

Suffolk Region PTA – Legislation – Nov 14, 2016

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It's been a fairly quiet month legislatively, with our representatives all running for re-election. As a result of last Tuesday's election, on the Federal level, we now have a new Congressional Representative, Tom Suozzi, who succeeds Rep. Steve Israel in the 2nd Congressional District. Congressmen King & Zeldin won re-election, as did Senator Chuck Schumer (who appears to be the front runner to be named the Senate Minority Leader) ... on the State level all of the incumbent Assembly members easily won re-election, as well as State Senators LaValle, Flanagan, Croci & Boyle. State Senator Marcellino also won reelection, but in a very tight race. The remaining State Senator slot, the 8th District, is still too close to call between incumbent Michael Venditto & John Brooks. The results of this particular race is extremely important in that it could change the balance of power in the NYS Senate, should Sen. Venditto not win re-election.
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Following up on last month's report, I still haven't heard back from any of PTA Council Presidents who were requested to contact their respective School Superintendent's regarding the \$2 Billion Smart Schools Bond Act. It's very important that we find out why just short of 50% of our districts failed to apply for these funds ... we can't involve our State Legislators asking them to help expedite approvals, etc. without this information. The reason that this is so important is EQUITY. As a State Bond issue, taxpayers/parents from all school districts are footing the bill for this bond, even if their district fails to apply/receive funds ... on a positive note, the Sachem School District is now in the process of developing a spending plan.
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Following up on NY State legislation that would mandate that all school districts test the quality of their water. By law, these tests were have to have been completed on Oct 31st, so if you haven't seen the results yet, you should contact your district Superintendent. If they don't have the results back yet from the testing labs, they should within the next couple of weeks.
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Recently received a “Save the Date” card from Eastern Suffolk Boces/Longwood School District regarding their Legislative Forum this Feb. Since Suffolk Region PTA no longer holds a Legislative Forum (due to logistics difficulties with our elected officials). I would encourage as many people as possible to attend on Saturday, Feb 4th, as they generally put together an excellent presentation. I believe that there may also be a Legislative Forum/Breakfast in western Suffolk County (Lindenhurst?) in February, as well. I’ll investigate, ASAP.

On the County Level, our legislators recently approved the budget submitted by County Executive Bellone for the upcoming fiscal year, with some modifications. It looks like most (but not necessarily all) organizations that provide programs and services to our youth will not receive funding cuts. County officials also said that programs run by Suffolk in the High Schools to prevent tobacco use, HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and bullying would continue, as would the Smoking Cessation Program.

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All ten Suffolk County Town Supervisors recently sent a letter to Gov. Cuomo to express their support for tighter state-wide restrictions against convicted sexual offenders and are backing proposed legislation that would give more local control on where sex offenders could live. This bill, sponsored by Assemblyman Dean Murray & State Senator Michael Venditto, passed the Senate 58-5 last legislative session, but in died in the Assembly despite having 26 co-sponsors & bipartisan support. Assemblyman Murray will re-introduce this bill during the upcoming session in January.

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In response to the drug epidemic here in Suffolk, a number of elected officials have been hosting Narcan training seminars. Tomorrow night Sen. Phil Boyle is hosting a session for EMT’s, etc. to get training on how to deal with a new potentially dangerous narcotic, Carfentanil.

..... Respectfully Submitted – Gerard Bringmann

