patricia Silverman

West Genesee

Robert Amerman
 Curtis Finney
 Ronald Holmes
 Valerie Koll
 Glen Rheaume, Jr.
 Suzanne Schiller

Liverpool

Rose Dodd.
 Thomas Gangemi
 Sandra Kline
 Evelyn LeFever
 Catherine McMaster
 Raymond Rivers

East Syracuse-Minoa

Catherine Michlovitch

Jordan Elbridge

William Hanley
 Carolyn Smith

North Syracuse

Allene Ayling
 Ronald Damon.
 Betty Grimble
 Evelyn Komaneky
 Jean Morin
 Carolyn Rogers
 Dolores Jones Tanner + L'pool
 Victoria Sinay
 Marilyn White

Fayetteville-Manlius

Carol Reed + OCM
 Evelyn Sherman

Tully

Kenneth Schwenn

Syracuse

Mary Abbott
 Daniel Bronchetti
 Sonia Buck
 Maralyn Coughlin
 Jessie Casavant
 Rose Epolito
 Mildred Ford-Perry
 Amy Landes
 Patsy Marra
 Anne O'Malley
 Jeanette Picciotto
 Clary Robinson
 Stephen Strough
 Patrick Vacca
 Barbara Varre
 Urla Zoll

Skaneateles

Karlene Bart Miller

CO BOCES

Frank Skardinski

Marcellus

Barbara Ryan

Moravia

Alyce Joy Wilcox

OCC.

Hugh Bellen

Onondaga

Anne Barry
 Wilma Nash

Union Springs

Mary Erickson

Weedsport

Julia Henderson

OCM BOCES

Cynthia Baker

Westhill

John Pappalau

Please Note:

Our newsletter is posted on the RC 7 Website before it is printed and mailed from NYSUT Headquarters.

Be sure to check the site for luncheon information and avoid sending in a late reservation due to unexpected printing and/or mailing delays.

Check out all your union membership has to offer!

Legal Service Plan

Plan benefits include:

- Crucial estate planning documents (a Simple Will, Health Care Proxy, Living Will & Durable Power of Attorney)
- Free telephone consultations
- Guaranteed maximum fees for specific legal matters

Financial Counseling Program

Plan benefits include:

- Unbiased objective advice
- Free telephone and virtual consultations
- Assistance with retirement planning, 403(b) savings, college savings, tax planning and more

NYSUT Member Benefits

Every Dollar Counts!

These are just two of the dozens of endorsed programs & services available to union members and their families.

Whether it's insurance products, financial or legal services, or discounts, shopping or travel, NYSUT Member Benefits offers numerous programs that can help you save time and money while protecting those you care about most. Many of these programs can be purchased through payroll or pension deduction for greater convenience and savings opportunities.

Member Benefits also provides the advocacy role that is so important should an issue or concern arise. We encourage you to take the time to explore the Member Benefits website to find out how we can help you make every dollar count!



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,
visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org
or calling 800-626-8101.



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

Nov/Dec 2021