

Resolutions Committee Report *Doris R. Kirsch, Chair*

The Resolutions Committee reviewed the ten proposals that were submitted by five different zones. These proposals appear below. Seven of the proposals are recommended for consideration by the delegates at the 2015 Annual Meeting. Any proposal that is not recommended by the committee may be brought up for consideration by an approval of 2/3 of the delegates. All NYSRTA members should review these proposals and make their feelings about them known to their zone president, Resolutions Chair and delegates. A complete listing of the resolutions that have already been adopted can be found on the NYSRTA website.

Resolution A-15-1: Increasing COLA Cap to Reflect Inflation (Southern Zone)

WHEREAS, the COLA Cap on our pensions was set over ten years previously; and

WHEREAS, there has been no increase in the COLA Cap during that time; and

WHEREAS, the inflation rate has increased during those years; and

WHEREAS, the COLA Cap does not now reflect the increase in inflation that has occurred over the past years;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support and promote legislation to increase the COLA Cap to account for the rate of inflation that has occurred since the inception of the COLA Cap.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objectives 1 & 3

The Resolutions Committee voted "To Recommend"

Resolution D-15-1: Common Core (Long Island Zone)

WHEREAS, Common Core was initiated and processed by corporate sponsorship with minimal input from teachers and many of the materials are sold from this company; and

WHEREAS, this was thrust upon teachers and pupils with no advance training or preparation regarding its goals, purposes and outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the tenth amendment to the Constitution states "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"; and

WHEREAS, in addition, federal authority over

education is regulated by the following laws: The General Education Provisions Act of 1965, The Dept. of Education Organization Act of 1979, The Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind "Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal Law, no state shall be required to have academic content or student achievement standards approved or certified by the Federal Government, in order to receive assistance under this act" and the restrictions are applicable to all programs administered by the federal Dept. of Education; and

WHEREAS, there is controversy concerning the curriculum – concerns that it is not aligned with traditional values of our Founding Fathers, as patriotism, sacrifices made by our leaders, their leadership abilities and positive attributes, for example of Washington and Madison, and instead fosters highlighting race, gender, ethnicity and negative aspects of our country; and

WHEREAS, there is no realization that each class is unique unto itself pertaining to ethnicity, mental abilities or lack thereof, affluence, and parental background or dysfunction and no consideration for special educational students or language barriers; and

WHEREAS, it stifles creativity and innovation for the classroom teacher, its long-term effects as yet unproven;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that NYSRTA disapprove of the Common Core as written and promulgated.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted "To Recommend"

Resolution D-15-2: Common Core – Evaluations (Long Island Zone)

WHEREAS, there has been a large opt-out movement in NY State testing for literature and mathematics questioning the validity of the test for student and teacher evaluation; and

WHEREAS, many students do not have the advantages possessed by others upon entering school, such as pre-school, participation in privately-secured instruction, educational advantages provided by some homes and not included by others; and

WHEREAS, the results of Common Core testing are not released until after students have moved to the next level and are never used by the teacher being evaluated to improve instruction with that set of students; and

WHEREAS, a California bill gives teacher unions a say in how much student test scores are factored into teacher evaluations cleared the California State Senate Education Committee; and

WHEREAS, the reliance in standardized testing and the time consumed hampers educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote innovation, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, communication critical thinking and deep subject-matter knowledge; and

WHEREAS, the over emphasis on standardized testing has caused damages in many schools that include narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing the love of learning, and driving excellent teachers out of the profession; and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that not all school districts are able to provide the same resources and learning experiences to these students;

Resolutions Committee Report continued.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that tests be recognized as tools and scores should not be used as a criteria for teacher evaluation, bonuses and school closings.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted “Not to Recommend” (Duplication of Current D-9)

Resolution D-15-3: Charter Schools (Central Western Zone)

WHEREAS, Charter Schools reduce the funding of the public schools that they encompass; and

WHEREAS, Charter Schools don't have all the mandates that public schools have;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that we do not support legislation in any form or name, which promotes public tax dollars to Charter Schools.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted “To Recommend”

Resolution D-15-4: S.O.S: Support Our Public Schools (Western Zone)

WHEREAS, retired teachers or educators have emotional and physical connections to public schools; and

WHEREAS, many retirees have retired from public school education; and

WHEREAS, the New York State government, particularly the governor, is making an attempt to replace some public schools with Charter Schools; and

WHEREAS, Charter Schools are privately owned schools that are publicly funded; and

WHEREAS, there is a movement to privatize schools and decrease the number of public schools; and

WHEREAS, many citizens in the public domain are being sensitized against public schools and teachers;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support and rally against any efforts to destroy public school education.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted “To Recommend”

Resolution D-15-5: Educational Tax Credits (Central Western Zone)

WHEREAS, any public funding given private schools decreases that which is available to public schools; and

WHEREAS, public schools are having more trouble meeting their financial needs;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that NYSRTA opposes legislation in any form or name, which promotes Tax Credits for Private Schools.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted “Not to Recommend”. (Duplication of Current D-8)

Resolution D-15-6: UNITY to Save New York's Public Education System (North-eastern Zone)

WHEREAS, active educators have additional stress with pressures on their performance reviews tied to standardized tests, no freedom to stray from scripted texts for “teachable moments”, little time or training for the Common Core, and dealing with flawed and misleading test questions; and

WHEREAS, because active educators are burdened with excessive amounts of paperwork related to the teacher evaluations, good school administrators and teachers are retiring before they had planned; and

WHEREAS, many school boards and superintendents must put off budget planning as the Governor has tied tentative school funding to other education reforms that are on his agenda; and

WHEREAS, parents have encouraged students to opt out of these common core standardized tests by staying home from school on the test days; and

WHEREAS, teachers are no longer active participants in the process of making state as-

sessments that would be more aligned with the curriculum. Instead the work is being done by corporations making a profit and producing very flawed tests; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's agenda includes schemes to make the public school system fail so that he can increase the number of charter schools administered by corporate investments that yield huge profits for hedge fund operators; and

WHEREAS, the Governor and legislators are not addressing the real issues of hunger, poverty, dangerous neighborhoods, volatile households and inadequate supplies that students are facing every day; and

WHEREAS, several generations of our retired educators were very instrumental in advocating for and helping to build the great public school system that is being threatened at the highest levels of state government; and

WHEREAS, the New York State United Teachers takes a very active role in working with the Board of Regents and the Legislature on behalf of in-service members;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that we encourage retired educators across the state to reach out to their in-service former colleagues and work with them in their fight to save our public education system;

And, be it further RESOLVED, that the leaders of the Zones of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association reach out to the leaders of the NYSUT Retiree Councils to find joint activities that they may do together in support of our in-service educators and the institution of public education;

And, be it further RESOLVED, that the Officers of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association reach out to the Officers of NYSUT to plan joint activities that they may do together to support our in-service educators and the institution of public education.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted “To Recommend”

Resolutions Committee Report continued.

Resolution D-15-7: Safe Behavior in Teen Relationships (Western Zone)

WHEREAS, there are too many instances of domestic violence in teen age relationships; and

WHEREAS, "The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center in its 2001 report concludes that each year far too many teens commit acts of violence..."; and

WHEREAS, teenagers lack experience and development in relationships and values; and

WHEREAS, there is a concern among retirees that safe relationships should be taught not only in parenting, social behavior and in school; and

WHEREAS, all children in their development should be taught safe relationships;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support the Teach Safe Relations Act which supports teaching safe relationship behavior in high school health classes;

And, be it further RESOLVED, that NYSRTA add its support to Senators Tim Kaine (D-Va) and Clair McCaskill ((D-Mo) who have recently introduced the Teach Safe Relationships Act;

And, be it further RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support any bill that would result in the teaching of safe relationship behavior in high school.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted "To Recommend".

Resolution D-15-8: Recommended Reading (Long Island Zone)

WHEREAS, high school students study world regions and cultures, including US relationships with other foreign countries and the effects on political decisions; and

WHEREAS, high school students read related books to gather insights on the [people and political institutions, such as "The Diary of Anne Frank"; and

WHEREAS, "I Am Malala" by Malala Yousafzai, a teenager and Nobel Prize winner, wrote her biography on life in Pakistan with the Taliban, an international terrorist group, and this is a present reality;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, NYSRTA endorse this book as recommended reading for high school students.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

The Resolutions Committee voted "Not to Recommend".

(It is not the duty of NYSRTA to dictate such specific curriculum.)

Resolution E-15-1: Bullying as a Crime (Western Zone)

WHEREAS, bullying comes in many forms, occurs at every level and is often unaddressed; and

WHEREAS, bullying demonstrates a lack of

regard for others (students, workers, family members, etc.); and

WHEREAS, bullying exists in schools, the workplace, homes and care facilities; and

WHEREAS, schools are mandated to establish guidelines to prevent bullying at all educational levels; and

WHEREAS, families utilize paid health aides for the care of handicapped and elderly; and

WHEREAS, nearly ten million adults age 65 and older receive care at home or in residential settings; and

WHEREAS, financial, physical and emotional abuse is on the rise; and

WHEREAS, lawmakers across the United States are recognizing the need to insure appropriate action to curtail bullying at all levels;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support future proposed legislation to make bullying a crime;

And, be it further RESOLVED, that NYSRTA support the improvement of interactive training for all employers and employees who handle bullying situations.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 1, 3 & 5

The Resolutions Committee voted "To Recommend".

Resolutions Committee Recommends to Rescind:

The Resolutions Committee is required to annually review the adopted resolutions and recommend rescission for those which are no longer legal, timely, relevant or have been accomplished. Following is a list of those resolutions which the committee recommends to be rescinded. The full text of these resolutions can be found on the NYSRTA website. The vote on these recommendations will occur at the Annual Meeting.

The Resolutions Committee recommends that the following adopted resolutions (or part of a resolution) be rescinded:

A-5 - Defined Benefit Pension Plan - paragraph #2 (2006) - *redundant*

C-9 - Identity Theft/Medicare – Medicare Correspondence (2006, 2013) - *accomplished*

D-12 - NYS Education Dept. and the Pervasion of NCS Pearson's Inc. Control (2013) - *accomplished*

D-13 - CPR Training for High School Students (2014) - *accomplished*