

## UTS LATEST NEWS

The following are highlights from the UTS monthly meetings. Full minutes are posted at [seafordteachers.com](http://seafordteachers.com):

### November Highlights

- Our retirement delegate, Laura Liepa, came to share information she received at the NYSTRS conference. Curtis will post the links to the slideshows on the UTS website.

- There was a discussion at the Central TAC meeting about having outside vendors in the faculty rooms. If any building has a problem with having the representatives present, please bring



the issue up on building level TAC.

- There was an email sent to the entire membership asking to see who was interested in home instructing. The executive board feels that the job should be offered to the student's teacher first followed by an email to the entire district. Many teachers hold multiple certifications and may be interested in tutoring students that are not in their current building.

- There was a discussion about the results of the 1 to 1 conversations that took place. There was a lot of positive feedback about organizing social events, being able to talk off the record, and receiving help with professional development. There were concerns about large SSC class size, curriculum at the elementary level, and a lack of direction from administration.

- Margaret signed an MOA that will place the missing stipends (MS Robotics and Woodwind Ensemble) into the contract.

- Dianne made a motion to donate \$300 to the Wellness Council for the Hot Chocolate Run; all were in favor.

### October Highlights

- Linda made a motion to appoint Sue Bennett as the Internal PAC and Ed Kent as the External PAC; all were in favor.

- Laura made a motion to appoint Wendy Maddalena (HS), Barbara Sherwin (MS), Jeannie Aplustille (Manor), and Tara Flood (Harbor) as the PR Team; all were in favor.

- The UTS donated a gift card and two t-shirts that were raffled off at a recent ARTS luncheon.

- Thank you to everyone that walked and donated to the Making Strides for Breast Cancer walk.

- Faculty meetings, conference day, department meetings, and grade level meetings will still count towards the required professional development hours.

- Matt made a motion to make a \$250 donation to the Foundation for Fighting Blindness; all were in favor.

### September Highlights

- On October 29th, there will be a NYSUT leadership conference at



Teachers came together for Homecoming – Let's Go VIKINGS!!!!

the Huntington Hilton to replace Gurneys. NYSUT is allowing 6 members and 2 new members (less 5 years in the district and not holding an officer position) to attend the conference. At this time, Margaret, Dan, and Maura would like to attend the conference. We can wait until after building rep elections to determine the remaining 3 spots.

- A digital version of the newsletter will be distributed by email and a print version will be available by request. The PR team will help solicit information from their buildings. There will be 4 newsletters throughout school year.

- The High School library is now open until 3:30 and is being monitored by an aide. At the Middle School, there is a teacher on duty when the library is open after school.

- There is a concern about receiving end of the year evaluations from the previous school year on the first day of school. Teachers feel that if there was an issue, they would like to receive the evaluation over the summer so that they may address it as soon as possible.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A wonderful holiday to all and a happy, healthy New Year!

As we approach the start of 2017, we are provided an opportunity to look back on what this current school year has brought us so far.

We started the school year with many new teachers in our midst. I'm sure many of us miss our colleagues who were lucky enough to retire this past June, but we also welcomed with open arms our newest members.

The fall provided our members the opportunity to participate in a number of events and activities that were enjoyable, but also served as great public relations for the UTS. In Sept., we had a great turn out for Seaford's annual Homecoming parade. Veteran teachers, new members and retirees marched together to show our support for our Seaford students and the Seaford community. In October, a number of UTS members participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk at Jones Beach. It was a great day to walk the boardwalk and to raise money for a very important cause. In November, we celebrated School Related Professionals Recognition Day by gifting some of the staff members whom we work so closely with every day. Aides, security guards, secretaries, custodial staff, food service workers, and bus drivers all provide important services for both our students and our members. We received much positive feedback from the people who we recognized on this day. And although it's 'nice to be nice,' building coalitions with our brothers and sisters in these other bargaining units can only serve to strengthen support for the UTS in the school district and the community. We also had our second general membership meeting in November. Approximately 50% of our membership attended to start the discussion on upcoming negotiations.

In an effort to engage our members, we will hold a number of social events throughout the year. On Sept. 16th we kicked off the school year and our Union Buddies program with a happy

hour at McCann's. Members from all four buildings enjoyed a relaxing Friday afternoon, chatting and getting to know each other better. More recently, on Dec. 2nd, our PR/Event Planning Committee organized a pre-holiday happy hour at Boss Croker's. Again, members from all four buildings were able to spend some downtime, mingling and unwinding after a busy week. Our next event will be a bowling outing sometime in late January. We're hoping to continue to provide opportunities to further engage all of our members and build unity within our local.

On a more serious note with regard to union business, we recently worked with our chair people and administrators to negotiate a settlement involving the case in civil court brought by the district in response to two PERB (Public Employment Relations Board) rulings in our favor which determined that the district's elimination of twelve chair positions always held by UTS members was indeed an improper labor practice. In settling the case before oral arguments were heard, we solidified the final PERB ruling as the standing determination. This ensures that the district will not be able to, in the future, arbitrarily eliminate those positions again. In addition, the members who were in the positions that were eliminated will receive monetary compensation for wages lost during the time period they were out of the positions. Another outcome of the settlement will be that the district will work with the UTS to review and perhaps update the duties and responsibilities of these positions, a task which both sides deem as necessary.

On the national front, there are two issues, which have potential to have a major impact on the teaching profession and labor unions in general. The appointment of Betsey DeVos as Secretary of Education may very well have a disastrous effect on efforts to strengthen public education in

the U.S. DeVos is a 'school choice,' aka charter school, advocate. As such, she believes in using public-tax money for vouchers that would enable students to attend unregulated charter schools. In addition, Ms. DeVos has no experience as an educator. American Federation of Teachers President, Randi Weingarten, issued the following statement on the AFT website: "The President-Elect, in his selection of Betsy DeVos, has chosen the most ideological, anti-public education nominee put forward since President Carter created a cabinet-level Department of Education." "In nominating DeVos, Trump makes it loud and clear that his education policy will focus on privatizing, defunding and destroying education in America."

The other issue looming large on the horizon is the possibility of a Constitutional Convention being convened in 2017. In the Nov. 2017 election, there will be a question on the ballot, which will read, "Shall there be a convention to re- vise the constitution and amend same?" Our state constitution establishes the fundamental rights you enjoy as a citizen of New York state and as a public employee, including: guaranteeing the right to a free, public education, prohibiting reductions in public pension benefits and the right to be a member of a union and to bargain collectively, to name a few. The convening of a constitutional convention opens the door to allow the state constitution to be modified and puts these rights and many more in jeopardy.

As we move toward a new year, my thanks and appreciation go out to all of you for the amazing work you do for the students of Seaford each and every day. Let's keep up the good work and make 2017 a great year!

Yours in unity,  
*Margaret Glancy*

## EDUCATION NEWS

# NYSED: No Changes To Grades 3-8 ELA & Math Tests in 2017 or 2018



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 14, 2016

After thorough review and careful consideration by State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia, Chancellor Betty A. Rosa, Vice Chancellor T. Andrew Brown and members of the Board of Regents, the Department will keep the grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics tests at three sessions for the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years, Commissioner Elia announced today.

"I have always said that state assessments must be diagnostic, valid, and reliable – and they must provide timely and practical information to teachers, administrators and parents," said Board of Regents Chancellor Betty A. Rosa. "Maintaining the current testing for now will allow us to measure student development over time in these areas. While we will consider moving to two-day tests for 2019, we will also examine the possibility of adding multiple measures of student achievement into the assessments."

"After listening to the concerns and feedback from countless educators and parents, last year we made significant changes to the ELA and math tests to reduce the pressure for children and provide educators with more information about the tests than ever before," Commissioner Elia said. "While we closely examined shortening the testing days based on this feedback, our expert analysis determined it would not be feasible to do that and still be able to have meaningful growth comparisons for students, schools or statewide. We will reexamine shortening the testing days as part of designing the tests for the state's new learning standards."

NYSED, in close collaboration with its assessment contractor Questar, and its assessment Technical Advisory Committee, engaged in a thorough

review into the feasibility of modifying the tests to a two-session design.

This review found that making such a substantial change to the test design of modifying the length of the test to two sessions from three sessions would have rendered it inappropriate to make longitudinal student growth comparisons of the test results at the school, district or statewide level. Therefore, the 2017 tests could not be used to make comparisons to test results from prior years in order to gauge how our students are progressing. Maintaining the current three-session testing cycle will provide important three-year trend data on student performance at the school, district and state levels as well as help determine the growth of individual students.



NYSED will implement new Grades 3-8 tests in 2019 aligned to the content standards resulting from the standards revisions process that is currently underway and will revisit shortening the tests at that time. These new tests will be developed with substantive input from educators across the state and the design will be optimally suited to measure these new New York State learning standards.11/15/16 UPDATE:

The State Education Department, in close collaboration with its assessment contractor, Questar, the assess-

ment Technical Advisory Committee and Board leadership, engaged in a thorough review of the feasibility of modifying the grades 3-8 state assessments to a two-session design for 2017. We determined that making such a substantial change to the test design would make longitudinal comparisons of test results inappropriate at the school, district and statewide levels.

For these reasons, the spring 2017 assessments will not have any significant changes but will retain the significant changes made to the 2016 assessments. However, given the recent events of the past month and our discussions at the Regents meeting yesterday, we are making no decisions right now about the 2018 assessments. At this time there

is uncertainty, and opportunities may emerge with a new administration in Washington. In fact, there are indications that the new administration may provide further flexibility to the states. We want to maintain the ability to gather all of the facts before making any determinations for 2018.

The 2017 assessments will reflect the significant changes incorporated in the 2016 assessments. We will revisit the structure of the 2018 assessments at a later time.

[-NYSUT.org](http://NYSUT.org)

## SCHOOL SPIRIT

Teachers at Seaford MS showed their support in the fight against breast cancer by wearing pink on October 14th.



Seaford Manor Annual Autumn Classic- teachers-staff-students and administration all participate in this annual fitness challenge- special thanks to Mrs. Dunne and Mr. Botti for organizing this great event.



Harbor teachers started a new tradition.....Holiday Buns! Everyone's in the Halloween spirit rocking their spider buns!



Reading teacher, Regina Weber and her son are heating up the track with a jog and some hot cocoa.

Harbor faculty, Regina Weber, Sharon Venticinque, and Jen Walsh, are 'warming up' at the Hot Chocolate Run.

## MEMBER NEWS

There is a new club at the Middle School - the Culture Club! Each month, the club focuses on a different culture to highlight. The participation in the new club is great and it gives students an opportunity to share their culture as well!

Melanie Levy-Roberts - LOTE Teacher is the advisor.

## Want to submit UTS member news?

Write a paragraph description and email to [ctripoli@mail.seaford.k12.ny.us](mailto:ctripoli@mail.seaford.k12.ny.us).

Please only include photos of UTS members.



Class 2-1 did Bottle Flipping to enhance their study of Liquids and Water Levels



## UTS Trust Fund

For information regarding Dental Benefits, Optical and Major Medical reimbursements and Legal Benefits please visit the UTS website ([www.seafordteachers.com](http://www.seafordteachers.com)).

**Danielle Alveari:**  
*Chairperson and Middle School Representative*

**MaryLou Christensen:**  
*Treasurer and Middle School Representative*

**Susan Bennett:**  
*Secretary and High School Representative*

**Ann Marie Motisi:**  
*Manor School Representative*

**Jessica Koudelka:**  
*Harbor School Representative*

## ARTS (Association of Retired Teachers)

The Association of Retired Teachers of Seaford, known as A.R.T.S., meets twice a year for luncheon meetings. It provides an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new friends. We have enjoyed each other's company at L.I. Islander games, theater outings and dinner cruises. Twice a year we publish a newsletter for our retired members.

Each year the A.R.T.S. grants a scholarship of \$500 to a graduating Seaford senior who will enter the field of teaching. We also grant a \$50 recognition award to two Seaford Middle School students and we make a yearly donation to the Seaford Patriot Dinner as well as a contribution to the Seaford Scholarship Fund in memory of deceased members.

A.R.T.S. has provided a means to stay in touch with those who were a part of our lives in Seaford for so many years. We look forward to increasing our ranks as more UTS members complete their service to the Seaford School District and enter the wonderful world of retirement.