

THE Yonkers Teacher

October 2025

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Official Publication of the Yonkers Federation of Teachers

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As we begin the 2025–2026 school year, our union’s work is already in full motion. During the September 25th Building Assembly, we opened with a reminder of our meeting schedule for the year—regular gatherings on September 25th, October 16th, November 20th, December 18th, January 15th, February 12th, March 26th, April 23rd, May 21st, and June 11th will ensure that members stay informed and connected as the year unfolds. Keep an eye/ear out for when your building rep will be holding a building meeting following our monthly meetings.

Several key union matters are on the horizon. PERB (Public Employment Relations Board) charges have been filed against the district for failure to bargain the Sotomayor Dual Language side-by-side program, an issue we will continue to monitor closely. At the same time, we are excited to share that YFT is exploring an AFT M.O.V.E. Grant, which will strengthen our capacity to advocate for members and our students. Updates are also expected on APPR that would change how our members are rated using a districtwide measure, and printed copies of our contract will be distributed once finalized. We encourage members to share feedback about the new cell phone policy, which has generated discussion in buildings across the district. On a different note, AFT President Randi Weingarten’s new book, Why Fascists Fear Teachers, offers both a love letter to union members and a powerful warning call about the role educators play in shaping democracy. We also look forward to honoring colleagues during NYSUT’s recognition days: Retiree Recognition Day on October 20th and SRP Recognition Day on November 18th.

Budget realities weigh heavily on our work this year. New York faces significant shortfalls as federal funding recedes, making advocacy essential. That is why, on October 18th before the Storybook Bonanza, we will participate in the No King’s Day Rally outside the Riverfront Library. If you can’t make it to Yonkers, find a location near you. After the rally, during the Storybook Bonanza, we’ll take time to honor Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Senator Shelley Mayer for their tireless efforts. While most districts saw devastating losses last year, Yonkers gained funding thanks to their leadership.

In education, several initiatives are shaping the year ahead. The Barack Obama School has been awarded a “Coaching For Excellence” grant, and the district plans to expand AP science and math offerings through a virtual academy. Negotiations are underway to make sure our work is protected. Meanwhile, members continue to raise important concerns about the six-day cycle and its effect on teaching and learning. In case you weren’t aware, additional mandated reporter training must be completed by November 17, 2026, even if you completed the training that was due in April 2025.

The political landscape also demands our attention. On the national stage, redistricting could shift congressional power dramatically, with the GOP positioned to gain as many as 13 seats. California may see gains as well, depending on the outcome of a ballot initiative, while any potential changes in New York would come too late to matter this cycle. Looking ahead, please mark March 8th on your calendar: we will travel together to Albany for a statewide Fix Tier 6 Rally, with buses leaving directly from Yonkers. At the same time, we must remain vigilant, as anti-union groups are increasingly deploying artificial intelligence to target educators online.

Taken together, these issues underscore the importance of our collective voice. Whether we are defending contracts, fighting for fair funding, or protecting the dignity of our profession, our unity is what gives us strength. Thank you for your continued commitment to our students, our schools, and to one another.

In solidarity,

Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, President



RELAY FOR LIFE 2025



On May 30th, 2025, another Relay for Life for Life of Yonkers took place at Gorton High School. There were different performers, fundraising booths, and speeches. But one thing was the same - we were all there for the same reason. We relay for our coworkers, loved ones, and friends who have battled cancer, survived it, or cared for someone who did.

Let's take a moment to remember each story. Remember our Yonkers Federation of Teachers members, the ones we shared our days teaching with or laughed and celebrated with. Remember the times we banded together to support each other during tough times and the times we needed each other the most.

I still remember my first Relay and each one of our YFT brothers and sisters who came to the event. Sadly, some of them may not be here to stand with us anymore because of this disease. Each of them had a story, and we never wished this disease to be a part of our lives.

I'm so grateful for the years we've had together and for all the memories we've made as part of Relay. Thank you to the committee that always shows up, to the union representatives who help organize the raffle baskets, and to each community member who bought a raffle ticket. Thank you to the restaurants and businesses that provided gifts, and thank you for the memories we have shared - laughing, telling stories, taking laps around the track, or just being there for a loved one.

You are all the reason I relay! Thank you for making this event as memorable as all the others!

Your YFT Relay for Life of Yonkers Chairperson,
Erin Theresa Gorman, YFT Officer At Large

This year Dia y Noche Restaurant 640 McLean Avenue, provided our team with a meal to energize the team as we walked the track and raised donations for the American Cancer Society. Please take a moment to thank the various schools and businesses that provided for the 2025 Relay for Life.

YFT Relay for Life Basket Donations

Farida Studio, White Plains
Buff City, Rye Brook
The Whistlin' Donkey, Yonkers
Katie's Cottage, Yonkers
Touchstone Jewelry
Gianna's Family Deli, Yonkers
P&D Meats, Yonkers
Sport Tech, Rye Brook
PEARLS Teachers
School 17 Teachers
Cesar Chavez Teachers
Las Hermanas Mirabal Teachers
Paideia School Teachers
YFT Women's Committee
The Liberatore Family
Lincoln HS Teachers
Enrico Fermi Teachers
Ella Fitzgerald Academy Teachers
Roosevelt High School Teachers
The Carreira Family
Yonkers Early Childhood Academy Teachers
Montessori 31 Teachers
School 30 Teachers
School 16 Teachers
Patricia DiChiaro School Teachers
Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School Teachers
MLK School Teachers
Halimi School Teachers
Siragusa Teachers

Thank you for supporting our team:

Bryan Boyd	Annmarie Sussingham
Landa Froku	Margaret Ribeiro
Thomas Rusk	Rose Perlmutter
Carolina Carreira	Josette Tilden
Barbara Carey	Wendy Hollander
Shai Stephenson	Shari Soto
Lynn O'Donnell	Allison Serrano
Dora Soropoulus	Kerry Gorman
Mitch Polay	Kathleen Gorman
Jen Lorio Yedowitz	Rosemarie Ann Siragusa Team
Mary Mallon	Jeremy Galland
Zuleima Ruge	Daniel and Tara Gallagher
Michele Santolo	Christina Giuliano
Siobhan Henry	Kara Popiel and Kirk Bauer
Jerilyn A. Myers	Jacquelyn Bonilla
Pat Puleo	Linda Morley
Ailish Doran	Florence McCue
Kerri Vanadia	William Rooney
Annie Talone	Herson Martinez
Tara Pepper	Erin Gorman
Melissa Barca	YFT Executive Board



The Steve Frey Memorial Scholarship Dinner

The Fairways at Dunwoodie

1 Wasylenko Lane

Yonkers, NY 10701

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025,
at 5:00 p.m.**

ADS:

PLATINUM-designated full page - \$1,500

GOLD- full page- \$1,000

SILVER -half page- \$750

BRONZE- quarter page- \$500

Tickets: \$80.00 or a table of 10 for \$750

Please send all ads as an email to Lynn O'Donnell
at leonio264@yahoo.com

All checks for tickets and ads please make out to
the YFT and send to Yonkers Federation of Teachers,
35 East Grassy Sprain Road, Yonkers, NY
10710 Attention: Scholarship

I would like to place an ad for the Steve Frey Memorial
Scholarship, and I have enclosed a check for
\$_____ as payment for

_____ ad and/or _____
number of tickets.

Name _____

Organization (if applicable) _____

Email _____

_____ I would like to make a donation in memory
of Steve Frey. Enclosed is \$_____

NAME _____

*Note: Donations are not tax deductible

YFT RETIREE RECOGNITION

HAPPY HOUR



HAPPY HOUR

Monday October 20th at 3pm
RANCHO GRANDE
1789 CENTRAL PARK AVE, YONKERS
FIRST DRINK AND APPETIZERS FOR
RETIRES ON US!



YFT Annual Storybook Bonanza
Yonkers Teachers will distribute FREE
books to Pre-K through 6th Grade YPS
Students. Students get their picture
taken with
Clifford, the Big Red Dog!
Saturday, October 18th
Riverfront Library
11:00am to 1:30pm



OCTOBER 2025

2nd	3:45pm	YFT Women's Committee	YFT
6th	3:45pm	COR Committee YFT	YFT
15th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
15th	5:30pm	Board of Education Meeting	Saunders
16th	3:45pm	Building Assembly	Roosevelt HS
20th	3:30pm	YFT TA Meeting	Roosevelt HS
23rd	3:45pm	YFT Human/Civil Rights Comm.	YFT
29th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT

CALLING ALL YFT BROTHERS AND SISTERS!
HELP US REACH OUR GOAL OF \$10K!



Please join us in the **Making
Strides for Breast Cancer
Walk on Sunday, October 19th**
at Manhattanville University in
Purchase. Please meet by 8:30am
under the NYSUT/YFT tent to get
your YFT t-shirt and for a group picture.

Please scan the QR code to make a donation. Do-
nations can also be sent by check (made payable
to the American Cancer Society) to **Dr. Lisa Fo-
to** at the YFT Office.





MEMBER
BENEFITS
nysut
Working to Benefit You

**GET
FREE
ACCESS**

TO THE PREMIUM CALM APP, PEER SUPPORT LINE & MORE!

NYSUT Member Benefits understands the importance of providing support, resources, and tools to help NYSUT members with all aspects of their lives. In light of that, we have negotiated with our endorsed program providers to offer members several benefits free of charge.



**Premium
Calm Service –**
All in-service and
retiree members receive

unlimited access to the full Calm library of sleep, meditation, and relaxation content. The popular Calm app includes specialized playlists dealing with stress and focus, mindful movement video and audio, nature scenes and sounds, children's content, and more. Members can add up to five dependents (age 16 or older) to receive their own premium Calm subscription. Note: You will need your NYSUT ID number (which can

be found at nysut.org/memberid) to create your Calm account.

Peer Support

Line – Life can throw lots of curveballs at us, and sometimes we don't readily know where to turn for help. The Peer Support Line is a confidential helpline that is available to all NYSUT members and their loved ones for answers, resources, and support when it's needed most. Chat, email, or call toll-free **844-444-0152** to connect with a peer today.



SCAN ME



Learn more about these along with several other free benefits by scanning the QR code, visiting mb-nysut.org/nocostbenefits, or calling 800-626-8101.

AD&D Insurance & Travel Assistance Services –

All in-service and retiree members are automatically provided with a \$5,000 accidental death & dismemberment insurance benefit, along with free travel assistance services.

New Member Life Insurance

– All new NYSUT members are eligible to receive a free term life insurance policy providing coverage for up to \$25,000 for one year, guaranteed renewable at the end of the year.

September/October 2025