

# **New York State Retired School Administrators and Supervisors**

Focus Group –March 14, 2018

Western Suffolk BOCES –Wheatley Heights, NY

**Present:** Ed Bellomo, Ken Forman, Gene Goldwasser, Elliot Kigner, Mary Hance Marty Mandelker, Ned Price,

**1.0 Welcome:** Gene thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the agenda.

**2.0 Website Design:** Ken pulled up the website on the SmartBoard. All of its components were reviewed. In addition, we discussed how costly it would be to make changes to the design. We agreed that the website is good, providing a variety of useful information and resources for our members. Gene will contact Tom, our paid consultant, to determine the number of website hits on a regular basis.

**3.0 Mission Statement:** After a lengthy discussion and review of suggestions to improve our mission statement, we agreed to present the following revised statement to our members at our next meeting:

NYSRSAS- Continuing to lead, In support of education, and to enhance life in retirement.

NYSRSAS is a non-partisan association of retired school leaders dedicated to improving the well-being of our members. We continue to advocate for students, educators, and the ongoing improvement of education in our public schools.

We monitor the political and educational scenes, take positions in the interest of our membership, make our views known, and communicate through our newsletter, member forums and website.

**We Stand For:** the last bullet was revised to read: a safe and viable public education system

**4.0 Midterm Elections:** The group discussed the effectiveness of the previous process of sending letters out to candidates and assessing their responses. Since only 30% responded resulting in many non-endorsements we decided to skip the letter and do research on each candidate. This would entail checking websites, voting records, and possible phone calls to candidate's offices. Each member would be asked to research 3 or 4 candidates. Ned agreed to come up with a list of announced candidates and research criteria would be decided at our April meeting. The timeline for the process is as follows: April-assign local candidates to members, July-add federal candidates, Sept.14- each member makes an endorsement recommendation, Sept. 20-exec.Bd.mtg, Oct.15-newsletter goes out

**5.0 Taking a Stand:** There was a vigorous and respectful discussion about gun safety and gun control in our schools. We agreed to take a stand on the platforms below which will be presented to our members for further discussion in April.

1. Raising the age to purchase guns to 21 and over.
2. Establishing stringent background checks and waiting periods.
3. Prohibiting people on federal watch lists being able to purchase weapons.
4. We are opposed to arming and training teachers and administrators, but we support a community decision to have an armed police officer to provide security at a school.

**6.0 Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 11, at 10:00 a.m.** at Western Suffolk Boces

Respectfully submitted,  
Edward Bellomo