

THE Yonkers Teacher

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A Union of Professionals



Dear YFT Members,

New York State has a constitutional obligation to provide all students with a sound basic education, as reaffirmed in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case. The Foundation Aid Formula was established to ensure that public schools, regardless of socioeconomic status or location, receive adequate funding to support student success.

However, years of underfunding have left Yonkers Public Schools struggling to meet student needs. Even when full funding was restored, the formula itself was outdated, relied on decades-old census data, and failed to account for current educational challenges.

Last school year, during the 2025 budget season, the Rockefeller Institute released the results of a study it conducted to identify what, if anything, needed to change with the Foundation Aid Formula for school districts to have what they need to provide all students with a sound basic education. They found that Foundation Aid plays a key role in addressing child poverty and supporting essential programs such as food security, after-school initiatives, and wraparound services. However, the formula still needs to be updated to better serve students, especially in historically underfunded districts like ours.

To ensure fairness and effectiveness, some key elements to consider include:

- Adjusting funding for English Language Learners to reflect actual costs.
- Reforming special education funding to align with time and resources spent.
- Reviewing and updating the regional cost index.
- Expanding Universal Pre-K by incorporating it into Foundation Aid.
- Using graduation rates, rather than grades 3-8 standardized tests, to measure school success when determining the per-pupil base figure used to calculate Foundation Aid for districts

The Rockefeller Institute's study was conducted under the direction of the Governor. Why then hasn't the Governor or the legislature implemented the recommended changes? Why are we again facing a deficit of nearly \$80 million for the 2026-2027 school year? Why are we again being forced to cut programs and face potential layoffs?

This year's Governor's Executive Budget provides Yonkers with a \$13.29 million increase in total school aid and a \$3.53 million increase in Foundation Aid. While we appreciate these investments, they do not keep pace with rising costs, and they are effectively neutralized by the loss of last year's \$12 million in Bullet Aid. At the same time, increased Charter Transition Aid pulls growth away from our schools, even though our costs don't go away when students leave.

In the proposed budget, Yonkers Public Schools receive only the 1% minimum increase in Foundation Aid, despite escalating costs in staffing, transportation, special education, and student supports.

This makes one point abundantly clear: the Foundation Aid formula must be modernized to reflect the real cost of running schools today!

Yonkers Federation of Teachers is committed to advocating for a fair and modern funding system that ensures every student has access to the resources essential for success, while collaborating with all stakeholders to achieve this goal.

In solidarity,

Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, President



Retiree Member Corner by Florence McCue (fmccue@yft860.org)

We are happy to announce that **Eight YONKERS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS STEVE FREY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS** will be awarded this year based on the overwhelming number of donations received in honor of our former YFT president.

The scholarships will be awarded to students going into CAREER PREP OR APPRENTICESHIP Programs. Acceptance into a program leading to employment in a trade or technical career is required before the scholarship is paid. Each award is valued at \$2,500 payable upon proof of registration.

Applicants must have at least one letter of recommendation from their CTE teacher(s) attesting to their motivation, hard work and probability of success in their chosen career path. Recipients will be selected by the Yonkers Federation of Teachers Scholarship Committee. There will be one scholarship awarded to one student from each of the YPS high schools.

There will also be scholarships awarded this year to students graduating from **Lincoln High School** who have completed the **Academy of Finance** program that was served for so many years by Mrs. Arline Frey. These Scholarships are given **in the name of Arline and Steve Frey** and were so generously donated by Arline and a family member.

Special Yonkers Federation of Teachers Applications for all of these scholarships will be available in the School Counselor offices and from the YFT building rep in each high school or by contacting our scholarship committee chair, **Jayme Downes** at jaydownes25@gmail.com **APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 20, 2026**

Notice: All emails that invite YFT members to events, happy hour gatherings, parades, phone banks, political action mailings, etc. always includes RETIREE members since we are continuing members of the YFT.

If you change your email address, please let us know since there are sometimes last minute emails sent out with time-sensitive information.

REMINDER:

Whether you are becoming Medicare eligible or if you are continuing on Medicare, DO NOT sign up for a Medicare Advantage Plan (NO MEDICARE Part C). If you do, you will lose your secondary coverage with NYSHIP Empire Plan. DO NOT listen to the marketing hype online, on the phone, in the mail or on TV. Once you have Medicare and the NYSHIP Empire Plan (as secondary coverage) there is NO NEED to renew it, or change it or choose anything else every year!

HELLO
March

9th	3:45pm	YFTTAMeeting	YFT
10th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
11th	3:45pm	Women's Committee	YFT
12th	3:45pm	Human & Civil Rights	YFT
16th	10:00am	Retiree Committee Meeting	YFT
18th	5:30pm	Board of Ed Meeting	Saunders
25th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
26th	3:45pm	Building Assembly	Roosevelt HS



YFT 2026 Scholarships

The YFT Scholarship is available for children (graduating from high school in June 2026) of YFT members in good standing. The application is available on the YFT website, and at all of the YPS high school guidance offices. The application deadline is **April 6, 2026**. For more information contact **Jayme Downes** at jaydownes25@gmail.com



YONKERS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
Committed to Excellence in Education

IMPORTANT **YFT-YFT Welfare Fund-YPS** **Retirement Meeting**

*** Only for those Retiring this School Year***

SAVE THE DATE

Date: Tuesday, May 5th
Time: 4:00PM
Location: Roosevelt HS Library

This meeting will provide valuable information and you will be completing forms for retirement benefits. Important topics will be discussed such as:

Retiree Health Insurance

Welfare Fund Benefits

Union Dues and other important Union information

Please RSVP & send the following information to YFT@YFT860.org no later than April 24th:

- Your full name
- Personal email address
- Phone number
- School
- Position
- Date you are retiring



Don't miss out on important updates!

Please make sure that we have your personal email on our list.

This meeting is ONLY for those retiring the 2025-2026 school year

Food & Drink
Specials

JOIN US

Ample
Parking

YFT Happy Hour

Friday, March 6th

Come have a drink, get to
know fellow union members
and build alliances!

SOLIDARITY FOREVER

WICKED WOLF NORTH
3PM - 6PM

2 Scarsdale Rd, Yonkers, NY



Congratulations to YFT's own **Sheila M. Halligan** for being named 2nd aide to the Grand Marshall of the annual City of Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade. Sheila is in her 20th year at Yonkers Public Schools, after teaching in Mount Vernon, North Rockland, as well as England and Italy. She earned a second Master's in School Leadership from The College of Saint Rose and a Gifted Learning Certificate from CUNY Hunter. She is currently a Reading Teacher at PEARLS Hawthorne. In 2011, Sheila joined the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, Our Lady of Knock, Division 19, Yonkers. She enjoys the camaraderie of her sisters and currently serves as Secretary. Sheila is beyond proud to represent her sisters as an Aide to the 2026 Grand Marshall on McLean Ave on March 21st at 1pm.



YONKERS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
Committed to Excellence in Education

YFT Retirement Dinner

For those retiring in the 2025-2026 School Year

The YFT will be hosting a Retirement Dinner to honor our members retiring this school year for their many years of service. The event will be held at the Fairways in Dunwoodie Golf Course. There will be hors d'oeuvres, a hot buffet, open bar, coffee and cookies.

In recognition of their accomplishments and in gratitude of our members' years of extraordinary efforts, this event will be free for those retiring. In addition, the cost for paying guests will also be subsidized by the YFT, lowering the cost to only \$65 per guest.

TUESDAY	JUNE	5:00 PM
	16	
2026		

Dunwoodie Golf Course (Fairways)
1 Wasylenko Lane
Yonkers, NY 10701

FREE for Retiring Member
GUESTS: \$65 per person

Please make check/money order payable to: "YFT"
Mail payment to: YFT Office, 35 East Grassy Sprain Rd. Suite 501, Yonkers, NY 10710

If you are retiring this year and wish to attend:

Please email the YFT your full name, school, date of retirement, personal email, and phone number to YFT@YFT860.org. Please also include the name(s) of any guest(s) you will have attending. Payment for your guests should be mailed to the YFT Office (\$65 for each guest).

If you would like to attend to support and celebrate this year's YFT retirees as a Guest:

Please send your full name, personal email, phone number, and if applicable, name of the retiring member to YFT@YFT860.org. Send check/money order (\$65 for each guest) made payable to "YFT" to the YFT Office at 35 East Grassy Sprain Road, Suite 501, Yonkers, NY 10710.

*****Please RSVP no later than June 1, 2026*****