



# THE UNION SOUND

THE VOICE OF A SOUND UNION



Mar./Apr. 2026

Rondout Valley Federation of Teachers and School-Related Professionals

Volume 50, Issue 4

# VOTE YES SCHOOL BUDGET

## Tuesday, May 19th

# ENDORSED RVF CANDIDATES

The RVF endorses candidates who stand with all students, respect the professionals who educate them, and are deeply committed to the future of public education in the Rondout Valley. These are the voices that belong at the table.

# Sidney Hymes Matt Nusbaum Justin Swisher

 **RONDOUT VALLEY FEDERATION**  
OF TEACHERS & SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONALS



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### The Union Sound

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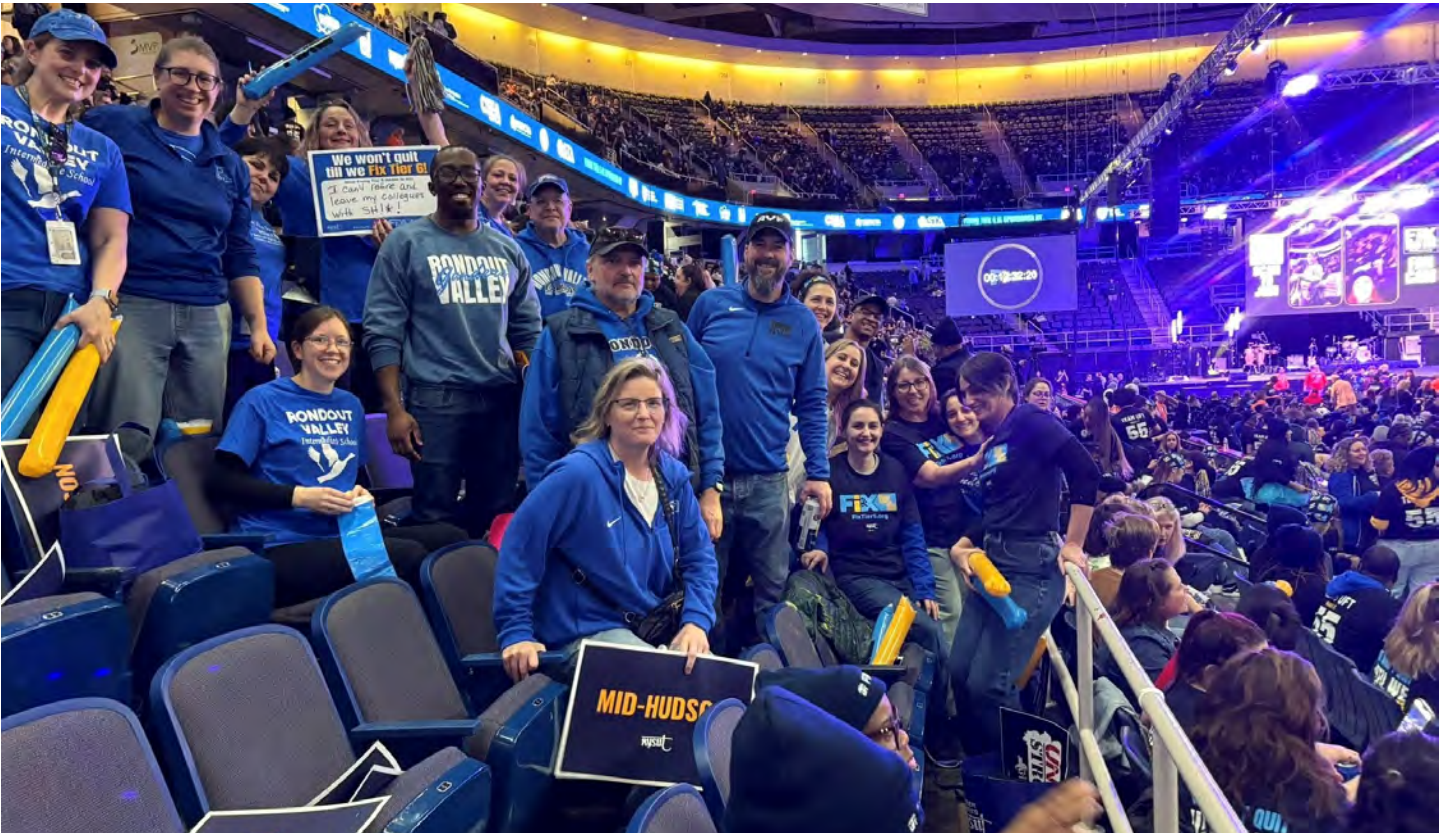
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# The RVF Won't Quit

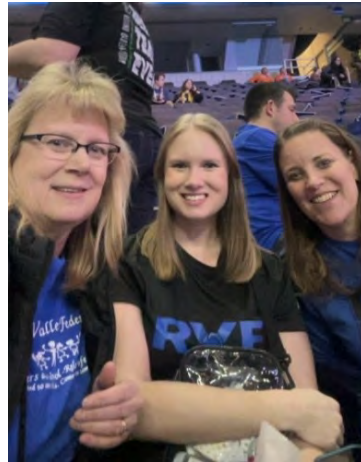


by Robert McDonough

Thank you to everyone who attended the Fix Tier 6 rally on March 8th. More than 15,000 members from across New York State gathered at the MVP Arena in Albany, making an impressive statement. Together, we showed our state leaders that Tier 6 reform is urgently needed. *Photos by various RVF members including: Patricia Abi-Hassan, Darlene Cummins, Rachel Hermance, Lisa Magrin, Rob McDonough, Liz O'Connor, Rhonda Petti, Angela Rion, and Jennifer Slauson*



# Until We Fix Tier 6!



# Spring Highway Cleanup

by Robyn McDonough

Our Spring 2026 Highway Cleanup on Route 209 took place on May 8th. Thank you to the RVF members and their families who helped clean our stretch of road. Afterwards, we enjoyed some appetizers and good conversation at the High Falls Cafe.





**RVF**  
**MERCH**  
**LINK**



# 2026 NYSUT Representative Assembly

by Tara Thibault-Edmonds

Our elected RVF Delegates Robyn McDonough, Kim McEvoy, and Tara Thibault-Edmonds and our Delegate Alternate, Stephanie Peacock, all attended the 2026 NYSUT Representative Assembly in Albany from May 1-2.

In addition, RVF President Robert McDonough attended the NYSUT Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference from April 30-May 1, and stayed through the end of the RA on May 2 to support our local union.

Nearly 2,000 delegates from across the state converged on the Albany Capital Center to conduct the annual event, which serves as the official policy-making body of NYSUT. Delegates debated resolutions that will set the agenda for union business, including resolutions on media literacy and civics education, setting artificial intelligence boundaries, extending the electric school bus mandate timeline, and curbing the advance of charter schools without local input.

Delegates also voted on our state union leadership, including the re-elections of our own Kim McEvoy as SRP Director At-Large, and our local Election District 13 & 14 At-Large Director, Matthew Haynes of Tri-Valley Teachers' Association. Following the retirement of Onteora's Melissa Tierney as our Election District 13 Director, a three-way race for the position resulted in the election of Kimberly Popken, president of the Poughkeepsie Public School Teachers' Association. For a full list of the statewide elected NYSUT officers and board of directors, [click here](#).



SAVE THE DATE



## RVF RETIREMENT GATHERING

APPETIZERS, DINNER, AND A CASH BAR  
RECOGNITION AND GIFTS FOR OUR 2026 RETIREES  
AND TIME TO RELAX WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

JUNE 6, 2026  
BEGINNING AT 4:30  
CHRISTINA'S RESTAURANT  
812 ULSTER AVENUE, KINGSTON, NY





# Books & Beverages

May 21 and June 18

4:00-5:30 pm



Join us for a relaxed "bring your own book" gathering with no preparation needed. Share highlights from your current read or simply come for snacks, good conversation, and new book recommendations.

[CLICK HERE OR SCAN Q.R TO RSVP](#)

Location:  
RVF Office  
4301 US Route 209  
Stone Ridge, NY 12484



# UNITED BEHIND CANDIDATES WHO KNOW PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNITE US

## VOTE: TUESDAY, MAY 19th

### 2026 HUDSON VALLEY UNION-ENDORSED SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

- Ardsley CT:** Andrea DeVico Smith & Matthew Gonzalez
- Arlington TA:** Eileen Snook (NYSUT Member), Linda Gaines (NYSUT Member), & Jeff Haight
- Carmel TA:** Jordi Douglas (NYSUT Member)
- Clarkstown TA:** Michelle Bondar (NYSUT Member) & Brooke Stone
- Chatham TA:** Matt Fisch, Dawn Friendman, Ashley Zwingelberg, Marianne Pierro
- Croton TA:** Anamika Bhatnagar, Sarah Carrier, & Neal Haber
- Goshen TA:** John Sullivan & Roy Reese
- Highland TA:** Shawna Newkirk-Reynolds (NYSUT Member) & Jocelyn Swart
- Kingston TF:** Suzanne Jordan (NYSUT Member), Marc Rider, Rita Worthington, & Michael Detweiler
- Lakeland FT:** Christopher Eustace, Amanda Franco (NYSUT Member), & Patricia Martucci-Pace (NYSUT Member)
- Mahopac TA:** Joseph Catalli, Lindsay DiCerbo (NYSUT Member), & Adam Savino
- Marlboro FA:** Jennifer DeSantis, Michael Schreiber, & John Shillieto (NYSUT Member)
- Monroe-Woodbury TA:** Bryan Bellino, Berny Vega, Kiesha Tillman, & Monique Officer
- Mount Vernon FT:** Dr. Lynne Middleton (NYSUT Member) & Warren Mitchell
- North Rockland TA:** Jim Kraus (NYSUT Member)
- Pearl River TA:** Dr. Kathleen Ann Kelley
- Port Jervis TA:** Eric Hipsman (NYSUT Member) & Cathy Sadaghiani
- Red Hook FA:** Troy Haley & Paul Byrne
- Rondout Valley FT & SRP:** Sidney Hymes, Matt Nusbaum, & Justin Swisher (NYSUT Member)
- Suffern EA:** Tom Donnelly & Paul Shapiro
- Tuxedo TA:** Michelle Watch (NYSUT Member)
- Valley Central TA:** Nicole Drost & Barney Zipkin
- Wappingers CT:** Ellen Mead (NYSUT Member), Keith Odums, & Steve Shuchat
- Washingtonville TA:** Stephen Frey & Robin White
- White Plains TA:** Rosemarie Eller & Valerie Daniele
- Yorktown CT:** Adam MacDonald, Jacquelyn Guarino, & Michael Magnani

### NEW YORK STATE: SCHOOL BOARD & BUDGET ELECTIONS

If you are unsure of your polling hours or location, call your local school district clerk.

**PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS  
UNITE US**



*Retirement doesn't mean entering a world of unlimited tee times and champagne coolies. It's important to be properly prepared for the transition from in-service employment to retiree status.*

Please note the following information if you are currently enrolled in one or more NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed program(s) or would like to do so in retirement:

- **If Your Local has a Retiree Chapter:**  
You are encouraged to maintain membership and pay chapter dues to that local (if necessary) to continue membership in NYSUT and our national affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and National Education Association (NEA).
- **If Your Local does NOT have a Retiree Chapter:**  
You will continue your membership with NYSUT, AFT, and NEA through the Retiree Council in your geographic area.

Member Benefits endorses a number of programs that can be purchased through the convenience of payroll or pension deduction – offering reduced premiums or the elimination of service fees in many instances. Approximately 88% of NYSUT members have payroll or pension deduction available to them.

You must have an active NYSUT membership to participate in payroll or pension deduction. If you're currently participating in one or more of our endorsed programs, you will want to look into switching to pension deduction after you enter retirement.

**LEARN MORE**

Learn more about continuing Member Benefits-endorsed programs by scanning the QR code, visiting [mb-nysut.org/retireemembership](http://mb-nysut.org/retireemembership), or calling 800-626-8101.

**SCAN ME**

