

**Volume 38 Issue 1  
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**AFT Local 3037/ NYSUT Local 22-220**

# The BEES Beacon

**BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk**



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



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# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong



Greetings and welcome back, BEES members! Although summer seems far behind us already, I hope that you all found time to relax and enjoy the summer sun. In recent meetings with the agency's Human Resources team, I was asked to share gratitude with you all for a very smooth opening to this school year. Dr. Rivers, Assistant Superintendent for HR and Claudy Damus-Makelele, Associate Superintendent of Educational Services, specifically asked that I share their appreciation to all of our BEES members. I would also like to welcome our new District Superintendent, Dr. Jasmin Varela, to the agency. Our continued collaborative efforts with our ES BOCES Central Administrative team is a benefit to both our BEES members and the agency. As union leadership, when we work together with central administration, we have the ability to accomplish so much more for our members, our students and our agency.

In the past two years, we have settled two contracts, both unprecedented on their own, together, a strong example of what collaborative collective bargaining can accomplish. Our two contracts caught the eye of NYSUT leaders in our Suffolk Regional office, and eventually the attention of the NYSUT president, Melinda Person. President Person called our newest BEES contract "the type of agreement that sets a huge change for a generation...this deal is really transformational." I also had the opportunity to show President Person around our Bellport campus in October. We toured BTC, BAC and BLC, and I had the pleasure of sharing the incredible work that our BEES members do on a daily basis. President Person and the rest of the NYSUT team were all so impressed with each of our programs; one of the team members even got her "fade" freshened up in the barbering class! You can see more of our tour in the spotlight article on pg. Please always know that your work is inspiring, enlightening, and it was an honor to share it with our NYSUT leaders.

I was invited to participate in NYSUT's Common Ground Over Chaos bus tour. This tour invited local legislators from various political parties to meet with local union leaders to discuss the challenges facing our local unions, students and schools. Our tour stop met at our Suffolk Regional office in Hauppauge, where congressional hopeful John Avalon joined us. Nick Lalota was also invited, however he declined the invitation. We discussed several important topics, including more teaching, less testing, Title I funding, charter schools funneling money away from districts (Did you know that the charter schools in Riverhead are now taking more than 14 million dollars away from the public school budget?), and cell phone usage in schools. Currently, NYSUT is backing a bill that would allow locals to negotiate restrictions of cell phone usage in classrooms, and much more. The conversation continually came back to our ability to find our common ground, and to find a way forward for our children and students we serve. If you are interested in learning more about this tour, you can read more at <https://www.commongroundoverchaos.org/bus-tour/bus-tour-stories/congressional-candidate-john-avalon-stresses-the-need-for-civility-civics-education-to-safeguard-democracy>.

# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong

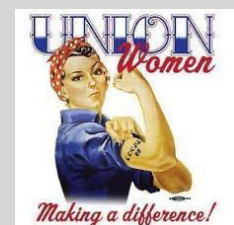


You may notice some new and exciting events this year! We have a new office space and will be planning more events there as the year goes on. Specifically, we will be hosting a Financial Literacy workshop on November 14th at 3:30. There will also be new member meet-and-greet meetings, a “will day” with our legal firm Feldman, Kramer and Monaco, and a tenure celebration for our newly tenured staff! We have also continued our BEES Buddies program based on the positive feedback we received last year. This is a union-led mentorship program that has no agency affiliation. If you’re not sure who your BEES Buddy is, ask your building rep. The BEES Buddies are friendly faces that you can go and talk to if you feel like you need advice, assistance with planning, prepping, student-related questions, or things that fall outside your contract that you may not want to involve administration with. Moreover, BEES Buddies will be providing some optional PDs for you to attend as well. The end of the school year will also have different celebrations. Our retirees will be honored with their own retiree dinner. Additionally, there will be an end of the year picnic celebration for everyone to attend! Keep an eye out for more fun and useful events!

Lastly, I encourage everyone to make two accounts, if you haven’t done so already. Head over to your retirement website, either NYSTRS (for certificated staff and TA’s) - <https://www.nystrs.org/> or NYSLRS (for aides) - <https://web.osc.state.ny.us/retire/sign-in.php> and make an online account. You can see your retirement portfolio information as well as make changes to beneficiaries (always keep your beneficiaries up to date.) Second, head to <https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/> and look at all of the amazing benefits you can get just for being a NYSUT member! The insurance for your home and auto alone could save you hundreds of dollars (it did for me). All you need is your NYSUT number, which you can find by going to <https://www.nysut.org/> and hitting log in, you’ll see a button that says, “I need my NYSUT ID.” Make a log in while you are there! If you cannot find your NYSUT ID, you can email our membership coordinator, Adrian Grube, at [agrubebeeunion@gmail.com](mailto:agrubebeeunion@gmail.com).

Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday season!

*Asha*



# Keep Up with the BEES

Keep up with your union activities! Make sure you have access to meeting information and other important union information by joining our Remind messaging and following our socials! To Join our Remind messaging system (we suggest downloading the app for the best experience), you can join by downloading the Remind app and searching for the keyword(s), or just by texting the keyword(s) to the number **81010**. Please use the keyword(s) for the groups that apply to you (you can belong to more than one if you would like to).

## Remind Key words

@beesblue - for Teachers, Itinerants, Certificated Staff

@beesparas - for aides and TAs

@beessped - for all Special Ed. members

@beesctesce - for all CTE/SCE members

@beesitin - for all Itinerant members

Follow us:



BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk - BEES3037



@BEES3037



@bocesbees22220



@bocesbees22220



# Politics in Education



Finding common ground to get things accomplished. NYSUT and AFT believe we have more in common than what divides us. By focusing on shared values and common goals, we can rise above chaos and come together to build a strong, prosperous future for all. The movement is dedicated to prioritizing results-oriented policies that address real-world problems; rejecting divisive partisan politics and striving to work across party lines to achieve meaningful progress for our communities and nation. We believe in the power of unity and shared values. We are committed to bridging divides, fostering respectful dialogue, and working together to find solutions that benefit everyone. A thriving democracy requires strong institutions. We are committed to supporting and enhancing public education, ensuring fair elections, and promoting transparent governance to uphold the integrity of our democracy. Change starts at the local level. We listen to and address the concerns of our local communities, focusing on policies that have tangible impacts on daily lives, while understanding their significance on a national scale. Trust is built on transparency. Our movement emphasizes the importance of clear communication, accountability, and ensuring decisions are made openly and responsibly, with the best interests of people in mind. An engaged citizenry is the foundation of a strong democracy. We are dedicated to promoting civic education, encouraging active participation, and empowering all members of our community to contribute to the democratic process.

You can read more about NYSUTS Common Ground Over Chaos here - <https://commongroundoverchaos.org>

Also be sure to take a look at their full voter guide to while your there!

# Politics in Education

**COMMON  
GROUND**   
**OVER CHAOS**

**NYSTU**

**YOUR  
VOTE.  
YOUR  
VOICE.**

Apply for an Early Mail Ballot

<https://elections.ny.gov/request-ballot>

Apply by October 26

Register to Vote

[www.ny.gov/SERVICES/REGISTER-VOTE](http://www.ny.gov/SERVICES/REGISTER-VOTE)

Register by October 19

Find Your Early or Election Day Polling Place

<https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>

**Vote November 5, 6 am - 9 pm**

**Or Vote Early! You Can Vote at Any Early**

**Vote Site in Your County**

**October 26-November 3**

# Politics in Education



## Long Island Endorsed Candidates

### US Congress

NY01 John Avlon (D)  
NY02 Andrew Garbarino (R)  
NY03 Tom Suozzi (D)  
NY04 Laura Gillen (D)

### State Senate

SD1 Anthony Palumbo (R)  
SD2 Mario Mattera (R)  
SD3 Dean Murray (R)  
SD4 Monica Martinez (D)  
SD5 Steve Rhoads (R)  
SD6 Siela Bynoe (D)  
SD7 Kim Keiserman (D)  
SD9 Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick (R)

### State Assembly

AD1 Tommy John Schiavoni (D)  
AD3 Joseph DeStefano (R)  
AD4 Rebecca Kassey (D)  
AD5 Doug Smith (R)  
AD6 Phillip Ramos (D)  
AD7 Jarett Gandolfo (R)  
AD8 Steven Basileo (D)  
AD9 Michael Durso (R)  
AD10 Steve Stern (D)  
AD11 Kwani O'Pharrow (D)  
AD13 Charles Lavine (D)  
AD14 David McDonough (R)  
AD15 Jake Blumencranz (R)  
AD16 Gina Sillitti (D)  
AD17 John Mikulin (R)  
AD18 Noah Burroughs (D)  
AD19 Edward Ra (R)  
AD20 Tina Posterli (D)  
AD21 Judy Griffin (D)  
AD22 Michaëlle Solages (D)

# Executive Vice President - Al Rios

## We Appreciate You



Welcome back to all our existing members of The BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk as well as our newest members who have recently started with us. Thank you to everyone for choosing to join the union and be a part of over 700,000 NYSUT union members.

I hope that the 2024-2025 year started smoothly for each and every one of you and that you are getting settled in and feeling comfortable with your new classes. I also wish for you all a successful and productive year filled with excitement in the classroom for both teachers and students.

For our new BEES members please keep an eye out for new member meetings, tenure celebrations, and financial literacy workshops. Your building Rep. will be posting information about this and any other gatherings on your building's union bulletin board.

This was an election year for our building Reps. (Blue and Yellow) so please, if your building Rep. has not reached out to you, find out who your Rep. is and get to know them. The Reps. are there to help you and are responsible for having building level meetings to make sure information is disseminated from YOUR union to you. They are also there for your questions or concerns and if they are not sure of an answer, they will find someone who will be able to answer your questions. Your building Reps. are a great source to bring your concerns to and to ask questions so please make sure you know who your building rep. is.

It is a privilege to represent the BEES as your Executive Vice president and I want you to know that along with your Executive Board we will always look out for the best interest of all our members and have monthly meetings with the building reps. In order to make sure to keep the lines of communication open among our members. I am also proud to be one of your NYSTRS (New York State Teachers Retirement System) delegates. Please make sure you keep yourself informed regarding your retirement by making sure you log in to your myNYSTRS account. Remember, it is never too soon to make informed decisions about your future at each stage of your teaching career.

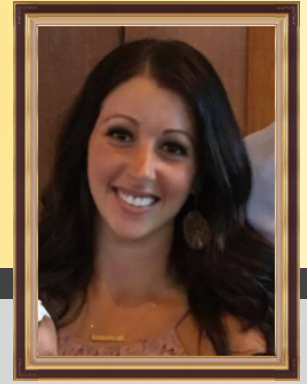
Finally, I want to take a minute to wish you all a safe, healthy and happy year ahead. We appreciate all you do and want you to know all your hard work and effort does not go unnoticed. I truly hope I get the opportunity to meet as many members as possible.

All the best,

Al Rios



# Executive Vice President - Amanda Pica



## Better Together

Welcome back friends!!

Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you're doing you will be successful! – Hermain Cain. When it comes to working to Eastern Suffolk BOCES it is no question that this will be another successful year. I want to welcome back all of our established friends as well as our new members. If you are new here I would like to introduce myself and tell you a little bit about me. I am Amanda Pica, one of your Executive Vice President, a member of the yellow contract, and wife/mom to two littles. I have been with the agency for 15 years and have had the pleasure of seeing a tremendous amount of growth within. After an amazing yet busy summer with family and friends I am looking forward to a wonderful year alongside my colleagues and Executive Board.

I have provided few important links to share with our members and colleagues, here you will find a tremendous amount of information.

<https://www.NYSUT.org>

<https://www.AFT.org>

<https://beesbeacon.org>

~ Amanda



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# LIFE INSURANCE: *Crucial for protecting your loved ones*



Life insurance is a topic many people find confusing, complicated, and uncomfortable to think about. It is undoubtedly one of the most vital types of insurance products you can purchase, though. Whether you're looking into your first policy or to upgrade existing coverage, it's important to determine how much life insurance you need and which type is right for you.

One key fact about life insurance you may not be aware of is premiums are likely to be less expensive if you purchase it earlier in life. For those of you who currently have policies, what you purchased 10 years ago, five years ago, or even last year may not be enough to replace your income and all you provide for your family. And if you are part of the 30% of Americans who don't have any life insurance at all,\* you could be putting your family at great financial risk.

There are a variety of options to consider when it comes to life insurance, including:

- 1. Term Life** – this product pays a benefit in the event of the death of the insured during a specific timeframe but offers no cash value.
- 2. Level Term Life** – this insurance is similar to term life but is normally for a set period of time such as 10, 15, or 20 years; it also offers no cash value.
- 3. Universal Life** – this option offers a way to protect your family while building tax-deferred cash value; policyholders can usually access a portion of the balance without impacting the guaranteed death benefit.

\* Source: USA Today - <https://www.usatoday.com/money/blueprint/life-insurance/life-insurance-statistics>

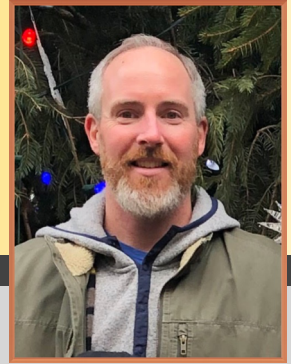
NYSUT Member Benefits endorses a number of competitive life insurance programs (those listed to the left and others) available to NYSUT members and their spouse/certified domestic partner. Many of these plans offer reduced rates not available to the general public along with additional convenience and savings opportunities through payroll or pension deduction.

**Learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed life insurance programs by scanning the QR code, visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](https://memberbenefits.nysut.org), or calling 800-626-8101.**



**MEMBER  
BENEFITS**  
**nysut**  
Working to Benefit You  
September/October 2024

# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



## Your Voice, Your Union

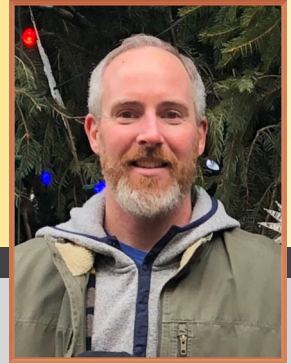
Hello..... BEES Membership! I can't believe the leaves are falling and we are grabbing our jackets to walk out the door. Summer feels like an eternity ago. As we settle into the school year and get ready for the spooky season of Halloween, I want wish you a happy and healthy school year! This past September, we had our Opening Day General Membership meeting for the BEES. It was another successful kick off to the school year, followed by the VOTECOPE Raffle. Through the VOTECOPE raffle, 48 VOTECOPE members were able to win a gift certificate. Like in previous years, we were able to stretch that money out by 23% so more members were able to win a gift card. Congratulations to our winners! VOTECOPE is NYSUT's non-partisan action fund that coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and supports NYSUT endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public education and pro-labor. Please contact your BEES Building Rep. or me if you are interested in becoming a member of VOTECOPE. Due to the new collective bargaining agreement, members can sign up using an enrollment card or they can now sign up through electronic enrollment. Please reach out to your building rep. for more information or you can contact me directly: keithbeeunion@gmail.com Election Day is November 5 th and it's quickly approaching. Please head out to the polls and vote for pro- education and pro-labor candidates. NYSUT is working hard to educate the membership statewide on the endorsement of candidates that are looking to fortify our member benefits, to preserve collective bargaining and to secure our pensions. Also, Fixing Tier 6 so they can receive the same benefits as our Tier 4 members. There is a ton of work to be done in order to fix those inequities. There are 18 (D) and 14 (R) who were endorsed by NYSUT. Please refer to the NYSUT Long Island Endorsed Candidates list. Political Action Committee (PAC) opportunities are available for members who would like to get involved at the Suffolk Regional Office (Hauppauge). There are Phone Banks and Labor Walks if any of our BEES members would like to get involved heading into election season. The phone banks are located in BBP/ Sayville, Sachem and the SRO in Hauppauge. NYSUT is looking for more members to get involved in any way possible so please email me if you would like to get involved. keithbeeunion@gmail.com

I wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season!

Keith Flynn



# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



## Your Voice, Your Union

<b>SUPPORT VOTE-COPE</b>	SUPPORT EDUCATORS	<b>In just the past year, this is what we have accomplished thanks to NYSUT members' voluntary donations to VOTE-COPE:</b>
	HELP OUR STUDENTS	
	PROTECT OUR RIGHTS	
	ADVANCE DEMOCRACY	
	UNITE OUR NATION	

### IN NEW YORK STATE

 <b>7.2% INCREASE</b> in school aid	<b>\$31.2 BILLION</b> in total school aid and full foundation aid funding	<b>\$891.8 MILLION</b> for public higher education at SUNY and CUNY	<b>\$106 MILLION</b> for the hiring of full-time faculty at SUNY and CUNY	Elimination of the burdensome <b>edTPA</b> 
 <b>APPR</b> suspended for another year	 Addressing class size in NYC	Fixes to <b>Tier 6</b> retirement 	 Expanded accommodations for breastfeeding in the workplace	

### IN SCHOOL BOARD & BUDGET ELECTIONS

<b>60</b> <b>NYSUT MEMBERS</b> were elected or re-elected	<b>86%</b> of pro-education, pro-student endorsed candidates <b>WON</b>	<b>99%</b> of school budgets passed 
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### AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Passage of the **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN**

- \$170 billion in dedicated funding to advance the process of returning to in-person instruction in K-12 school buildings.
- \$350 billion in state and local aid to help avoid layoffs of educators and other essential public servants.

Passage of the **INFLATION REDUCTION ACT**

## Supporting VOTE-COPE is how we get it done.

This coming year, we'll be back at it as the voice of New York's educators in the halls of power.

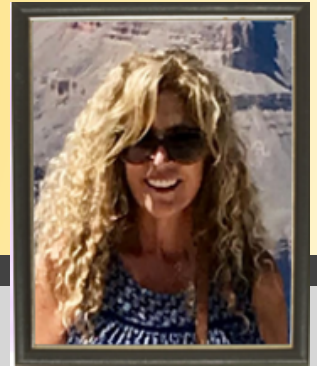
- Fixing APPR permanently so you can teach and your students can learn.
- Reforming receivership which unfairly punishes schools based on flawed test scores.
- Properly funding our SUNY and CUNY colleges.
- Fighting at the bargaining table for good jobs, health care, better workplace conditions and your future.



Learn more and support at **VOTE-COPE.ORG**



# Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



## Amazing SRPs

Dear Fellow BEES Members.

Welcome back! I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer and has adjusted to the new school year!

I was informed by HR that staff, that those who were entitled to the 300.00 stipend for 7 or less absences last school year, should have received the payment by now. If any member feels they should have received it and hasn't, please look over your wincap to make sure that it correlates with the absences you believe you had taken. If you still feel you were entitled, please get in touch with your building rep and we can take it from there.

Newly hired Teaching Assistants should be aware of all the requirements they need to complete in the time frame that is required by the State Education Department. All Building reps have the information you need so please ask for help if you feel you need it.

We do not have the new seniority list available at this time, and as soon as I have it I will inform the building reps.

We will be having many opportunities to learn about your union and benefits this year. Be sure to attend your union meeting to get information about new member meetings, tenure celebrations, and financial literacy workshops held at our new union office. We hope to see you there.

I would like to wish all our members a successful and happy school year and thank you for your support.

Angela





## Union Strong All Day Long

Welcome to the new school year and new beginnings! Hope everyone has had a great September!

Welcome Masera Middle School! How exciting...a middle school! From what I hear the building is beautiful and everything is new and high tech! Can't wait to visit and see the program!

I am looking forward to working with all of our members in this new role. I was a building rep for many years and will continue to advocate for you and our students.

I would like to thank the E- Board and the Negotiation Team for all of your hard work and commitment to the members on getting a contract signed before the school year started.

Let's work together to make our Union as strong as it can be! Have a great year!

Dana



# Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



## Things to Remember

Welcome back!! I hope everyone has had a great start to the school year and I welcome all the many new related services, itinerants and special subject members. I want to start by thanking everyone for their help, support, input and patience during the negotiations of our new contract. The contract was passed by almost a 75%-25% split so I'm thinking most of our membership was happy with the outcome of the negotiations. I feel we made a lot of advancement in areas we never had addressed in previous contracts such as the stipends, so hopefully with each contract moving forward more areas can be looked at. As for those licensed related service members who are entitled to the stipend, we have gone up from \$500.00 to \$800.00 per year. Please remember to get your updated license into HR attention Jean Christensen or you will not receive the stipend and it is required of us by ESBOCES. As I write this, I want to encourage everyone who has not completed the updated Mandated Reporter Training (<https://www.hslcnys.org/hslc/>) to do so soon. It will take approximately 2 ½ hours and needs to be completed by April 1, 2025 so you can remain employed. Completing this is required by law, Chapter 56 of the laws of 2021 amended Social Services Law 413. Once you complete the course you must then click on the link that will send it to the state. It is your responsibility to make sure it goes into your teach account. Once it goes into your teach account it can be found under workshops as Child Abuse Identification (New Program) listed. Each of these steps could take some time so I urge you if you have not completed this yet to do so. I also encourage you all to set up a 403B with one of the approved companies in OMNI. It is very important to have a 403B especially as you get close to having saved 200 sick days. Once the balance of saved sick days is at 200 days you can no longer increase that number however whatever sick days you did not use in that school year will now be rolled over into your 403B. You will see a deposit made into your 403B account in August for these sick days you did not use. This is a nice way to get some extra money into your retirement just by not using your sick days.

# Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



## Things to Remember

Also, another way we have increased salaries under the new contract is the increased amount in longevities and the amount of times we get longevities. Many districts do not have longevity in their contracts, or if they do they are not cumulative or even at the amounts that we have at ESBOCES so make sure you are receiving the correct amount. If you are unsure of how the longevities are added to your salaries or how to calculate the correct amount please reach out. This is a great benefit in our contract and it seems like so many members are unsure of what they are entitled to or how they are calculated. Lastly, if you are not sure about an issue, a policy or a procedure always reach out to either your building rep., building BEES Buddy, mentor or someone on the Executive Board. No one person has all the answers but there are plenty of places and people who can help you navigate any questions or issues that may come your way. Remember, all contracts are on the ESBOCES website, however our NEW contract is still being reviewed by the lawyers to make sure every T is crossed and every I is dotted. Please have patience until we have the finalized copies so in the meantime please reach out should you have any questions. My contact information is beesvpitin@gmail.com I'm located at Sequoya HS 631-622- 1240. Please note that the itinerant meetings will be held at our new union office which is located at 1150 Portion Rd., Holtsville. Suite #1. The meeting dates are 10/23/24 and 4/30/25 both at 3:30pm.

Kristin



# Area VP for CTE/SCE - Deirdre Pettit

## Success!

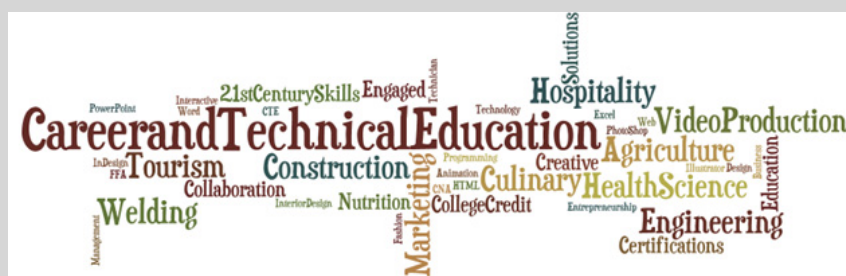


We are once again at the end of a long and hard school year. One of my favorite days is when the "big white tent" goes up outside of ICC and I know Recongition Day is finally here!! I instantly start humming the Christmas song lyrics to "It's the Most Wonderful Time of The Year." What is even more ironic is that there is actually a television commercial that shows parents singing the same song as they shop for back-to-school supplies at the beginning of the school year. It's all about perspective; both of us are humming the song because we are happy, just at different times of the year. I became a union representative about 12 years ago and I enjoyed attending the monthly meetings and hearing about the different perspectives the agency held about us as their employees and how the employees felt about the agency. I was never a part of a union before. My only perspective was, "If you just do your job, why do you need one?" Boy, was I limited in my thinking and understanding. Today, I truly understand that there is power in numbers. I am a part of the Fix Tier 6 movement and I believe that it will get fixed. The hardest part for me as a union member and now the area VP is that I get super frustrated with how long it takes to make changes. I assumed that because the NYSUT membership is huge, that change would be swift. I have been told it will probably take years to fix Tier 6 and the one thing I personally can do is continue to support those who are actively working to make that change happen. My hope for all of you is that the next 10 weeks move at the pace you want them to. For some members, that may be super slow and long, and for others, you may want the next 10 weeks to fly by. What I do know is this: if I am not stuck in my thinking and I am open to other perspectives, then that silly little song might actually play in my head at the beginning of the year, halfway through, and again on recognition day.

Enjoy your summer and I look forward to seeing you in September.

Deirdre

[Dkroupa222@gmail.com](mailto:Dkroupa222@gmail.com)



# Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



## It Benefits You to Know

Good day members,

I would first like to applaud all of the hard work of every single member, your work is appreciated. Welcome back to all of our returning and new members, we are happy to see you.

I have some housekeeping items I would like to share with you:

1. Open enrollment begins in November. Any discrepancies in your care plan are showing up at this time. November is the time to adjust that. Whether it's approving a new medical plan or adjusting your FLEX benefit deductions, now is the time to do that. Be aware of what each plan offers and look at the pros and cons of each for your individual or family needs.
2. Anticipate what your needs will be in the near future. I am sure you are seeing how quickly things turn around. Medical expenditures, dependent care and childcare have all increased. When funding a FLEX plan keep in mind, any money not used will be forfeited at the end of the term.
3. You may be having financial difficulties due to rising prices. One way to free up some cashflow is to temporarily reduce contributions to your voluntary retirement accounts. Your 403 b or 507 type plans can be temporarily reduced to put those funds back into your paycheck. Be sure to increase your contributions again when you can afford to. Your union has also worked to make a Roth 403b option available to you as well as adding Vanguard to the list of 403b providers. If you feel comfortable, Vanguard offers the option to self manage your plan and avoid many overhead fees. Look out for a financial literacy workshop coming in November to our union office!
4. For many of us, the demands of today can cause anxiety and burnout. Take time to decompress if possible. Seek out friends and family to change the mood cycle. We have a great resource at Eastern Suffolk BOCES called the Employee Assistance Program. The program has a wide range of assistance from helping with small to medium tasks to counseling and referrals. If you find yourself in need please ask for help. If you can offer assistance let the E.A.P. know also, this is a network style of assistance. Email [eap@esboces.org](mailto:eap@esboces.org). Please be assured that all matters are kept confidential.
5. For members who are struggling with serious financial difficulties and may find themselves without the daily necessities, a warm bed, food, and clothes, we also have the Employee Resource Foundation. This is another way for employees to confidentially get assistance with any immediate financial needs. You can find more information here - <https://www.esboces.org/about-us/for-staff/employees-resource-foundation>

Stay safe, stay upbeat and stay informed as a BEES member.

-Nick

**UNION  
STRONG  
UNION  
PROUD**

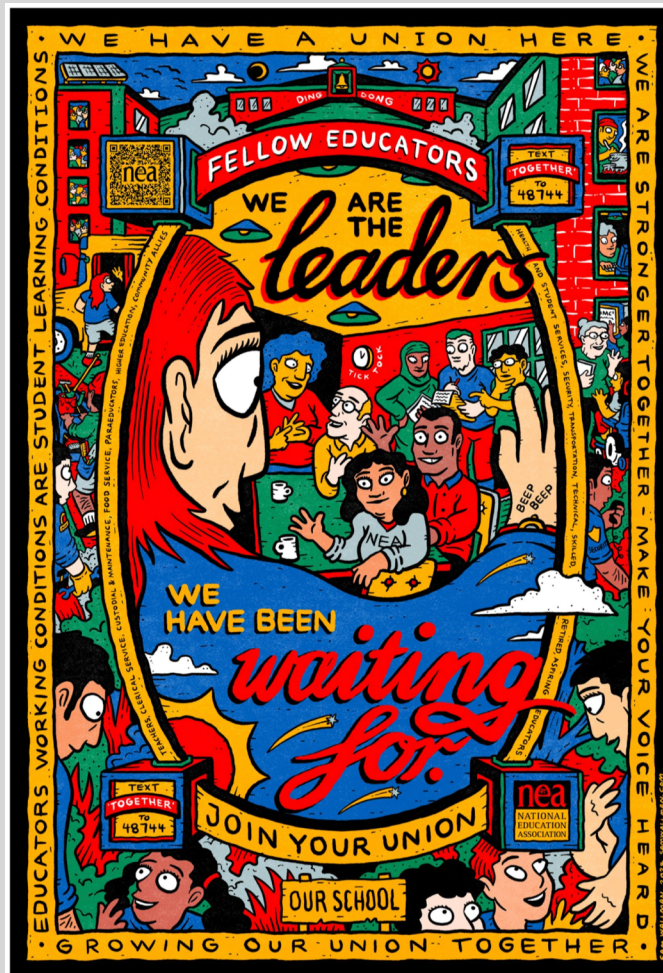
# Membership Coordinator - Adrian Grube



## A Happy Hive

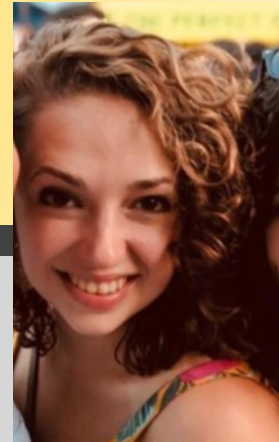
Welcome back all! I am very excited to begin another year as your membership coordinator. I hope this year brings you joy, happiness and fulfillment. As this year unfolds it brings us to many uncertain things, the upcoming election, further information on the fix tier 6 movement, and changes in the economy. As these moments and others unfold around us I hope we can show everyone how strong we are together, by staying strong and working together! I look forward to seeing you all throughout the year at all the awesome events we are hoping to host for you. Have a wonderful 2024-2025 school year!

Adrian



# Treasurer - Rachael Klahn

## Budgeting the BEES



Happy fall everyone! I hope you all are enjoying this new school year and are settling in. This year there are some adjustments to the dues schedule in the NYSUT and local dues categories. For any payroll deduction questions, please reference your dues schedule. As a reminder, the dues deductions are withdrawn on the third pay period, which takes place in October. The deductions will continue for 18 consecutive pay periods ending in June. A copy of the dues schedule is available on the BEESBEACON.org webpage and is shown below for reference.

### NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL Dues Schedule for 2024-2025 Membership Year

NYSUT (Codes)	Membership Category By Salary Range	NYSUT Annual Per Capital	AFT Annual Per Capital	LOCAL DUES	TOTAL NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL DUES	AMOUNT Deducted per Pay Period (18 Pay Periods)	INCREASE Per Pay Period
(1) Full	\$34,000 and higher	\$394.00	\$242.16	\$368.84	\$1,005.00	\$55.83	\$0.57
(7) 3/4	\$25,500 to 33,999	\$295.50	\$121.08	\$226.92	\$643.50	\$35.75	\$0.47
(2) 1/2	\$17,000 to \$25,499	\$197.00	\$121.08	\$174.72	\$492.80	\$27.38	\$0.36
(5) 1/4	\$8,500 to \$16,999	\$98.50	\$60.54	\$122.16	\$281.20	\$15.62	\$0.24
(8) 1/8	Under \$8,499	\$49.25	\$30.27	\$40.43	\$119.95	\$6.66	\$0.18
(6)	Unpaid leave Laid-off	\$10.00	\$12.00		\$22.00	\$1.22	-0-
(9) **	Per-Diem Substitute	---	---	---	---	\$.70/day	-0-
(3)	Retirees (pre-funded)	---	---	\$35.00	---	---	-0-
*	Full/Split	\$394.00	\$121.08	\$278.60	\$793.68	\$44.09	\$0.57

**Note:\*** A special split NYSUT/AFT category within Code 1 (Full Dues) exists only if members are earning more than \$34,000 but less than the basic teacher's salary.  
**\*\*Per- Diem Substitutes dues are \$.70 per day for NYSUT/AFT up to a maximum of 1/2 dues. Refer to Membership Reporting & Dues Transmittal Handbook for additional information.**

Full Dues Paying Member	2023-2024	2024-2025	Increase
NYSUT	\$386.00	\$394.00	\$8.00
AFT	\$242.16	\$242.16	\$0.00
LOCAL	\$366.44	\$368.84	\$2.40
TOTAL	\$994.60	\$1,005.00	\$10.40

Proposed income for the 2024-2025 budget is based on an estimated (full)704, (Split)57, (3/4) 613, (1/2)190, (1/4) 1 dues contributions and interest from savings. Active Members + Leave = 1,611 Total Members.

Submitted by the **BEES Budget Committee:**

Asha Mazza Shaw - President, Rachael Klahn - Treasurer, Adrian Grube - Chairperson, Dana Sayers & Marianne Zioba, Active Members

Dues deductions begin the 3<sup>rd</sup> pay period for (18) consecutive pay periods.

**VOTE/COPE**  
 So much to give, so little to give!  
 If you are not a vote cope member, please fill out a card this evening for automatic payroll deduction one time a year of \$12.00(side) \$25.00(TA) \$50.00(Teacher) donation.

**\*Reminder\*** All up & coming retirees must join the B.E.E.S retiree Chapter in order to retain any insurance you may have through NYSUT.

I hope everyone has a safe, healthy, and fun-filled holiday season!

Sincerely,  
 Rachael

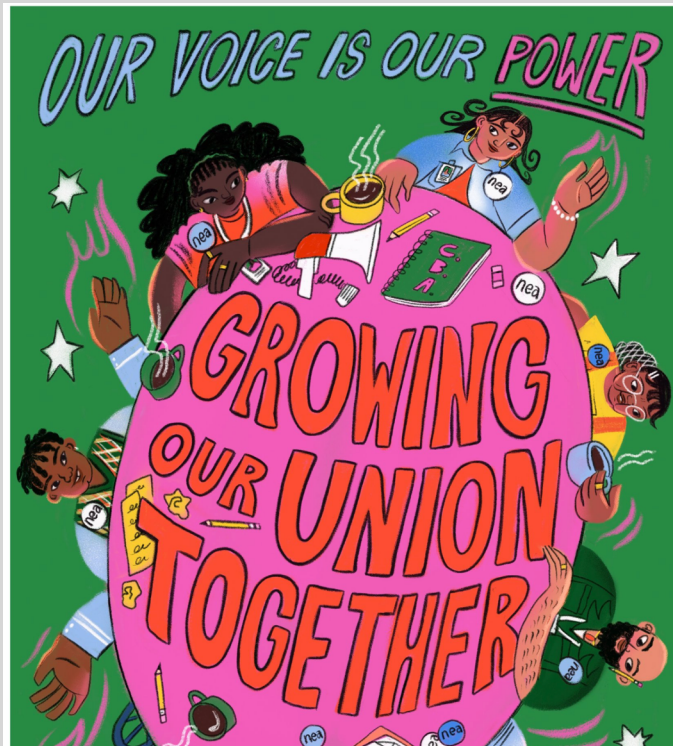
# Grievance Officer - Tiffany Robinson

## Welcome Everyone!



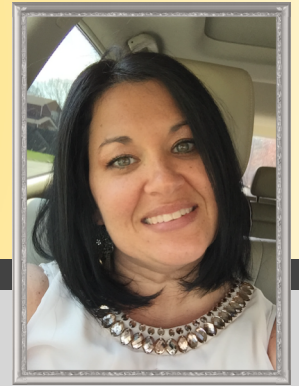
Hello fellow BEES members! Hope that everyone had a happy and healthy summer break and got a chance to recharge for the new school year. It is very important that our members stay involved and informed, so please familiarize yourself with all available resources and feel free to reach out. You have an E-Board that is dedicated to their members and truly makes every effort to go above and beyond for its membership. With all the hiring that is taking place agency wide, I would like to say welcome to all the new members and encourage them to get involved because all voices matter, old and new! We all know that the strength of our union lies in our unity. When we stand together, our collective efforts make it possible to secure the respect and recognition we all deserve. Thank you for standing by your union!! Hoping that everyone has a productive school year!

Tiffany



# Social Chair - Danielle Ibba-Morabito

## Let's BEE Social



Welcome back everyone! We have some exciting events in store for you this year, so be sure to attend your building meetings and keep up with us on our website and social media pages!

### Patchogue Theater Discount code

The BEES were able to secure an discount code for members of the BEES union for **ALL** events at the patchogue theater. Please use the code **BEES25** at checkout to save on the fees for each ticket. <https://www.patchogetheatre.org>

BEES Gear is here! If you would like to add to your BEES gear collection, look no further! Check out our great selection and order today!

**EASTEND** SCREENPRINTING  
**BEES** UNION  
CONVOLUTION: Buy to BEE better  
QR Code

**Bees Union 2024**  
You can now purchase your items online in 3 easy steps:  
1. Scan the QR code or go online to <https://bees24.itemorder.com/>  
2. Choose your items and add them to your cart  
3. Securely checkout with your credit card  
Online Store Deadline: **Sunday November 10th, 2024 (11:59pm EST)**

<b>Full-Zip Hooded Sweatshirt</b>  \$45.00	<b>Hooded Sweatshirt</b>  \$40.00	<b>Crewneck Sweatshirt</b>  \$35.00	<b>Long Sleeve Cotton Tee</b>  \$30.00
<b>Cotton Tee</b>  \$25.00	<b>Dri Fit Polo</b>  \$30.00		

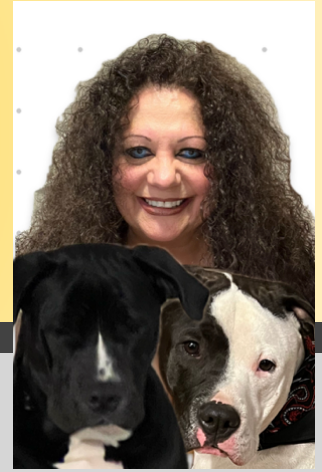
powered by **ORDERMYGEAR**  
Questions?  
Jimmy Butler  
(516) 446-7670  
jbutler4@gmail.com  
<http://www.eastendscreenprinting.com/>

**Welfare:** The loss of a loved one is an emotional time, and one of the worst things we may go through in life. It is with that thought that we would like to reach out to our families in need in a timely manner. There are guidelines for sending out cards or a small token to the family of a member. In the past I have gotten several requests that I was not able to send out in a timely manner because the guidelines below were not adhered to. Please make sure that you include all of the information listed below so that we may pay our respects to the families in their time of need. Thank you.

Guidelines for welfare: A bereavement card will be sent in the event of a member's spouse, parent, child, or sibling's death. In the case of a member passing, special circumstances will then apply. The procedure for a sympathy card to be sent is as follows: Members should contact their building representative as soon as they believe a member meets the above guidelines and a bereavement card should be sent. The building representative should contact me via email at [daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com](mailto:daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com) with the member's name, address as well as the name and relation to the deceased. In the event it is a member that has passed, I still need their name, address and a home or cell number of a member of their family so that we can acknowledge their service with us in a special way. If you need more information, see your building rep, check out our BEES website or feel free to send me an email. My email address is: [daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com](mailto:daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com) Have a great, healthy, and safe school year!

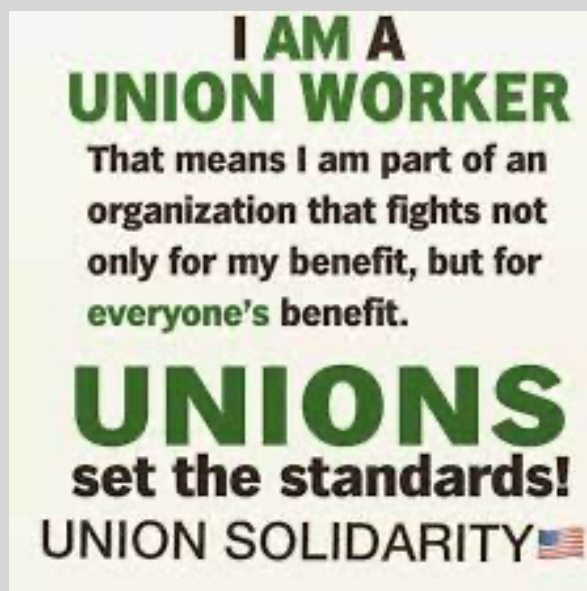
# Recording Secretary - Marianne Zioba Longabardi

## Nice Notes



Hello my fellow union brothers and sisters. I hope you all enjoyed your summer vacation break. I look forward to working with all of you, and I would like to send out a warm welcome to our new hires, remember we are union strong. I am here to answer questions and help all our members to the best of my ability. Together we will stand united as union brothers and sisters to make things better. Let's all have a great new school year.

Fraternally yours, Marianne Zioba Longabardi



# Retiree Chapter Chairperson - Terry Kalb

## Radiant Retirees



Hello BEES Retirees and Retirees in training!

We are so grateful that our BEES Retiree Chapter has a welcome and ongoing connection to our in-service local. My role as your chair and E-Board representative is to bring retiree issues and concerns to our union's decision making processes.

The programs that are so essential to our lives as retirees- Medicare and Social Security, are always in need of protection from those who would love to diminish, privatize or even eliminate them. Please be very careful about supporting politicians who see these programs as budget busters. In fact, they stand alone as self funded through payroll deductions and do not add a penny to any national debt or budget deficit. If the inequitable cap on those payroll deductions for the very wealthiest earners were removed, Medicare would have full funding well into the next century. We could even afford to enhance it with vision, hearing and dental coverage if the cap benefiting only the very rich was removed.

Be sure to get out and vote! You can also get involved! Whether it's phone banking, canvassing, or showing up to rallies, your efforts as retirees with the time to support pro-union, pro-education causes, are crucial to electing leaders who support public education and working families. Together, we can make a difference!

Check here to see how you can get involved - <https://commongroundoverchaos.org/get-involved>

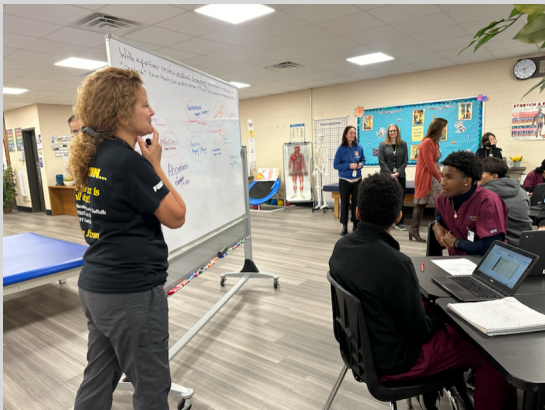
Stay well, and stay connected!  
Terry Kalb  
BEES Retiree Chapter President



# Spotlight on Our BEES Community

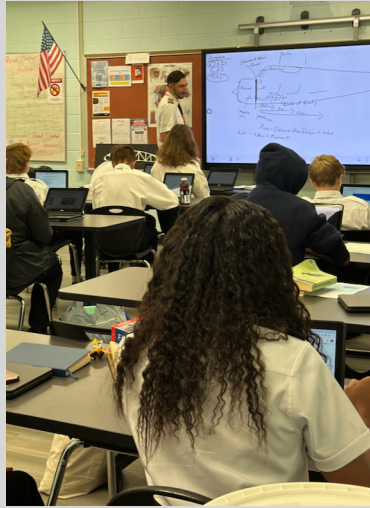
## NYSUT Visits the BEES

This issue of "Spotlight on Our BEES Community," highlights a recent visit from our NYSUT President, Melinda Person. President Person toured our Bellport campus and visited our BTC, BAC, and BLC programs with our own BEES president, Asha Mazza-Shaw. As they toured the programs and campus the two presidents spoke with buidling administration about the amazing opportunities offered to the students at each. Joined by Divisional Administrator for Special Ed. Gina Reilly, each program administrator was passionate and brimmed with pride as they spoke about their BEES staff and the students we serve. While touring BTC, Divisional administrator for CTE Leah Arnold joined the tour and the discussion turned to the BOCES aid formula needing to be increased so that districts are more fully reimbursed for sending students to a BOCES program. "The BOCES aid formula has not been changed since 1990, and we have been lobbying for a change to that for as long as I can remember." said Asha. President Person agreed that with the movement towards more CTE programming, that the BOCES aid formula needs to be updated. The NYSUT team was so impressed with the immense amount of CTE courses offered at BTC, one of them even got a fresh fade in the barber shop! Overall the visit was inspiring, and President Person and the team from NYSUT shared that our programs have "incredible energy, our staff is warm and welcoming, it was great to spend time with the BEES!"



# Spotlight on Our BEES Community

## NYSUT Visits the BEES





# **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 Ritchie - Area Vice President Para Educators**  
**Patti Richards - Area Vice President Special Education**  
**Kristin Ericson-Abbruzzese - Area Vice President Itinerants/SAS**  
**Deirdre Pettit - Area Vice President CTE/SCE**  
**Rachael Klahn - Treasurer**  
**Nick DeBlanco - Contractual Benefits Officer**  
**Adrian Grube - Membership Coordinator**  
**Dana Sayers - 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**

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*NYSUT Local 22-220*  
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*Farmingville, NY 11738*  
*(631)475-4704*  
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*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*

