

# The Agenda



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Over Seventy Years of Excellence in Education

MOUNT VERNON FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

June 2023



Assemblyman Gary Pretlow at the MVFT offices with Keith McCall, Jaqueline Diaz and Carene Damato



NYSUT President Andy Pallotta with the MVFT Representatives at the RA Assembly

## Message from the President

The beginning of the summer season brings about thoughts of the end of another school year. We have reached the end of another academic year and I know each of you are anxiously awaiting the very last day.

This year has been filled with its challenges and triumphs. We have dealt with the unexpected change in school district leadership as well as the multitude of payroll discrepancies many of our members have experienced.

On the other hand, the MVFT managed to negotiate fewer teacher observations for staff members. We also spearheaded the Autism Awareness event that took place in April.

One of the things for which I am most proud is that the MVFT gave over \$26,000 this year in scholarships to children of our members as well as Mount Vernon Students.

Congratulations to the scholarship recipients!

The end of the year also marks tenure and retirement celebrations.

Congratulations to the sixty MVFT members who recently earned tenure!

On June 12<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the careers of thirty-three MVFT members who have chosen to retire. We wish the retirees well in their future endeavors.

I wish every member a restful, fun-filled, exciting summer.

Best Wishes,

*Keith McCall*



# APPR Overall Scores – Things to Know

By Ian Smith

As another busy school year comes to a close it is important to look forward some rest and relaxation over a well-deserved summer. However, it is also a good idea to consider APPR scores. Normally, at the beginning of every school year in September, teachers receive their APPR overall scores from the previous year. Over the past few years, scores have been waived due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but there is no guarantee this will be the case in the future. If we return to the normal APPR procedures, it is important to be aware of the APPR appeals process. If a teacher's score is determined as "ineffective" or "developing" and the teacher wishes to appeal their score, the teacher must act quickly and by following a specific process.

If a teacher receives an overall rating of "ineffective" or "developing" there are steps that the teacher can take to appeal their rating. *Teachers who receive an overall score of "effective" or "highly effective" are not permitted to appeal their rating.*

Teachers who wish to appeal their overall ratings should first contact their building union representative and make them aware of the situation. Your union rep can provide additional support and it is important to keep them informed.

Next, teachers who wish to appeal their scores need to submit an appeal form to the Joint APPR Review Committee (JARC). There are specific dates that a teacher will need to submit this request, be sure to check with your union rep after you receive your scores. Also, gather all relevant evidence before submitting your claim.

*Did you know? Your rating, issuance of the Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP), and the conclusion of the implementation of the TIP can be appealed.*

Your appeal form must detail the basis of the appeal to the JARC. Failure to do this will be deemed a waiver of the claim. According to Section 3012-d of the Education Law, the evaluated teacher may only challenge items related to the school district failing to follow agreed upon procedures.

The JARC will render a determination, in writing, of the appeal within five school days of receipt of the appeal. A copy of the determination will be sent to the original evaluator and the Superintendent via EdVistas/StaffTrac.

Within five days of receipt of the JARC's determination, the teacher may submit a final appeal form to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will respond within 15 school days of receipt of this final appeal.

Can a teacher Grieve an APPR score? Teachers who receive an overall rating of "ineffective" and who believe that the District failed to comply with locally negotiated evaluation procedures and who disagree with the Superintendent's determination shall be allowed to file a grievance in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.

What happens if a teacher's appeal is ultimately denied and receives an APPR overall score of "ineffective" or "developing"?

First, the teacher's department chair or other designated administrator will work with the teacher to develop a Teacher Improvement Plan (TIP). The intention of a TIP is to provide a structured oversight for the teacher's improvement towards an "effective" or "highly effective" score the subsequent year. Tasks to be followed in a TIP are determined on an individual basis.

Second, it is important to remember that in order to be granted tenure, non-tenured teachers must have a score of at least "effective" for 3 of their 4 probationary years (3 for previously tenured teachers). The last probationary year must be an "effective" or better. Failure to meet this qualification may result in a "Juul agreement." This agreement essentially adds an additional year to the non-tenured teacher's probationary period to give that non-tenured teacher another chance to receive the necessary score of "effective" or "highly effective" in order to be granted tenure.

Be sure to follow all APPR procedures carefully throughout the school year, to document all APPR procedures, ensure the district admin follow agreed upon procedures, and to print out copies of all observation and APPR scores. If you have any further questions, contact your building's union rep or call the MVFT office. To see the full information for the APPR process, you can find current APPR documents by going to EdVistas/StaffTrac, hover your mouse over "Observations", then finally click "Observation Forms."





## MVFT RETIREES 2023

Rocco A. Alianiello  
Maureen A. Alleva  
Craig Aronson  
Lisa Bendlin  
Christine Brennan  
Crystal Brown  
Dina L. Caldwell  
Robert Ceballos  
Joseph W. De Carlo  
Wilfurl H. Duhaney  
Andrea Gillins  
Domenick Guaglianone  
Tonja R. Hills  
Marcus Hyacinthe  
Lorraine Izzo  
Sara L. Kincade  
Lisa Lipedusi  
Susan M. Lombardi  
Jhanice McDonald  
Gloria Montgomery  
Joan Nangle  
Genette Pearson  
Angelique Perez  
Margherita Piacquadio  
Lisa M. Pizzolla  
Donna Rustin  
Roosevelt Scott  
Salvatore Sgobbo  
Charles M. Spence  
Albert Stuart  
Lisa Tutorius  
Julia S. Tate  
James B. Vetere

**MVFT Retirement Luncheon** took place on Monday, June 12, 2023, at the Davenport Mansion in New Rochelle. Surrounded by loving colleagues, envious co-workers and fellow cheerful retirees, twenty-six of the thirty-three retirees celebrated their hard work and dedication together.

The festivities kicked off with a welcoming address by our President, Keith McCall as well as greetings from Dr. Smith, and Mayor Patterson-Howard.

Then the fun really began when recognition of the retirees kicked off with Rich Suozzo's toast/roast of the MVHS retirees. Subsequently, all attending retirees were called up to receive thanks, flowers and gifts from their administrators and colleagues. There was much laughter along with tears as MVFT paid final salute and a big thank you to these educators who have given all they have to the children of Mt. Vernon City Schools.

Now they will join the ranks of the Retiree Chapter of the MVFT and continue to impact the children and community of Mt. Vernon. We hope the future is full of all the joy, dreams and excitement you have earned!

*By Laura Marino*



*Lincoln's Rebecca Jones and Modesta Curzio-Spies honoring Susan Lombardi along with Keith McCall*



*Tashi Campbell, Crystal Waterman, Keith McCall and Stacia Fogg celebrate Lisa Bendlin from Williams*



*Keith McCall honors STEAM retiree Donna Rustin*



*RTES Jeanne Casino celebrating retirees Lisa Pizzolla and Lisa Lipedusi*



*Graham Retirees Gloria Montgomery and Dina Caldwell with Mayor Patterson-Howard*



MVHS Retirees (not in order) Charles Spence, Rocco Alianiello, Joseph De Carlo, Domenick Guaglianone, Jhanice McDonald, Salvatore Sgobbo, Albert Stuart, James Vetere, Marcus Hyacinthe, Craig Aronson and Scott Roosevelt with Keith McCall



Dina Caldwell, Laura Marino, Gloria Montgomery, Modesta Curzio-Spies with Michael Jurnegons at the Retiree Luncheon



Parker's retiree Angelique Perez with Jacqueline Green, Andrea Hyatt-Copeland and Troy Newby



MVHA aka Holmes's Denisha Hawkins and Nadine Alcalde honor Joan Nangle, Margherita Piacquadio, and Maureen Alleva



Hamilton's Sara Kincade with Marc Molina, Thalia Langley, Charlene Clarke and Jennifer Quiros



Thrusha Henderson and Janice Pollard honor Pennington retirees Christine Brennan and Lisa Sutorius



Traphagen Retiree Lorrain Izzo surrounded with love by Stacia Fogg and Keith McCall



Retiree Lisa Sutorius surrounded by her sister, Laura Grosso from STEAM and Mary Beth Rhodes



Graham Retirees Dina Caldwell and Gloria Montgomery being honored by Natasha Hunter-McGregor





*Congratulations!*



*FRANCK PANDOLFO MEMORIAL MEMBER SCHOLARSHIP*

<u>STUDENTS</u>	<u>PARENTS</u> (MVFT MEMBERS)	<u>SCHOOL</u>
ALLAN WHITE	CHRISTINE WHITE	Traphagen
JESSICA ACEVEDO	YESENIA ACEVEDO	STEAM
CHIARA BYRNE	MICHELA BYRNE	Graham
EMMA KEARNEY	ELIZABETH KEARNY	MVHA
SIDNEY EDWARDS	DIANE TERRY	BTMS
KASSIUS PAULIN	MARLA WHEELWRIGHT	MVHA
CHIJINDU NWAIGWE	CELINE NWAIGWE	Pennington
ALANNA SHEEHAN	ELIZABETH SHEEHAN	DWSA
TIFFANY WHYTE	JUDITH JONES	Grimes
LISANNE RATTERY	TANEK RATTERY	Lincoln
RYAN ALBIN	DIANE ALBIN	Graham
ALANI BANDOO	ALTHEA SIMON	Williams
SARAH MAZZELLA	MARLENE MAZZELLA	Pennington
JADA INGLESE	MAILYN IRIZARRY	Lincoln
MADISON MEDINA	DEBRA MEDINA	MVHA
ANDREW MANIGAULT	CHARISSA MANIGAULT	RTES
AUBREY DANIELS	CASSANDRE LAURENT	Williams
SUZANNA ORLOVITZ	PAMELA ORLOVITZ	RTES

*FRANCK PANDOLFO MEMORIAL TEACHING SCHOLARSHIP*

<u>STUDENTS</u>	<u>PROPOSED MAJOR</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>
DANIELLA COSTA DOS SANTOS	CHILDHOOD EDUCATION	STEAM
TRAN CHAU	MATH EDUCATION	STEAM



# Edith Kaplan PTA Dinner Dance

By Laura Marino

The Edith Kaplan PTA Dinner Dance was held on the evening of April 14 at the Greentree Country Club in New Rochelle. The dinner dance is an evening that honors a staff member, voted by their colleagues, from each school, who exemplifies an educator who has gone above and beyond.

The gala was a fun filled night of dancing, photo ops, awards, and a chance to dress up with friends and colleagues. What better way to thank and recognize educators who give so much and ask so little on a daily basis!



*Lincoln Honoree Modesta Curzio-Spies and Lincoln teacher Anna Cammarata celebrate in style at the PTA Dinner Dance*



*Claudine Armstrong, Traphagen's PTA Honoree, accepting her well deserved honor at the Edith Kaplan Dinner Dance*



*Claudine Armstrong, Katie Santoro and Traphagen Staff Glitters and Glow at the Edith Kaplan PTA Dinner Dance*



# SPOTLIGHT



MVHA Autism Awareness Day



RTES Autism Awareness Day



Anabella Strozza and Graham Celebrates Autism Awareness Day



Donald Emerson, far right, Edward Williams teacher and Committee Chair of Autism Awareness Day



Caiifa Clark and Brynn Rabinowitz with Graham Staff Celebrate Autism Awareness Day

# AUTISM AWARENESS DAY



# SPOTLIGHT



CALW Community Event at MVHA



Online survey/encuesta digital



MVFT Pres. Keith McCall addressing MVHA families and the CALW

Through an AFT PPI grant, Mount Vernon Federation of Teachers partnered with Yonkers Federation of Teachers in a joint venture and created the Community Alliance of Lower Westchester (CALW). CALW is an advocacy collective that seeks to strengthen relationships by forging partnerships, addressing key issues, and serving the needs of our schools, families and communities with the goal of improving the outcomes of our diverse citizens.

Our first initiative focused on ways we can improve parental involvement in our schools and community. On Thursday April 13<sup>th</sup>, we held our first event, the MVFT Family Series 1, at Mount Vernon Honor Academy (Holmes School). During this event, local businesses and organizations provided information to parents highlighting resources that are available in our community. A community survey was also circulated which allowed CALW to gain insights into our community and parents' needs.

The evening was a great success. While parents were engaged with local vendors, children participated in arts and craft events, and enjoyed pizza and snacks. Parents, vendors, and children were also treated to Bachata dance lessons led by Moises from Mr. Styles.

Many thanks to the following groups and organizations for joining during our family event;

SUNY Westchester EOC, Safe Haven Mt. Vernon, Mt. Vernon Recreation Department, Mt. Vernon Youth Bureau, Mt. Vernon City School District Parent Liaisons, Mt. Vernon City School District Districtwide Psychologist and Mental Health Coordinator, Department of Mental Health, Student Assistance Services Triple P Trained Providers, Girls Embracing Maturity (G.E.M.) and our local food bank.

By Nadine Shields-Alcalde



# SPOTLIGHT

## MVLA



*MVLA Students and Staff Arrive at City College for Performance*

On Friday June 9, 2023, Ms. Woodall of MVLA coordinated a Special Event field trip for the Mt Vernon City School District schools. Three hundred fifty-three staff and students from Mt. Vernon Leadership Academy, Benjamin Turner, Traphagen and the Graham School attended a musical production at the famous Aaron Davis Hall/ Marian Anderson Theater at City College.

Students got to experience a multicultural theatrical dance concert called KINGDOM OF SOUL that consisted of professional dancers ages 9 and up. The incredibly talented young people performed tap, ballet, toe, gymnastics, and Jazz. Students were thrilled and loved the production so much that the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade team at MVLA provided reflection letters as soon as they returned to school!

For this joint effort, we must thank all the school leaders, principals (special shout-out to Dr. Crawford who opened the trip to the other schools) and assistant principals from the various schools. Thanks also to Ms. Abby Hines and Ms. Judy James from the transportation office. A special thank you to Ms. Lorna Kirwan, Mt. Vernon City School District Board member and trustee, who came in to support during the final hours of the trip planning. This is only the beginning and as Ms. Woodall says, "I can't wait to plan the next Special Event for the students at the Mt Vernon City School District."



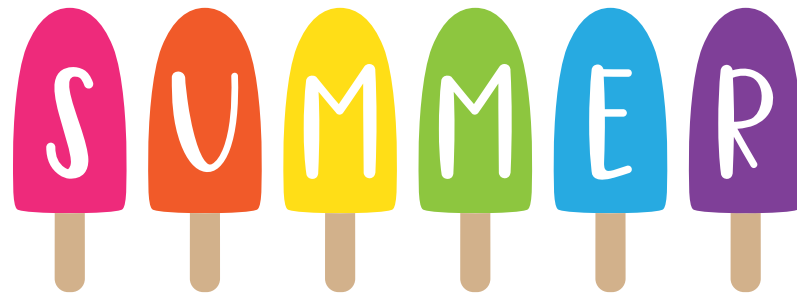
## It's a Wrap!

By Katie Santoro

It has been a busy spring season in Mount Vernon! The Autism Acceptance Day event was a huge success with the support of staff and community members. The PTA Dinner Dance was a fun night out for Mount Vernon staff and PTA members to come together to celebrate the honorees from each school. Spring concerts are going on in the different schools for parents to come into school to see their shining stars! The school year is coming to an end and there has been so many amazing new teachers who joined our Mount Vernon staff and have completed the Mentor Program. Wishing everyone a relaxing and restful summer to rejuvenate!



# hello



### Membership Report

652	Retired
8	On Leave
1093	Active Members
1753	TOTAL

### MVFT Summer Office Hours

Monday–Thursday 10am–3pm, Closed on Fridays

Mount Vernon Federation of Teachers

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### EXECUTIVE BOARD

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*Vice President*

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*Secretary*

Thalia Langley

*Pre-K-8 VP*

Denisha Hawkins

*Pre-K-8 VP*

Michael Jernecons

*Pre-K-8 VP*

Andrea Gelling

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Richard Suozzo

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Shondu Young

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Monique Bell

*TA Chapter Leader*

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### BUILDING REPS

Paula McFarlane #1  
TBD #1

Laura Marino #2

Modesta Curzio-Spies #2

Michele Battista #3

Andrea Hyatt-Copeland #4

Shawn Harper Tarrant #4

Charlene Clarke #5

Jennifer Quiros #5

Katie Santoro #6

Rebecca Challop #6

Tashi Campbell-Tulloch #7

Stacia Fogg #7

Janeen Clayton #8

Nikysha Copeland-Bey #8

Caiifa Clark #9

Tina Ciccone #9

Ellen Benowitz #10

Lenora Harris-Shoulders #10

Ian Smith #12

Mary Dempsey #12

Lydia Rose #13

Nicole White-Lee #14

Charissa Manigault #14

Janice Pollard #16

Francina Jubilee #16

Nadine Shields-Alcalde #17

Isabel Garcia #17

Mike Malosky #18

Eddie Sauls #18

Sam Stern #18

Jaqueline Simone #18

### The Agenda

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*Editor:* Laura Marino

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Lenora Shoulders-Harris

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