

MARCH/APRIL 2018

TOGETHER

Warning Signs of Bullying

There are many warning signs that may indicate that someone is affected by bullying—either being bullied or bullying others. Recognizing the warning signs is an important first step in taking action against bullying. Not all children who are bullied or are bullying others ask for help. It is important to talk with children who show signs of being bullied or bullying others. These warning signs can also point to other issues or problems, such as depression or substance abuse. Talking to the child can help identify the root of the problem. Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs. Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

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Doug Allen Sings in Eden

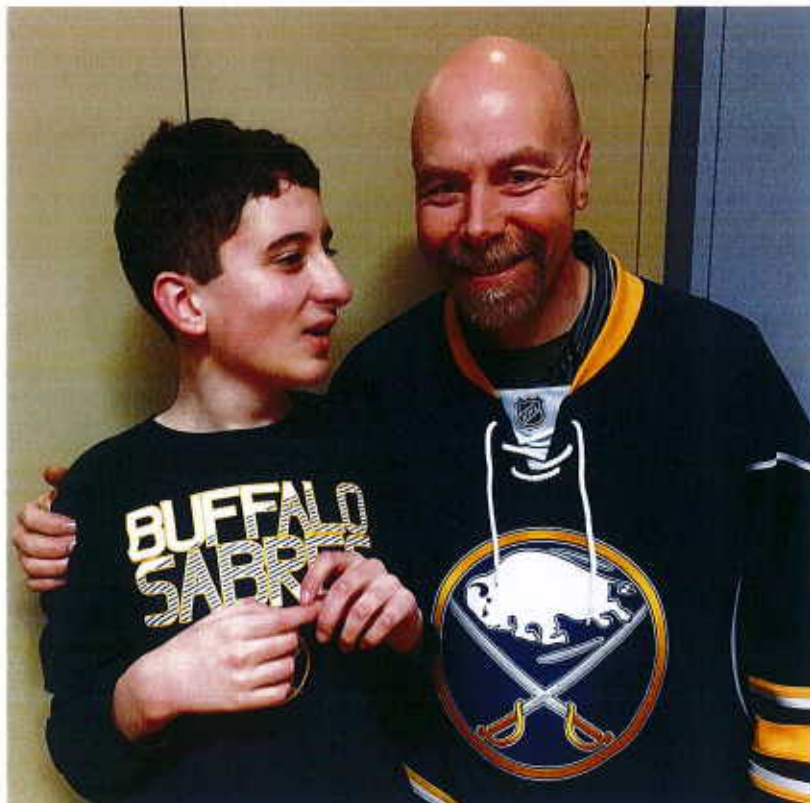
Mr. Doug Allen was a guest artist at the 40th annual District Orchestra Concert held at Eden Junior/Senior High School Tuesday, March 20th, 2018. Mr. Allen sang "O Canada" and "The Star Spangled Banner" accompanied by the 5th grade string orchestra and pianist Ms. Merry Jeffers under the direction of Mrs. Denise Uhlman.

Pictured here is Bryce Ballacchino meeting with Doug Allen for the first time. This was an amazing experience for Bryce and his family. One they will never forget! Bryce is a non-verbal student, yet he enjoyed singing the "Star Spangled Banner" along with Doug Allen when he watched him perform. Bryce's mother, Pam Ballacchino, writes: "Doug Allen was gracious and kind and has no idea of the impact he made on our family's lives." Truly a special meeting!

The concert continued with beautiful music from students grades 4 through 12 as well as an adult ensemble performing a Vivaldi concerto. Each of the seven performers had an Eden connection. It was a unique way to honor 80 plus years of orchestral performance in the Eden School District and the 40th anniversary of District Orchestra concerts! Special thanks to performers Ms. Merry Jeffers, Mrs. Christine Reed, Ms. Sarah Uhlman, Mrs. Michelle Stocksclaeder, Mrs. Eve Rouschey, Ms. Jenelle Nyitrai and Mrs. Denise Uhlman.

The "grand finale" piece, "Deep Sea Fandango" combined all 4th through 12th graders directed by Mr. Peter Griesinger.

Other special features of the concert included food trucks, raffles, bake sale, and posters of Eden orchestras from 1938 to the present. The entire event was a true celebration of the gift of music!



LEAVES OF ABSENCE PRIOR TO RETIREMENT

A number of participating employers are now offering provisions in employment contracts and collective bargaining agreements ("CBA") that essentially provide for a period of paid leave immediately prior to retirement. The purpose of this bulletin is to reiterate the System's position regarding the treatment, for pension purposes, of earnings paid pursuant to such provisions.

Paid Leaves of Absence Reportable to the System as "Regular Salary":

In general, a paid leave of absence is reportable to the System as "Regular Salary" if the terms of such leave meet the following criteria:

- The paid leave of absence must be duly provided for in the governing employment contract or CBA;
- The paid leave of absence must not be tied to retirement or resignation;
- The employee is expected to return to his/her position after the leave; and,
- The paid leave of absence is available to all members of the bargaining unit or administrative staff, regardless of age or proximity to retirement.

Under these conditions, the employee is also entitled to service credit in the System for the period of the paid leave of absence.

Paid Leaves of Absence NOT Reportable as "Regular Salary" to the System:

In contrast, a paid leave of absence is not reportable to the System as regular salary if such leave is tied to, requires or is to be followed by the employee's retirement or resignation.

Under certain circumstances, the monies paid to the member pursuant to such leave may be considered "termination pay," because the monies are paid pursuant to an agreement to retire or resign. As termination pay, the monies would be reportable to the System only in the case of Tier 1 members with a date of membership prior to June 17, 1971, and would be includable only in the calculation of the five-year final average salary. Termination pay, however, is not includable in the final average salary calculation for Tier 1 members with a date of membership on or after June 17, 1971, or for members of Tier 2 through 6.

A paid leave of absence is not reportable as "Regular Salary" to the System if:

- The paid leave of absence requires the employee's resignation;
- The paid leave of absence is immediately followed by the employee's retirement;
- Eligibility for the paid leave of absence is dependent upon the employee's age and/or proximity to retirement; or,
- The terms of the paid leave of absence require return of the monies paid pursuant to the leave if the employee does not retire at the end of the leave.

Under these conditions, the employee would not be entitled to service credit in the System for the period of the leave.

If you have any questions on this topic call NYSTRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6220.

Erie-Catt Teacher Center

With Spring finally showing up, the next round of classes available at the Teacher Center will be listed soon.

Hopefully, with more people responding to our needs survey, our focus for classes next year will be of interest to you. With technology and how we use it rapidly changing, the resources that are available have changed quite a bit in the last few years. If you're ever interested in checking the center out, I'd be more than willing to meet you there and show you. Angela Heath is the assistant and is always willing to give you a tour. It is definitely more than poster making and laminating.

Cathie Marriott has been our director for a few years now and has decided to enter into full retirement. The new director will be announced most likely at the end of May/early June. If you've taken a class with Cathie or use the Center, she would appreciate you stopping in before she gets to go home and enjoy her grandchildren.

SAVE THE DATES

High School Adopt-A-Highway - May 17th

The Annual Retirement and Awards Dinner

Thursday, June 7 at Pearl Street Grill and Brewery. A cash bar will open at 5:00 PM, with awards and dinner following. ETA will be recognizing Joe Mesi of the Business Department, retiring with 26 years of service to the Eden Central School District. Awards acknowledging leadership and appreciation will also be given, along with milestone years of service gifts. Begin thinking of a deserving colleague who you would like to recognize, as award nomination information will be emailed the first week of May.

Your monthly bills won't stop if you become unable to work

Insurance is the type of product that you hope you never have to utilize. In the event that you need to use it, though, it's important to have the insurance product that best meets your individual needs.

The NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed voluntary Disability Insurance Plan -- provided by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company -- provides valuable income replacement benefits to help meet your living expenses if you become partially or totally disabled and are unable to work.



Disability insurance can be customized to fit within your budget and still provide peace of mind until you are able to get back on your feet and return to work. Applications for the new NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed Disability Insurance Plan are now available, with coverage effective dates on or after Jan. 1, 2018 from the Plan Administrator, Mercer Consumer.

For more information and/or to get an application, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** for specific information about this program.

Call to Action: Proposals requested for NYSUT *Educator's Voice*



New York State's classrooms are among the most diverse in the nation. In recognition of this, NYSUT is currently seeking article proposals on "**Culturally-Responsive Teaching**" for consideration in its annual edition of *Educator's Voice*, a *Journal of Best Practices in Education*. **The deadline for proposals is June 15, 2018.**

Do you have a project or practice that works well in your classroom, something you are passionate about and would like to share with other educators across the state? This is a great opportunity to write about it and become published in NYSUT's member journal, a publication created by NYSUT members for NYSUT members. No previous experience is needed nor do you need to be a professional writer to be published in *Educator's Voice*.

Once accepted, authors receive a great deal of editorial support and writing guidance throughout the year-long publication cycle. The result is a professional, research-based publication that can be shared with your colleagues and used for professional development. Authors or author teams can collaborate across schools or with partners in higher education; at least one author must be a NYSUT or affiliate member.

For more information and/or to download the author submission form, visit <http://www.nysut.org/educatorsvoice>.

Previous editions of this publication are available at <https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/educators-voice>.



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.

President's Message

"Eden doesn't have a strong union." "What does the union plan on doing about this?" "I have a question.... You're union."

Over the years, these are just a few of the statements that have stuck with me. The individuals that said these things meant no harm. Their statements didn't have a personal impact on me. Most of the time they were said during very friendly conversations. These statements, and ones like them, however, always cause me to reflect. What can our union do to become more cohesive? How can we eliminate any detachment folks might have?

I worry less about this today. Here's why:

- When ETA leadership asked for volunteers to act as Ambassadors for the white card effort we had a room packed with people eager to help.
- All of our members have signed a card updating their contact information and reaffirming their commitment to remain "Union Strong."
- We have a team of 12 members who have committed to the negotiation process.
- When a message of unity had to be sent to the district over a recent important action we saw an immediate response from our building reps and strong unified support.
- I see commitment and hard work being done every day from a strong membership. Your leadership team is united and cohesive, and this benefits all of us.

We are a small local, but part of a larger effort. The Governor, with bipartisan support, just signed protections into law for organized labor in NY State. This comes ahead of any ruling in the Janus Case. The most encouraging news - It will allow unions to set our own rules for revocation of membership and to refuse representation to non-member "free-riders." There's a reason we collect dues!

This is good news, but we cannot be more than cautiously optimistic. There will be more assaults on organized labor, public school funding, and our profession. Just this week the Erie County Executive has mentioned school consolidation. Our elected leaders seem slow to realize that our public schools ARE our communities.

Please check your home emails for Negotiation updates. We will issue them after every meeting.

Thank you to our Ambassadors, Building Reps and Committee Members! Special thanks to Lorry Malkowski who worked so hard to keep our website up and running! Also, congratulations to Larry Millson who will receive the NYSUT Leadership Award on May 16th!

Stay informed. Stay united. Support one another, in all matters, big and small!

In Solidarity,
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