

# Hudson Teacher's Association

## HTA OFFICERS

President: Jack Beyer

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Jen Clark

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Justin Cukerstein

External Secretary: Julie Coryell

Internal Secretary: Ellen Huemmer

Treasurer: Lucy Rees

Assistant Treasurer: Anna Barletta

Public Relations: Victoria Dougherty

## Building Reps

### JLE

Melissa Brown & Kim Cruger

### MCSIS

Marlene Parmentier & Tani Quinion

### JHS

Carey Ann Daniels & Emily Goldstein

### HHS

Brian Palmieri & Wayne Kinney

## Negotiations Committee

**Chuck Peters, JH**

**Mike Antonelli, HS**

**Terry Ohl, JLE**

**Melissa Brown, JLE**

**Lisa Dwyer, JH**

**Jen Clark, JH**

**Justin Cukerstein, HS**

## A Letter from the President by Jack Beyer, HHS

Dear HTA Members,

As the President of the HTA I would like to welcome back everyone. This year, HTA will be utilizing our website, newsletters and emails to keep you informed.

This will be our first full year with the APPR. We all need to work together. I know that some of us are still not comfortable with it. If you are not, please ask someone from the APPR committee or a colleague for guidance. There are some returning and new teachers also who will have many questions. Please extend a helping hand to them as well.

Now that the scores are out, NYSUT is saying that the scores are based on

a flawed implementation of the new Common Core Learning Standards. It is NOT a reflection of teacher effectiveness or student achievement. The problems are associated with moving too fast without taking into account what matters most - giving our children what they need to succeed. I know that you

all are working hard to make this happen.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a great school year with many successes.



## Contract Corner by Lisa Dwyer, JH

Check your personal leave days and sick leave days on your paycheck. Any personal days that were left over from last year should now be in your sick leave. Employees in their probationary period should have received ten (10) additional sick leave days. Tenured employees should have received eleven (11) additional sick leave days. Personal leave days should also have been added. One (1) personal leave day for a first year employee, two (2) personal leave days for a year leave days for employees in their third and subsequent years. Refer to Article 11 on pages 9 through 12.

APPR

Review the September section of the APPR Timeline.

**APPR Committee**

**Jack Beyer –  
President**

**Terry Ohl, JLE  
Melissa Brown, JLE**

**Tani Quinion, IS**

**Lisa Dwyer, JH  
Chuck Peters, JH**

**Wayne Kinney, HS**

## Wellness Benefits for BSNENY Members from BSNENY

Blue Shield members can take advantage of Blue 365. To sign up, go to [www.bsneny.com](http://www.bsneny.com), and search blue365. Click on the blue365 link, and click on register online.

Registering for Blue 365 allows you access to discounts on a variety of services. Everything from personal care, fitness, healthy eating, experiences, and living are offered. Browse the

categories and find discounts on gym memberships, dental services, rock climbing, and more.

Additionally, BSNENY members are entitled to take two 10 week fitness classes per calendar year. Visit [www.bsneny.com](http://www.bsneny.com), click on Health & Wellness, Community Wellness Seminars, & then Physical Activity & Fitness. Scroll all the way

to the bottom & click on the Wellness Seminars box. This will give you a list of all the available classes and phone numbers for you to take advantage of.

There are many options to choose from including Zumba, spinning, yoga, pilates, and cardio step just to name a few. Be sure to check it out and begin your journey to a better you!

## Changes in ELA Instruction by Theresa Cipollari, HHS

The 2013-14 school year is bringing many changes in the way we teach. The common goal is to get students college and career ready. It is the first year that students will be taught Common Core Instruction and it is changing the way that we, in the Hudson City School District, teach our students. Common Core Instruction is being taught now in forty-five states and is a common thread that keeps our nation on the same track academically.

Many parents and teachers are wondering, what does this mean? One drastic change is the way material is being instructed. Instead of doing units, based on novels, we are now

teaching modules, based on themes. Each module will contain literature, close reading, date driven instruction, and non-fiction that can be presented in various forms. Students are expected to read 50 percent of non-fiction materials. They will learn to make evidence based claims based on what they read. Many lessons will be student instructed with the teacher's role as facilitator.

The incoming freshmen class will be the first group not taking the Regents exam. Instead, they will be taking a Common Core ELA exam, given in early June of their junior year. The junior and sophomore classes will still take the Regents exam and are eligible to

also take the Common Core Exam during their junior year as well. The State is also determining whether every student entering high school must complete a research paper in order to graduate. This year's incoming freshmen class will be taking a mandatory writing class to help better prepare them for the new expectations set by State Ed.

There is a wealth of information and videos on the [engageny.org](http://engageny.org) website. Things are constantly changing and it will be a learning experience for all of us! Our goal is to better prepare our students as they enter college or the work force.

*Something great  
going on in your  
class or building?*

*Email Jen Clark  
with your story or  
photo and we will  
get it in the next  
newsletter!*

## HTA Dues Breakdown by Lucy Rees

Three organizations are supported with the dues each member pays. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is the national organization. The dues to AFT are \$346.00 for the 2013-2014 school year. The second portion of the dues, \$213.36, goes to the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). The local portion of the dues, \$120.00, goes to the Hudson Teachers Association. The local dues are used to support social activities for members, charitable contributions to community groups that support the children in the Hudson City School District, and recognition of life events (births, weddings, illness and death) of the members.

## Standing Up For Our Professions by NYSUT

NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi released a [statement](#) today that criticizes the use of performance data from new tests based on the Common Core standards, tests that SED prematurely rolled out in the spring. His message is clear: As the new school year begins, NYSUT will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with parents to fight for the future of public education, to protect against the misuse of standardized testing data, and to demand that state education policymakers get it right.

To highlight the fact that we stand united in our fight for what is right, Dick is sending K-12 members a personal letter this week to reassure them that NYSUT will not stop working until the current course is corrected and the voices of practitioners are heard by policymakers at all levels.

As the school year starts, we are working to harness the energy of the growing number of educators and parents who are outraged by the state's obsession with overtesting. Iannuzzi is urging local leaders to step up efforts to engage parent and community members in our fight to get it right.

Visit [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) for more information.



Take the time to **WELCOME** the following teachers!

*Genevieve White, IS*  
*Kristin Lent-IS*  
*Amie Malin-IS*  
*Shawn Briscoe-JH*  
*Brian Capuano-JH*  
*Sally Ostrander-JH*  
*Doug Fenson-HS*  
*Michelle Nowak-HS*

### Upcoming Fundraisers

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Giffy's Chix BBQ**  
**@ HHS 4-6 pm**  
**Benefits HCBF**

**October 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**Homecoming Sub Sale**  
**Greenport Pumper #3**  
**4-6 pm**

**Meet the**  
**Teacher Nights**  
**JLE-9/10 6:30**  
**IS-9/12 6:00**  
**JH-9/19 5:45**  
**HS-9/19 6:00**

**HOW CHILDREN SUCCEED GRIT, CURIOSITY, AND THE HIDDEN POWER OF CHARACTER**

by Paul Tough

Reviewed by Lisa Dolan, MCSIS

One of the strengths of the Hudson City School District population is the diversity of our student body. We educate children from thirteen different countries. Our public school is where all of these groups first meld, ideally, forming a learning community where the strength and background of each individual can be realized, celebrated, learned from. And then we factor in the variables. The extremes of American childhood. Language barriers, and the stresses that accompany poverty.

The adversity some students face before arriving at the doors of John L. Edwards School at age five not only affect their lives, but can alter the physical development of their brains. At the very same time, we, as educators must strive to have each child “College and Career Ready” by the time they graduate from Hudson High School.

In *HOW CHILDREN SUCCEED*, Paul Tough (acclaimed author of *WHATEVER IT TAKES: GEOFFREY CANADA'S QUEST TO CHANGE HARLEM AND AMERICA*) argues that society as a whole can do an enormous amount to influence the success of our children.

From the introduction:

“At its core, this book is about an ambitious and far-reaching campaign to solve some of the most pervasive mysteries of life: Who succeeds and who fails? Why do some children thrive while others lose their way? And what can any of us do to steer an individual child—or a whole generation of children—away from failure and toward success?”

Anecdotal vignettes in Tough's book will have adult readers thinking of a child they know or have taught. Children who have problems with impulse control, who lack the will power necessary to delay gratification.

Readers are supplied with this assumption: Non-cognitive skills are more crucial than intelligence when predicting success. And this is hopeful news. While IQ is resistant to improvement after age eight, the ability to handle stress and manage emotions can be improved throughout a lifetime. Programs that target emotional and psychological health can be effective in later childhood. While early interventions are vital, children continue to respond to interventions as time passes. Character skills such as optimism, resilience, and social agility can be learned, practiced, and more importantly, taught. We can influence students and help to steer them on a successful course. We can teach grit, social intelligence, self-control. The power of character matters, and we can help students to take those first steps.

Two important excerpts from Tough's final chapter:

1. “This is the downside to conflating the education debate with the poverty debate—you can get distracted from the real issue. You start thinking that the only important question is, How do we improve teacher quality?, when really that is just a small part of a much broader and more profound question: What can we as a country do to significantly improve the life chances of millions of poor children?”
2. Science suggests this reality: “Character strengths that matter so much to young people's success are not innate; they don't appear magically, as a result of good luck or good genes. And they are not simply a choice. They are rooted in brain chemistry, and they are molded, in measurable and predictable ways, by the environment in which children grow up. That means the rest of us—society as a whole—can do an enormous amount to influence their development in children.”

It seems a good way to greet the students in September. Hopeful. Knowing the solutions are part of a larger community. Thinking of ways that we as teachers and as a school can become a part of it. *HOW CHILDREN SUCCEED* is a quick, entertaining, informative read. I am happy to lend it to anyone interested. It makes you think and feel that everyone's future has the potential to be amazing. Have a great 2013-14 school year!



# The benefits of an *online* bank

*Have you heard of online banks?* These are banking institutions that do not utilize actual “brick and mortar” branches; instead, they offer banking services that are predominantly done online.

So why consider using one of these types of banks? Online banks are often able to offer superior rates and incentives since they don’t have physical locations -- thereby passing these savings along to their customers.

Many people decide to utilize online banks in conjunction with their current traditional bank to secure higher rates for supplemental accounts, such as term-based certificates of deposits (CDs), savings accounts or IRAs.

The Member Benefits Corporation endorses the GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program, which is an online banking service that allows NYSUT members and their families to take advantage of some of today’s most competitive interest rates.



## GE Capital Retail Bank

*4 reasons to use the  
GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program:*

1. Earn preferred interest rates on Money Market Accounts, High-Yield Savings Accounts, CDs, and IRAs.
2. Access your money and account information 24/7 by phone or online.
3. Grow your funds, finance a vacation, save for retirement, and much more!
4. All GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program customers receive free identity theft resolution services.

Learn how the GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program can help you save by calling toll-free 866-226-5638 or visiting [gecrbatwork.com](http://gecrbatwork.com) (enter “NYSUT” in the company or association name box).

## Financial expertise customized for your situation



Looking to learn how to properly invest your assets to build a college savings or retirement fund; what to look for when purchasing or financing a home; or maybe tips for getting your credit under control?

The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program – provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. – offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation.

### The program offers:

- Up to six hours of objective toll-free telephone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.
- In-person consultations at least once per calendar year at your NYSUT Regional Office or Stacey Braun's New York City office
- Access to Stacey Braun’s password-protected website and a 24-hour email helpdesk for basic financial questions.
- NYSUT members can purchase the Financial Counseling Program for an annual fee of \$260; a 403(b) Limited Plan is available for an annual fee of \$185.

For more information, call **800-626-8101** or visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.