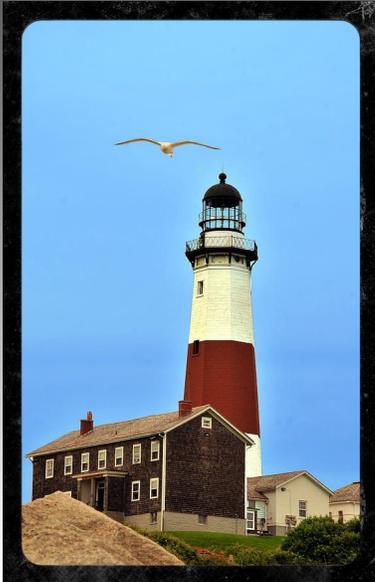


The BEES Beacon

BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk



*From the Lighthouse
in the East
to the Lighthouse
in the West*



What's Inside

- Election Details - p. 2**
- Running for President - pp. - 3 & 4**
- Running for Executive Vice Presidents - pp. 5-7**
- Running for First Vice President - pp. 9 & 10**
- Running for Area VP for Paras - p. 11**
- Running for Area VP for Special Ed. - p. 12**
- Running for Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - p. 13**
- Running for Area VP for CTE/SCE - p. 14**
- Running for Contractual Benefits Officer - p. 15**
- Running for Membership Coordinator - p. 16**
- Running for Treasurer - p. 17**
- Running for Recording Secretary - p. 18**
- Spotlight Article - pp. 19 & 20**



Election Edition

Get ready to vote in the upcoming election for the BEES Executive Board. This year voting will take place digitally with a new platform called Election Buddy. Voting will be live for the first two weeks of March. Please make sure we have a non BOCES email on file for you. If we don't please reach out to your building representative to provide them with one to ensure you receive your information to participate in the voting process. Future votes will likely be digital as well, so make sure your information is on file with us! You can email your voting questions to the election committee at beesunionyellow@gmail.com
Thank you for sticking with the BEES!



President - Asha Mazza-Shaw



Running for President

Greetings BEES members.

My name is Asha Mazza-Shaw, and I am running for President of the BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk (BEES). I have been a member of ESBOCES since the age of eighteen... I won't tell you how long ago that was! I began my ESBOCES career as a substitute para-educator. That time was filled with some of the most wonderful experiences I could have asked for as an aspiring educator. I was afforded the opportunity to see the amazing services ESBOCES offers, and I gained valuable insight from veteran employees who worked in various positions. I was a substitute para- professional on and off until accepting a teaching assistant position at what was then the "William Floyd Learning Center." The following year, I was hired as a special education teacher there. Before I knew it, I was a tenured teacher eager to get involved with my union. I held the position of building representative at William Floyd for two terms before being appointed as the Grievance Officer for the Executive Board. During that time, the William Floyd Learning Center closed its doors, and I moved to the Sayville Academic Center. During my time at SAC, I transitioned from the appointed position of Grievance Officer to the elected position of Area Vice President for Special Education--a position which I held for three terms. During my time as Area VP for Special Education, I developed many valuable working relationships throughout the agency and learned a great deal. As the program at SAC underwent its own changes, I moved to the program I currently work in, Tecumseh at Stony Brook Hospital on the Children's Psychiatric unit. During my time at Stony Brook, I continued to learn and grow as an educator and union leader. In the 2019-2020 school year, I was elected into the position of Executive Vice President and began working with our other Executive Board and the Representative Council on new ways to reach our BEES members.

**UNION
STRONG**

President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

Running for President

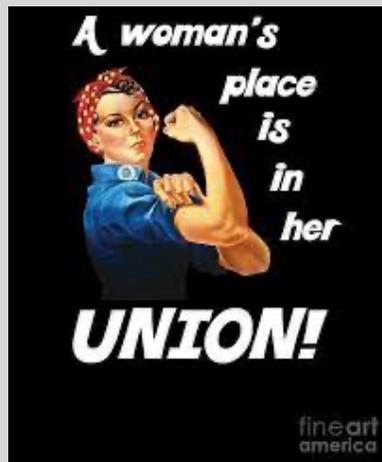


I served for two years as Executive Vice President when our former President, Jim Beck, decided to step down. At that time, I was elected by the BEES Representative Council and the Executive Board to step into my current role as President. I don't have to tell any of you how challenging the past two years have been for all of us. They have definitely been the most challenging of my union career. While these past few years have brought difficult times, grief, tension, and unprecedented amounts of stress, I have also witnessed our members come together to help one another in amazing ways. The Executive Board and building representatives have not stopped advocating for you during this time. We have not lowered our voices when speaking to the needs of the membership. We will continue to work hard for each and every member in our local.

I have seen the power of the union at work first hand, and I have been lucky enough to be a part of it. I was raised to believe in the importance of unions and the power of a group of people who work together for a shared cause. It is my sincerest hope that as long as I am an active employee of ESBOCES, I will always be involved with our union. It has been a pleasure to serve our union in multiple capacities thus far, and I look forward to many more years of involvement and continued progress. I am grateful to each of you for being part of the BEES; we are stronger together. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our union and its members.

In solidarity,

Asha



Executive Vice President - Al Rios



Running for Executive VP

To my fellow BEES members,

Greetings and thank you for taking a moment to find out a little about me and the position I will be running for on the BEES E-Board.

My name is Al Rios and it has been my pleasure and an honor to serve as your Executive Vice President for the past 3 years. As your Executive Vice President I have gained invaluable experience & knowledge about the fundamentals of our local union as well as the concerns of our members.

I am currently teaching science at the Sequoya High School program and have experienced first hand the challenges educators have faced and obstacles we had to overcome. Our BEES members have gone above and beyond in order to make sure our students get the best education possible in a safe environment as well as supporting our fellow colleagues in their times of need.

In addition to my teaching responsibilities, I am also one of the secondary Lead Science teachers, participant in ESBOCES Advocacy day, attendant in NYSUT Representative assemblies, Member of the suffolk ED 22 committee as well as representing our members as a NYSTRS Delegate and the 2022 Representative for Committee of 100.

One of the responsibilities that is most fulfilling is to serve on the **NYSUT BOCES Leadership Committee**. I have participated for the past six years on this committee where I had the amazing opportunity to work with representatives from all the other BOCES programs throughout New York State. Together we would discuss unique issues and solutions in BOCES that needed to be brought to the State Education Departments attention. This year's meetings already began in December and needless to say the concerns of BOCES employees are front and center.

Executive Vice President - Al Rios

Running for Executive VP



Active participation in all these Committees as well as working in the classroom has given me a true, in person perspective as to how dedicated, passionate and significant every single one of our members are to their students and to BOCES. We would not be able to do the amazing things we do if it were not for all your hard work and support.

It is for these reasons that I want to continue to serve on the BEES Executive board.

I am running for the position of Executive Vice president and I hope with your support you can afford me the opportunity to support, represent and look out for all of our fellow members.

I am passionate about being a part of a great team that will represent and support each and every one of the members of the BEES. I am constantly striving to educate myself on union matters and become a strong union leader.

Thank you for taking the time to get to know a little about me and I thank you for your consideration.

- Al Rios

Executive Vice President - Amanda Pica



Running for Executive VP

Mom, friend, colleague, and Para- Educator are a few of the titles I hold, but over the last year the one that was so near and dear to my heart was Executive Vice President for the Boces Educators of Eastern Suffolk (BEES). It was one to be proud of. As an employee for over 12 year it has been the most rewarding position. Seeing the hard work, growth, and dedication our Executive-Board has accomplished over many years has only made me strive for more. The level of knowledge and experience I have gained over the last 12 years is unimaginable. I started my journey as a Para-Educator at William Floyd Learning Center with a passion to help others. With this goal I found many opportunities not only with the BEES local union but within the BOCES Agency as well. As a Building Representative for 6 years, Recording Secretary for 2 years, Area Vice President for Para Educators for 2 years, and this past year as your Executive Vice President it has given me the opportunity to work alongside such a professional team that has helped mold me into a strong leader. Being able to help our members has been so rewarding, not only has it taught me a great deal, I have also gained some life long friendships. Creating a positive work community is a goal I will continue to strive for. I am fortunate enough to have the opportunity to attend conferences, committees, and workshops that not only strengthened my knowledge but has built the foundation that is needed to be your Executive Vice President.

It would be my pleasure to work alongside and continue to represent all of our members. I will provide consistency, proficiency, & support to the entire membership. Thank you for your consideration.

- Amanda

Check out all your union membership has to offer!



INSURANCE YOU CAN COUNT ON.



PROVIDERS YOU CAN TRUST.

**VALUE-ADDED EXTRAS YOU
CAN'T GET ELSEWHERE.**



SOMEONE WHO HAS YOUR BACK.



NYSUT Member Benefits

Every Dollar Counts!



When it comes to protecting yourself, your loved ones, your income or your most valuable possessions, NYSUT Member Benefits has insurance programs that fit the bill. Whether you are looking for **auto & home, life, disability, long-term care, dental, vision, or pet insurance**, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics.

Member Benefits also endorses several discounted shopping programs that can help you save on both everyday and more expensive purchases. Finally, if you ever have an issue or problem when using a Member Benefits program, our staff take great pride in their ability to quickly assist members with any concerns that may arise.

Visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** to learn more about the endorsed programs and services available to you through your union membership.



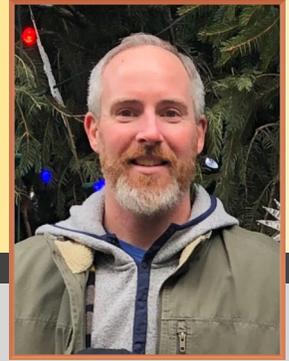
Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,
visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org or
calling **800-626-8101**.



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

Jan/Feb 2022

First Vice President - Keith Flynn



Running for First VP

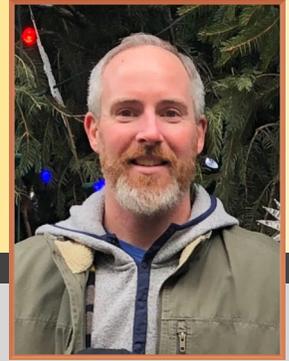
Happy January! I hope everyone is well and trying to do their best with the ever changing world of COVID. I am really looking forward to using the phrase, 'Post-Pandemic'.

For this edition, we are going to steer away from the COVID world (temporarily) and I am going express my interest in why I am running for the First Vice President for the BEES. I have been working at Eastern Suffolk BOCES for the last 15 years as a School Counselor. Prior to that, I worked at Sachem East High School in quite a few roles. All my past experiences have given me a great understanding of how each role supports each other within a school building.

Currently I work at Sequoya High School, but I have worked in other buildings like a lot of my fellow members. I have worked at IAC, IAC@ICC, BAC, WHBLC and CAC which moved to IAC. As you know, programs are ever changing at Eastern Suffolk BOCES based on the services we provide. It's more common than not to have worked in different buildings throughout your career at ESB.

I have served as a Building Representative, Grievance Officer and I am currently hold an interim position as First Vice President, due to the retirement of Ray Stenberg. I entered the school counseling field to advocate for students and to assist them in their journey throughout high school. I consider myself a dedicated professional who is intrinsically driven to go about my business the right way. I believe role-modeling is just as important as teachable moments. I prioritize communication and collaboration between union leadership and our members, reflective practice, with a goal of moving towards and executing a vision for our membership.

First Vice President - Keith Flynn



Running for First VP

Honesty, reliability, conscientiousness and integrity are values that I pride myself with. I was told at the beginning of my career that if I treat every student like they were my own child, then I would have done my job responsibly and ethically. Whether I am working with a student or a member, I know that it has been done with the best intentions.

Throughout my tenure at Eastern Suffolk BOCES, staff members and students have sought me out for guidance. I take pride in helping people with trustworthy, fact-based information. I might not always have the answer, but I am pretty resourceful in finding it out. My involvement with the union was a natural progression. Since the school counselor profession is based on assisting and advocating for our students, I was already helping my fellow colleagues before I officially started in a union leadership role.

Although our membership has two separate contracts, we are 1 union. I have represented yellow and blue contract members. I believe an important part of the Executive Board's job is to bring clarity and solidarity to our union members.

I look forward to continuing to work with our members and to help represent Your Voice, Your Values, Your Union!

Keith Flynn



Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



Running for Area VP for Paras

Dear Fellow BEES Members,

I am hoping to have your support to resume my position as Area Vice President for the Para Educators.

In my 18 year career as a Teaching Assistant at Eastern Suffolk Boces, thirteen of those were as the Para Building Representative at the Islip and Centereach Academic Centers. My Union participation also includes;

Area Vice President for the Para Educators since July, 2021

Recording Secretary for the Executive Board

Para Pro Practice Committee

AFT-PSRP National Convention

NYSUT SRP Leadership Conferences

Budget Committee

Negotiation For School Related Professional Regional Workshop

I have worked with incredible Para Building Representatives who have brought to my attention many of your concerns and issues on a daily basis.

These dedicated Para professionals have opened my eyes to the many obstacles we all face in every program, and with the support of my fellow Executive Board Officers, we have been able to resolve many difficult situations.

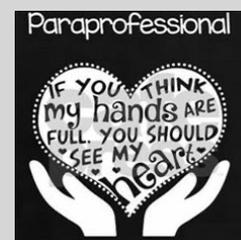
It has been an honor to serve our membership as both the Recording Secretary and Area Vice President for the Para Educators on the BEES Executive Board.

I offer my unwavering support to all our members and I hope to continue to represent and serve our local.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angela Ritchie



Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards

Running for Area VP for Special Ed.



My name is Patti Richards and I've been a teacher with Eastern Suffolk BOCES for 30 years. I am currently serving on the Bees Board as the area vice president for special education and I am seeking re-election to the position.

I became part of the union about 15 years ago when our program needed a building rep. At first I was hesitant, I thought somebody else could deal with it. A concept I am sure many of you can identify with. My hesitation was because I was unaware of what was involved in the role. But once I became involved, I realized how essential the union is in our profession. The union is not just a contract, it is support for the member who has questions or support for the member during a problematic situation. It's making sure our rights are not violated.

After several years as a representative I was appointed to the board as the grievance officer and then I moved into my current position. During my tenure, I've had the great honor of helping many members.

With the upcoming elections in the spring, I hope you will continue to support me as you have in the past and vote. This will ensure I can advocate for each and everyone of you with the challenges ahead.

I thank you in advance for your vote and support.

Patti Richards



Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



Running for Area VP for Itinerants/SAS

Current Assignment: Social Worker at Sequoya high school.

Work Experience: Employed with ESBOCES for the last 23 years as a social worker. I have worked in elementary settings, middle school settings, high school settings and a district site. Before coming to ESBOCES I worked as a social worker for the YMCA Family Services specializing in drug and alcohol counseling and supervising graduate level social work students, a woman's domestic abuse shelter, Maryhaven and managed a family business for 13 years.

Related Professional Experience: Throughout my career I have always been very involved in various committees and activities which create a more enjoyable environment for both my coworkers and students. I have been the Arts in Ed. coordinator, served on the behavior committee, shared decision making, character education, level rewards, interviewing committee, graduation, fund raising and task force for the combining of BRAC and JAC programs. I have also piloted a morning meeting program at JAC and shadowed a summer supervisor in setting up the program. Prior to my position as a social worker I attended Dowling for my masters in early education.

Union Participation: I served as a building representative at JAC which had me involved in many situations involving contract, pro-practice, labor laws and building safety. I have also served as the chairperson of the BEES EBOARD election and have sat on the EBOARD since 2014.

Thank you for consideration and remember every vote counts so be involved in your future.

Kristin

Area VP for CTE/SCE

Running for Area VP for CTE/SCE – Deirdre Pettit



My name is Deirdre (Kroupa) Pettit and I am running for Area Vice President for CTE/CSE Blue Contract. I began my career at ESBOCES in 2007 as a PT Adult Ed LPN teacher. I was extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to interview and receive the position of Certified Nurse Assistant Teacher at BTC and remained in that building for 5 years. In my 6th year enrollment dropped and I was called in and told my position could possibly go down to half time. The union president worked hard for me and I was offered ½ day at HBW and ½ day in Incarcerated Ed @ Riverhead Correctional Facility. I took the opportunity and gained valuable insight into the many different populations we educate. Finally, I landed at ICC and I currently teach a class called Health Related Occupations. I have been an Executive Board member since the summer of 2021 and I really enjoy being a part of such a dedicated, dynamic board. I feel that I have a firm understanding of the needs and concerns of both CTE and SCE and I will work hard to work for you for the best possible outcomes.

Thanks for your consideration.

Deirdre

Dkroupa222@gmail.com

Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



Running for Contractual Benefits Officer

I am Nick DeBlanco and I'm running for the Contractual Benefits Officer position. I have taught Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning at Milliken Technical Center for the last 19 years.

Prior to Eastern Suffolk BOCES, I was an H.V.A.C teacher at Western Suffolk BOCES. Before beginning my teaching career I was an active member in Local Union No. 3 IBEW.

Since 2013, I have served as a delegate for both AFT and NYSUT. I am also a delegate for the New York State Teachers' Retirement System and have served in this position for the past eight years.

Two years ago I had the pleasure of representing the BEES at the NYSTRS Convention in Saratoga Springs, NY.

I am an active participant in the CTE APPR committee, the CTE Lesson Plan committee, and the SDM committee at Milliken Technical Center.

For the last three years I have represented the membership as your Contractual Benefits Officer and I ask for your vote fso I can continue to represent you for the next three.

-Nick



Membership Secretary



Running for Membership Secretary - Adrian Grube

Hello, my name is Adrian Grube and I am asking for your vote for the office of Membership Coordinator on the BEES Executive Board.

For the past five years I have been a teaching assistant at Westhampton Beach Learning Center. Additionally, I have served as para union building representative for three of those five years. I have a degree from Salisbury University and hold a NYS Teaching Assistant Certification.

The duties of the Membership Coordinator include recording and maintaining membership information, and organizing our collective goals and progress. Beyond my experience, I bring a tenacity and passion for this union and its' members.

I look forward to working together with the rest of the board, and you as members, to grow the power and breadth of our union. Although this will be my first year on our Executive Board, I believe I am qualified due to my extensive organizational skills, attention to detail and previous experience as a building representative.

I know these past few years have been tough for everyone, but I look forward to the years to come and would be honored to be chosen to join our Executive Board and help lead all of us forward. Thank you.

Adrian

Treasurer



Running for Treasurer - Rachael Klahn

Hello everyone and Happy New Year! My name is Rachael Klahn, the treasurer intern this year. I have been working with Michelle Tinter in preparation to run for treasurer upon her retirement. I am fortunate to have such a wonderful and experienced treasurer to observe and learn from.

I have a bachelors of science degree in mathematics, so I was very drawn to this position. I have worked for ESBOCES since 2014 and have held the positions of substitute, individual aide, teaching assistant and now teacher. I have had incredible mentors and worked alongside incredible people. One of the most important things I have learned is that no matter what your title is and no matter what program you work in - we all work as a team. We help each other, support each other and learn from each other. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the Executive Board so far this year, especially seeing all the hard work and dedication that goes into helping the BEES members. I hope to continue this work as treasurer next year supporting you all and making sure your voices are heard. Stay well!

Rachael

Recording Secretary - Tiffany Robinson

Running for Recording Secretary



Hello All! I'm hoping that everyone is having a happy and healthy New Year thus far. My name is Tiffany Robinson, and I am very excited to be running for recording secretary again. Starting as a building Rep. I was thrilled to jump on the opportunity to join this fabulous E-Board and gain so much more knowledge of what happens behind the scenes for our many members.

I began my Boces career in November of 2004, and can't believe that this past September began my 18th school year working with the agency. I have learned so much from the many professionals that I have worked with, and although like everyone else sometimes the days can get tiring, we do seem to find the joy in what we do! I know this has been a crazy year, but collectively we will get through! Please take advantage of all the many resources that are available, and don't hesitate to utilize the information on the BEES beacon website as well as reach out to your union reps, who will always keep you informed. Let's continue to push forward and look for the light at the end of that tunnel and as always please know that we are here for you.

Thank you for standing by your union!

Tiffany

Spotlight on Our BEES Community



ESB Marathoners- Karen Harte, Karen Audia & Dana Forstadt

This edition of Spotlight on our BEES community is very appropriate for this issue because as we celebrated New Years Eve many of us set resolutions for the new year. The most popular New Year's resolutions are about self improvement (living healthier 23% of people, getting happy 21%, losing weight 20%, exercising 7%, stopping smoking 5%, reducing drinking 2%). In addition, people resolve to meet career or job goals (16%) and improve their relationships (11%). Despite their big plans, only 8% of people will achieve their New Year's resolutions.

Yes, I have to admit that I am among those that start out strong and eventually realizes that although I had great intentions I fell short of achieving the goal but there is always next year. This is not the case for three of our members who have signed up to sweat, ache and push their legs to the limit and run in a marathon. Three of our very own have each set a goal to run in a marathon and not any old marathon but some very well known ones. Let's give a big congratulations to Sequoya H.S. Social Worker Karen Audia, Psychologist Karen Harte who works at Tecumseh and finally, Dana Forstadt, also a Social Worker at Sequoya H.S. These three ladies demonstrated dedication, endurance and strength to get themselves conditioned to, run in and complete a Marathon. On October 11, Karen Harte was one of the 20,000 entrants that took part in The grueling 26 mile Boston Marathon which is also recognized as the world's oldest annual marathon, which was held first in 1897. On Oct. 24, our own Karen Audia ran the spectacular Suffolk County Marathon which started in the Village of Babylon and finished in Gardiner Park. Athletes ran one of the most scenic courses on Long Island, running across the Robert Moses Causeway. This years Suffolk County marathon was dedicated to veterans who enlisted in the military following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as the nation commemorates the 20th anniversary. Last but certainly not least on November 11, Dana Forstadt was one of 30,000 runners who took part in the 50th running of the New York City Marathon which begins in Staten Island and loops through Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx before ending in Manhattan's Central Park. To these amazing ladies I congratulate you on accomplishing such a lofty goal and inspiring us all that we are all capable of achieving anything we set our minds out to do.

Remember, If there is someone you know that has had a great accomplishment, volunteers, donates their time someplace, has an interesting hobby, or has an amazing story or maybe a side business let me know! Yes, we work with such a diverse group of talented, caring, compassionate and interesting members that we should put them in the spotlight and let us all congratulate them for the fine job or interesting story they have.

Write me at alrbeeunion@gmail.com and shine the spotlight on one of our BEES members

Spotlight on Our BEES Community



ESB Marathoners- Karen Harte, Karen Audia & Dana Forstadt





BEES

BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk

Union Strong

Asha Mazza-Shaw - President
Amanda Pica - Executive Vice President
Al Rios - Executive Vice President
Keith Flynn - First Vice President
Angela Ritchi - Area Vice President Para Educators
Patti Richards - Area Vice President Special Education
Kristin Ericson-Abbruzzese - Area Vice President Itinerants/SAS
Rosaria Catania - Area Vice President CTE/SCE
Michelle Tinter - Treasurer
Nick DeBlanco - Contractual Benefits Officer
Lisa Mongiello - Membership Secretary
Deirdre Pettit - Grievance Officer
Danielle Ibba-Morabito - Social Chair
Tiffany Robinson - Recording Secretary
Dennis Charaton - Webmaster
Terry Kalb - Retiree Chapter Chairperson
Mary Longo - BEES Office Secretary
Asha Mazza-Shaw - BEES Beacon Publisher
Rachael Klahn - Treasurer Intern

BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk
AFT Local 3037
NYSUT Local 22-220
1266 Waverly Ave.
PO Box 434
Farmingville, NY 11738
(631)475-4704
BOCESBEES@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/bees3037
www.beesbeacon.org

Proud members of AFT, NYSUT and AFL-CIO

The BEES Beacon is the official publication of the BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk First Supervisory District

