



Northeastern PTA News

Volume 9, Issue 3 March 2010

Questions/Comments:

Contact Newsletter Chair,
Tracy Ahtila (518) 456-0971

A NOTE FROM YOUR REGION DIRECTOR...PENNY HOLLISTER

As we proceed into the school year there are a few things that we need to keep in mind.

- - This year even more than in years past it behooves us all to be active participants in the budget process in your school districts. Educate yourselves on the budget process and pay attention to your districts work on the budget. There will be many difficult decisions to be made, make sure that your voice is heard on behalf of all children. Take time to contact your legislatures so that they understand how important school funding is to you as well. Remember it is the squeaky wheel that gets attention.

- - As materials for this issue of the Northeastern PTA News were being prepared, I along with other members of the Region Board and delegates from Northeastern and other Regions attended the NYS PTA Legislation/Education Conference. Look for a report on the Conference in the next issue.

- - As you form your nominating committees and they prepare to select a slate of officers for the coming year I want to remind you that this is not a popularity contest. Look around your unit for the people that are most qualified to move your unit forward in the coming year.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Units should be preparing to **ELECT** their nominating committee at this time of year. Now is a good time to take out those Bylaws and check the expiration date and the how and when of nominations and elections. Your Bylaws are not a secret document; all members of your Executive Board should have a copy. If you have any questions please call your Associate Director.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership numbers are still down. Please make sure that all of your payments have been made. The NYS PTA Office has sent out the Membership Card notices. When you receive it please check it carefully and get in touch with Mary Ann Chesky at cheskyfam@aol.com or 382-1962 if you have any questions.

BYLAWS

Now is a good time to take out your Bylaws and check the expiration date. If your Bylaws have expired or will expire anytime in the next 6 months now is the time to get started on the process. Please note that if your Bylaws are expired your requests for NYS PTA Awards **will not** be processed. If you need a pattern or have any questions about your Bylaws please contact Melissa Snow at melsnow@mhicable.com or 966-5970.

HELP WANTED

What makes a good leader? Some would say that good leaders must have courage and loyalty, understanding, initiative, vision, and a good sense of humor.

Attached to this newsletter is a very important flyer for Help Wanted. I am seeking recommendations for the Northeastern Region Board for the 2010-2011 school year. I encourage you to check any and all Areas of Interest that you are interested in. Please return to me by May 1st by way of fax 499-0611 or email pennyhollister@wildblue.net or northeasternrd@nyspta.org.



AWARDS

Please keep in mind the many wonderful awards we offer. All of the Region awards can be found on the Northeastern Website.

Award : **Postmarked By:** **Send To:**

Northeastern Region Newsletter Award
March 31
Northeastern Region Director

Jane Skrzypek Leadership Award
June 15
Northeastern Region Director

PARP Award
June 15
Northeastern Region Director

Richard Gazzola Teacher Fellowship Award
June 21
Northeastern Region Director

Cindi Zagorski Memorial Teacher Award
June 30
Northeastern Region Director

Outstanding Youth Award
June 30
Northeastern Region Director

Award Opportunities

The following awards are a great way to honor your unit volunteers and do not have deadlines.

- NYS PTA ACT Award
- NYS PTA Advocate in Action Award
- NYS PTA Diamond Award
- NYS PTA Honorary Life Membership Award
- NYS PTA Distinguished Service Award
- National PTA Life Achievement Award

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINE REMINDERS

-- March is PTA Advocacy Month!

The NYS PTA has a two-fold campaign: **a letter/postcard writing initiative and a Virtual Lobby Day.** The letters and postcards were furnished for you in the last unit/council mailing that your President received in February. Please see your President to get copies of these letters and postcards and start writing to your representatives in Albany.

--VIRTUAL LOBBY DAY is Wednesday, March 17th. Please call, email and/or fax your legislatures. Tell them you support full funding for public schools and want to see changes in the funding and accountability of charter schools! They need to hear your voice and thousands of others to ensure our message is heard. PARTICIPATION IS THE KEY!

-- Northeastern Region School Board Brunch on Saturday, March 20, 2010 at Longfellow's in Saratoga Springs, New York. Information on this event is included in this newsletter and is also available on our website.

--Reflections Reception will be held on Thursday, April 29th in Ballston Spa. Presidents will be receiving the finalized details for the Reception by April 1st. Effective immediately Karen Parlapiano will be taking over and finishing up the Reflections Program for this year. If you or anyone you know would be interested in taking on this Chairmanship for the next school year please get in touch with me.

--Northeastern Spring Conference is being held on Thursday, May 20th at the Gowana Middle School in the Shenendehowa Central School District. Registration information will be provided at a later date. Please mark your calendars for this very important and rewarding Conference.

--Summer Leadership Conference – will be held July 30-August 1 in Utica at Utica College. Mark your calendars and watch for more exciting details to follow.

In closing, please don't hesitate to contact me whether it pertains to an issue that you need guidance on or just to chat.

We must remember that we are all working for every child, one voice. We must advocate for all children and follow the NYS PTA Beliefs, NYS PTA Mission Statement and NYS PTA Vision Statement.

Penny Hollister,
Northeastern Region Director

P/F (518) 499-0611
northeasternrd@nyspta.org



ASPERGER'S SYNDROME
ADVOCACY GROUP OF
SCHENECTADY

c/o 1752 Eastern Parkway

Schenectady, NY 12309

aspergeradvocacy@aol.com



Mission Statement

The Asperger's Syndrome Advocacy Group of Schenectady is an organization dedicated to increasing knowledge and understanding of Asperger's Syndrome and other disabilities as they impact education. We envision a partnership with the Schenectady City School District in an effort to employ quality programs, share resources, and develop state of the art services in education. We embrace parents partnering with schools to reach, nurture, and educate our children.

Please know that we have spread much farther than Schenectady....we are about 80 families strong from 10 surrounding school districts. And we also have members with children who have disabilities other than Autism. What we share in common is the love and the desire for quality of life for our children. We have found that other parents are the best critics of programs, books, research, and professionals in the field. So, if you are interested in asking questions, and/or reading what goes between members, honest/frank opinions, and many times enjoying a much needed laugh we're the group for you.

Hope to hear from you again.

Lynn Goliber

One initiative of this group has been to develop an electronic mail (e-mail) network of parents, educators, service providers, and interested community members. The network shares information on conferences, training opportunities, and best practices for parenting and educating school-age children with disabilities such as Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD, and traumatic brain injury. We have mailing lists that connect parents and teachers within individual school districts in the region, and a general mailing list that includes interested people across school districts.

Please be assured that we do not share materials that are irrelevant to our mission such as jokes, political or religious statements. All participants share the goal of promoting appropriate educational services for all children. Individuals can join our network by sending email to aspergeradvocacy@aol.com that includes their name, email address, and school district, and, if desired, the age, gender, school attended and disability of the student in whose education they are involved.

Rena Hurley,
Special Education Chair

hurls500@aol.com



Do you hear what I hear?

Take this direction given by a teacher to her 7th grade History class:

“Open your history books to page 22 and do the even questions.”

Pretty clear, right?

Well, inside the brain of a student who has auditory processing difficulties, it may sound something like this...

“Pen your mystery books to page 32 and do the seven questions.”

While this seems far-fetched, it's actually happening to 20-30% of school-aged students every day!

While this 20-30% of students can hear what the teacher is saying, they may not be processing those sounds correctly as shown in the above examples.

The basic difference between hearing and auditory processing is this:

Hearing is the ears ability to hear certain sounds and frequencies while **auditory processing** is the system that allows those sounds and frequencies to be heard and processed efficiently and correctly.

Just as vision problems affect academics, so does auditory problems. Unfortunately, auditory processing difficulties directly impact academics, but there is little to no help in changing the difficulty within the school setting because the reasons stem from the underlying learning skills and not academic skills, which is what schools are directed to address.

Parents and educators must become educated in what auditory processing disorder is and how it can be addressed in and out of the classroom.

As a starting point, below is a symptom list that can be shared with both parents and educators.

It's important to note that these are just symptoms and do not in any way reflect on a students intelligence. If three or more of these are seen, however, help should be sought to assess and to address potential future struggles.

- * Says 'Huh' or 'What' more than five times per day
- * Poor listening skills
- * Has trouble paying attention to and remembering information presented orally
- * Has problems carrying out multi-step directions
- * Needs more time to process information
- * Has low academic performance
- * Has behavior problems
- * Has language difficulty (e.g., they confuse syllable sequences and have problems developing vocabulary and understanding language)
- * Has difficulty with phonics, reading, comprehension, spelling, and vocabulary
- * Has excessively strong reactions – or virtually none at all – to loud or unusual noises

- * Not speaking as well as other same-age children
- * Seems to ignore you when you call his name although you know he can hear
- * Has a significant history of ear infections as a toddler
- * Covers his ears frequently to block out sound – or for no apparent reason
- * Seems uncomfortable or distracted in a group or busy room
- * Reacts to sounds you don't hear – or react to them long before you hear them
- * Has an unusually high or low voice volume
- * Often asks others to repeat what they have said

Now that we've seen what auditory processing difficulties look like, so what should parents do to get help?

First, they should let their child's teacher know so that the school can begin making accommodations to begin relieving those struggles in the classroom. This may include moving the student's seat closer to the front of the classroom and providing written notes/directions. It's important to remember, however, that these are just accommodations and while they may help in the short term, they will not fix the problem.

The next step for parents is to seek out professionals with knowledge of auditory processing struggles who provide programs to fix the causes at the root.

This usually isn't found in pediatrician/audiologist/occupational/physical therapist offices or even through a tutor. To begin eliminating the child's struggles, auditory stimulation is needed. A learning skills specialist trained in this area will be able to sit with you to help determine the specific areas of the auditory system that need help and will work with families to develop a comprehensive program that should include therapeutic music and sound training for the struggling student. And don't forget to ask for a list of other families who've worked with the program and trainer!

And last, parents should follow the auditory training program as prescribed.

An effective program requires 1-2 hours per week of one-on-one work with a clinician with home training taking place 5-6 days per week and should include a variety of 6-8 therapeutic CD's that will span 4-5 months.

A program like described above, allows for the intensive, repetitive auditory training that will begin to change what and how your daughter hears. Other areas seeing noticeable improvements include: attention, focus/concentration, behavior, motivation, self-confidence/self-esteem, independent homework, relationships, etc.

Finally, it is important for parents not to lose hope! There is help for their struggling student!

Pamela Grandin is owner and Director of Hunter Learning Solutions LLC located in Ballston Spa, New York. Since 2001, she has been helping children address and fix the causes of learning struggles including auditory processing difficulties. She has developed an Auditory/Visual Processing Simulation Seminar that helps parents, educators and professionals feel what it's like to struggle with these disorders. In 2005, she also helped co-develop a combination movement/auditory stimulation program that has been used as a template for similar programs in other states, including California. For additional information about their services, Pamela can be reached at pgrandin@HunterLearningSolutions.com. [To schedule Pamela to speak at an event, to present her Auditory/Visual Processing Simulation or to obtain a list of her other presentations, please contact her directly at 518-441-4236.](#)

Annelise Kavannaugh,
Ballston Spa Council President

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PTA STORE NEWS!

Believe it or not, spring is just around the corner! It's hard to believe with the cold weather upon us though isn't it?

Spring brings new life to us....new growth....new plants and flowers...and certainly more energy! We can compare this to our PTA groups as well. New members join us either as Volunteers or as Board Members, or, in many cases, both capacities.

Many of you are already thinking about and planning for the Installation of Officers, which usually takes place in the spring. The PTA store has pins and other "goodies" to suit your needs for this annual event. You can purchase them at Spring Conference, Thursday, May 20th at Shenendehowa West High School, or contact me to make other arrangements if you won't be attending. Treat yourself, your board members or your volunteers to a special remembrance of the time spent with PTA! It's a great way to show your appreciation to them for all they do.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Barbara Smollin, PTA Store Chair

bjsmollin@yahoo.com



PTA Virtual Lobby Day:

Go Green on March 17



Before you start celebrating St. Patrick's Day, be sure to participate in New York State PTA's Virtual Lobby Day. Call, e-mail or fax your State Legislators on March 17 to let them know that education issues are critical to the future of New York State.

Prepare for the day by signing up for CapWiz through the "Take Action" quick link at www.nyspta.org. With a few keystrokes you can add your name to e-mail messages on PTA issues to be sent to your elected officials. The site also provides extensive background information so that you can tailor your message for your representative or write your own letter.

New York State PTA also prepares sample letters and postcards that can be mailed to legislators. PTA councils and units can collect signatures at meetings to send or deliver to elected officials.

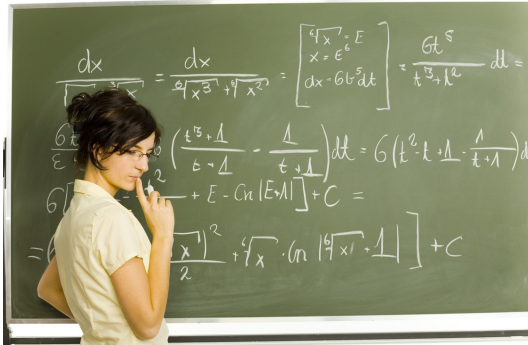
The huge state budget deficit makes this year's Virtual Lobby Day more important than ever. While Governor Paterson and the Legislature agreed to a \$2.8 billion deficit reduction plan last year, it wasn't nearly enough to make up for the shortfall caused by the economic downturn.

In these difficult fiscal times, it's going to take more than the luck of the Irish to protect funding for education. It's going to take the strength of every member of the New York State PTA working together to ensure that schools get their fair share of a balanced state budget.

Get your Irish up for New York State PTA and participate in this year's Virtual Lobby Day on March 17.

Susan Pedo, NYS Legislation Chair

legislation@nycap.rr.com



Rural Schools Association of New York State

The Rural Schools Association (RSA) of New York State is a statewide organization, representing the interests of, initiating research for, and providing service and information to the small and rural school districts of New York State. It is a member driven organization dedicated to representing the interests of small and rural school districts in New York State. Approximately 300 school districts and BOCES units are currently enrolled as members of RSA. In addition to the financial support provided by RSA members, supplemental assistance is given by the Department of Education, New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, in the form of office facilities, utilities, clerical assistance, and the use of equipment.

The Rural Schools Association was founded in 1978 following a statewide conference sponsored by the Council on Rural Education and the Rural Regional Education Association (now NREA) to consider the special concerns and needs of the rural and small school districts of New York State.

Upon recommendation of conference participants, the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, agreed to provide housing, financial assistance, liaison and supervision for the program. The RSA office has been assigned responsibility to serve the rural and small school districts of this state -- a state containing one of the largest rural populations in the nation. A significant percentage of the student population of this state is enrolled in rural or small school districts.

Goals and Objectives

--To assist districts in liaison with state and national governmental leaders and with officials of rural interest organizations.

--To conduct research pertinent to small and rural school districts and to disseminate results to the membership, the public, and to decision-making bodies.

--To assist members to develop organizational policy at state and national level.

--To provide service and information to district members relating to staffing, curriculum.

--To provide service and information to district members relating to staffing, curriculum in-service training, instruction, and general school management.

--To provide a clearinghouse function and promote communication among members of the program.

--To conduct regional and statewide conferences concerning the broad issues facing RSA members.

Penny Whiting, NYS Rural Schools Chair

consultantwhiting@nyspta.org



News from the Shenendehowa PTAs

The Shen Council PTA Executive Committee began this school year like most Councils, with a set plan. One of our goals was to have the 12 Units that our Council works with come together in creating a stronger unity among one another in order to become a more visible force within our district. The idea...promote PTA. Sometimes we become complacent without realizing it. It becomes routine to only do the work within an individual Unit. We forget that when we share ideas, resources, promote events and programs among schools, work more strongly in partnership with our school district administrators, and the community at large, the goals that each of us set will be more successful district-wide. After all, each Unit follows the same mission of PTA. Why not promote and support one another's work? Council set out to establish and maintain a better level of communication, follow through and effort. A simple concept, yes, but work was needed to motivate others to join in with all efforts.

I was motivated by this goal about 4 months prior to agreeing to step up to be the Council president. I attended a basketball game in February, 2009 which included parents, school staff, school district administrators, and five of the PTA elementary schools. It was the most amazing coordination of effort from all involved. The attendance at this venue was standing room only. It was awesome to sit in the crowd and see the coming together of our community for one night to enjoy a friendly competition. It was great to see the faces of the children cheering on their school, parents working together in unison, staff members and administrators in their shorts willing to "entertain" the crowd by their sometimes lack of skill, as well as, the friendly competitiveness. It was amazing. Unbeknownst to me, the way this concept came about was due to a parent volunteer who saw her son's school become part of a major redistricting that occurred

in 2007. His elementary school had lost a major part of its population to other schools. Though the parent understood that the redistricting needed to be done, it bothered her that there was an apparent division that existed from school to school. She challenged herself to introduce an idea from her childhood. She brought the plan to the school principal, initially without success. That did not deter her. When the principal retired, she approached the new principal and he was intrigued by the idea. As soon as she got the go ahead, she began her quest to reach out to other parents in the PTA from other schools. Many thought the idea was not feasible, and others had no interest. With much diligence, the concept of Almost March Madness after two years of pursuit became reality. Sitting in the crowd, the full extent of the efforts that took place, the challenges of personality clashes, the miss steps, the learning from mistakes made leading up to its "freshmen" year, and other behind the scene episodes that occurred, was not evident on that night. I remember sitting there as a "veteran" PTA volunteer wishing district-wide events showing the gathering of volunteers, school personnel, and community members, would become a norm in our District. Needless to say, this year's Almost March Madness has grown to include all 8 elementary schools and expanded into two gymnasiums at our High School. An amazing tribute to one parent who motivated others to think outside the box, by recognizing that "something fun" was needed, when a necessary and stressful change occurred in our school district.

Keeping this concept in mind, it was Council's mission to have Shen PTAs join forces with a few of our district's initiatives that called upon the help of PTA to get the word out, have parent involvement and input. The Health and Wellness Committee and the Shen Community Coalition were two such initiatives.

The Health and Wellness Council reached out to us to help support our district's work in developing alternative fundraising to correlate with the health and wellness policy, and to explore the coordination of nutritional education in both the classroom and cafeteria, work on alternatives to classroom party foods to promote health and wellness, particularly in regards to food allergies and to help coordinate programs in

the elementary and middle schools to help combat the epidemic of childhood obesity.

The Shen Community Coalition was another initiative that started to help build a community environment that supports healthy growth and development of youth. It is a gathering of a multitude of agencies and organizations in our community. With the help of PTA, the coalition has developed a three part series to help promote teen health and safety. The coalition has also established a series of parent and student surveys that helped the Coalition's mission to get a better idea of the thinking and understanding that relate to parents and their children in regard to risky behaviors which are faced by youths. For the first time, Shenendehowa is hosting the Odyssey of the Mind Region 7 Program. All twelve Units agreed to join forces in running the concessions for this massive program, working together as a PTA organization to create a welcoming atmosphere for visitors from across the state who will participate in this program. We were also asked to find volunteers to be part of our district's Multi-Cultural Diversity Committee. With the help of those volunteers, Shen will host its first ever "Shensational! Global Expo". The intent is to celebrate and acknowledge the array of backgrounds, cultures and viewpoints that exists in our community. Doing all of this has challenged our PTAs to step outside the "comfort zone" of only doing the work within their Unit and into the mix, working in partnership with one another and our district.

This year we welcomed many new Unit officers who were not as up to date or as aware of the importance of following the policies and procedures of PTA. Much to their credit they sought help when needed, attended workshops, and asked questions when they discovered that something that their Unit had "always done" contradicted procedure. They made it a goal to leave their Unit stronger than when they took office. They challenged themselves to rectify past errors, without the drama. We saw Units rely on each other to help with resources and support, members who were willing to lend a hand from one Unit to another.

It's been a busy few months for the Shen PTAs. We know that at the end of this school year we'll walk away feeling a bit exhausted, but hope that we'll look back and feel pride for what has been accomplished. We hope that efforts made this year will motivate more volunteers to come forward and others to do a little more than what they do within their Unit. Our superintendent always strives for Shenendehowa to settle for nothing but excellence. There has been evidence of a renewed excellence among our PTAs as a whole. By reaching out, being a more visible force, and stepping out of the box, who knows how much more we will achieve!

Gina Scotto di Carlo,
Shenendehowa Council President
gsdc@nycap.rr.com

*High School PTSA, Acadia, Gowana, Koda
Middle Schools PTA,*

*Arongen, Chango, Karigon, Okte, Orenda,
Shatekon, Skano, Tesago,
Elementary Schools PTA*



MEMBERSHIP IS WRAPPING UP –

SPRING 2010!

Dear Presidents & UMC's;

As you're membership year is coming to a close I'm sure by now you've made several monthly payments to the state & hopefully I have had the chance to send you new cards! ☺

The month of February celebrated Founders Day and all units who pay for 15 members or more will automatically qualify for the Founders Day award if payments are received no later than March 1st! Your units should be receiving the papers to complete for the annual membership awards so if you haven't seen it please speak with your unit President or go online to the NYSPTA website – there will be a link for this.

Did you or do you know?....

- ❖ You don't need cards to sell memberships - you can always get new cards ***even after March 31st*** but you can't get back lost time at events where you could have sold memberships to your "captive audience" so please feel free to sell, sell, sell!
- ❖ March is your final push for members – especially with facing elections! Any person running for a seat on your executive board needs a PTA membership card... please see your bylaws for specific rules [in case you have a feeder school policy in place].
- ❖ As membership chair it's your responsibility to provide the President a member log for all meetings & especially for meetings where votes may occur like election night. Remember, only paid members have the right to vote on any voting issues/elections.
- ❖ Even after March 31st you can get a membership card – if that need does arise please just contact me! Membership truly is a year round process even with the deadlines but please try to solve all these needs before 3/31!
- ❖ March is when you will wrap up your membership campaign for the 09-10 school year and that your final payment must be into the ***STATE OFFICE [NOT ME – you must have 2 mailings!] NO LATER THAN 3/31/10.*** Please get it in the mail around 3/15 so that it will be ***RECEIVED IN THE OFFICE BY MARCH 1ST - NOT POSTMARKED BY THEN!***

- ❖ ***Please remember to include your unit dues slip with your payment & treasurers keep your copy for unit records.***
- ❖ All the unused cards get mailed to me [even if printed on or damaged] ***NO*** unit keeps cards – they must all be returned at the end of the member year and you must adhere to the same deadlines as listed above for payments. [Mailing information for me is in your UMC packet]. If you put an email address in the cards I will let you know cards have been received.
- ❖ Please remember to put your unit code [12 -] on all PTA mail – especially the dues payment form and on at least one (1) sheet of cards you're returning so I know where they came from to credit your account. If this is incomplete units may not get credit for returns and then will be charged for "missing cards".
- ❖ Remember cards = \$3.50 each so units will be charged for ***ALL*** cards not returned.

Well enough for now, please don't hesitate to contact me with questions/concerns regarding membership. Good Luck as you close your year!

Mary Ann Chesky, Membership Chair
cheskyfam@aol.com [preferred]
or 518-382-1962 any day from 11- 9 pm



Time Spent With Our Children

We know that we are in a world of both working parent families. Most of us are so busy, not only with our own activities but those of our children. Especially now, we have to make sure that we are having specific times with our children to find out what is happening in their lives. It's easy to get caught up in the everyday tasks we have running from here to there with the things we need to do. Try and set some time during the week for a special dinner with your children. When having dinner with your child you can communicate with them about their everyday lives. Ask them about what their week has been like so far and what have they been doing? In doing this your child will make a connection with you and know that they have this time to talk with you about whatever they would like.

Another way to connect with your child would be to have a game night. You could try this on a Friday or Saturday night and have pizza along with it. Maybe pop some popcorn or have their favorite snacks with their favorite movie. In doing this you can create many memories that will be with you for the rest of your life.

Bev Cottrell, NYS Parenting & Family Life Chair

parent.family.life@nyspta.org



From the Treasurer

The end of the year is nearer than you think. It's coming fast and now is the time to start planning your yearend wrap up. Get those receipts in order. Check you checkbook ledgers. Make sure they balance. Start planning for your annual audit. Designate an Audit Committee and schedule the review. Don't wait until the last minute. You can find a sample Audit Report form in the Resource Guide. Audits do not have to be complicated. They just need to be thorough enough to verify fiscal accountability.

Questions?

As always feel free to contact me.

John Cummings, Treasurer

jcummin2@nycap.rr.com



Board of Regents Information

To view who the current Board of Regent members are and to see who represents your area, go to:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/members/>

The Board of Regents has Webcasts available each month. If you cannot attend in person, you can participate via webcast. Simply click on the webcast. You can participate live or view archival webcasts of previous meetings. Go to:

<http://usny.nysed.gov/webcasts.html>

For a complete listing of the reports and materials for the February Board of Regents meeting, go to:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010Meetings/February2010/0210monthmat.html>

The Full Board discussed the following:

Education

- The Florida model of a “virtual district” and on-line course for high school
- Strategies for achieving the goals for P-12 Core Principles
- Early Childhood Learning Grants – strategies for the soon to be released applications
- Applications of technology in education students with disabilities
- Best Practices in the use of technology in schools: curriculum, web lessons, assessments
- Revised grade 3-8 testing schedules

Race To The Top

The federal RTTT Grant site is:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/phase1-applications/index.html>

This site currently contains all state applications and will contain evaluation information in the future.

Cultural Education

- Strategies to better use technology in libraries
- eBooks and other methods to provide information from state archives for use in school lessons

Funding

- Much discussion at the main meeting and at committee meetings related to the governor’s proposed 2010-11 budget and its impact on SED, local school districts, state archives, and libraries
- Increasing the scope of allowed shared regional services
- Seeking out funding and expertise from the private sector

Higher Education

- Education of students with disabilities - related to teacher preparation
- Distance Learning in Colleges and for the Licensed Professions
- Adjustments to teacher preparation programs to be in line with the RTTT application
- Teacher Learning standards, especially in the area of applying technology
- Professor evaluation assessments

Other

- A new Early Childhood Learning workgroup was formed
- Examining new computer systems at SED to better serve the 800,000+ professional people being licensed by SED

Neil Johanning, NYS Education Chair

education@nyspt.org



**Parents as Reading Partners
(PARP)...**

Sometimes we are our biggest fans!

Did you just spend a week, several weeks or a month hosting one of the best PARP programs ever? Then toot your own horn, pat yourself on the back and most importantly submit your program and information for the New York State PTA PARP Award.

Sometimes adding one more thing to your already full plate is asking a lot but I promise you that you have already done the hard part...you planned and executed a great program (maybe your event is yet to come but still apply). Now it is time to share what you did and what you learned with others. Sure, the possibility of winning the "bragging rights" and award is nice but the real gift is the sharing of ideas with other schools in our area and beyond. It is really nice to see what others do. While 2 schools can do something with an Olympic theme you will find vast differences in scope and programming. It is a real think tank we have out there.

So take the time, apply for the award...even if you don't win you will know that each one of your students will have won because you worked so hard for them. Please visit the state website at www.nyspta.org Go to the Awards and Recognitions page and look for PARP. Please note, current the award packet is not available on-line...so check often and look for updates. This is worth it! Award applications will be due to the Region director by June 15th, 2010.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can help you when it comes time to apply.

Karen Parlapano, PARP Chair

885-0630

PARPmom@gmail.com



**Two Minutes – That's All It Takes
To Tell Congress You Support the
Arts and Arts Education**

Tell Congress to Support Arts in Education - \$53
Million Requested for FY 2011

There are two priority areas for arts education advocacy at the federal level: strengthening the arts in the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (most recently called the No Child Left Behind Act), and increasing funding for the Arts in Education program at the U.S. Department of Education.

U.S. Department of Education's Arts in Education programs support the development of models for K-12 arts education, professional development for arts educators, the national activities of the Kennedy Center, and VSA acts, which serves artists with disabilities.

Congress has a record of supporting the Arts in Education programs, despite their elimination in the past administration budget proposals. While President Obama's FY10 budget included funding for this program for the first time in eight years, his recent FY11 proposal recommends consolidating the federal program into a new category with six other non-arts programs.

Please take a few minutes to write to your elected officials and ask them to support strengthening arts education in federal policy, a funding level of \$53 million for FY2011 and voicing your concerns about diminishing the role of arts in learning. TAKE ACTION NOW!

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