



BLACK LIVES MATTER

A Statement from the NYSRSAS Executive Board

A wide ranging discussion at the June Executive Board meeting resulted in a consensus that our organization should publish a statement expressing our thoughts on this topic.

With post-meeting input from many Board members, we arrived at the document we present here.

We welcome our readers' input and invite you to share your reactions (see the Quarterly Query on page 7).

The violent deaths of unarmed people of color – from Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown, whose deaths spawned the Black Lives Matter movement, through Eric Garner in New York to the recent horrors of the killing of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Armed Arbury, and Rayshard Brooks – have underscored the urgency for all of us to confront the need for change in our society. Much of this will focus on government in terms of legislation, police policies and judicial processes. However, **as an association of retired school administrators and supervisors we are deeply concerned with our educational systems and their role in fostering inter-racial understanding, mutual acceptance and appreciation and, most importantly, educational equity.**

Reaction to these cases of police brutality has grown to include all Americans. **We believe that Black Lives Matter and we, as an association of retired school administrators and supervisors, support opening channels of reform which reinforce fair treatment and respect for all. We pledge to engage in conversations about racism on many levels** – at our NYSRSAS Executive Board meetings, at social gatherings with our friends and relatives, and at religious, political and service organizations to which we belong. We also recognize that, just as children learn to read and write in school, there is a critical need for schools to actively and purposefully foster understanding and teach tolerance and acceptance. Existing literature, history, music and visual arts curricula do not adequately teach the full scope of our diverse, multi-cultural, and multi-gender heritage. While there have been educators along the way who have made sincere and strong efforts to combat racism in their schools and classrooms, we need to go further. **There is too much “lip service” given to platitudes about getting along, about equality, about diversity – it’s time for schools and community institutions to “step up.”**

A part of this will involve deep reflection upon educators’ roles in fostering opportunity for students. Many black writers have spoken about how some teachers have assumed lower intelligence and/or motivation among their students of color and have, therefore, challenged them less and expected lower performance from them, thus contributing to a self-fulfilling prophecy. We must confront the fact that white educators, even the most well-meaning, need to address the fact that simply by virtue of being white they benefited from a privileged status even if they were not from wealthy families. Similarly, as educators we all need to consider the possibility that our backgrounds and the socialization they have imparted may make it difficult for us to appreciate the particular burdens that our students of color (and their families) confront – factors which may influence school behavior and academic performance.

Racism is a sickness that is deeply ingrained in western society. Systemic racism permeates every level of American society from economic opportunity to health care. **We need to recognize existing beliefs, address our biases and be willing to initiate change.** It is common knowledge that unequal school funding formulas result in communities with the most pronounced educational and social needs receiving the poorest funding. The Black Lives Matter movement challenges us to revisit and rethink school

FROM THE DESK of: *The Reflective Retiree*

THE YEAR OF THE CORONAVIRUS: ADDICTION TO CONFLICTION

Corine Lipset-Huberman

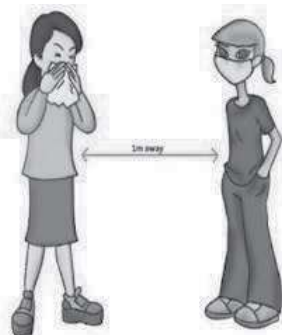


“Hi, Cori, how are you? I was thinking that it would be nice to have some company. I’d love to see you. I have a six foot table in my backyard. How do you feel about coming over and we could sit six feet apart and visit a while?”

Hmm, I’m very tempted but I’m not sure whether she really is self-isolating. Does she go out to the supermarket? Does she always wear a mask? Do her kids come to visit her and do they go out with their friends? What about her husband? Does he go out and about? Has anyone in their family come down with Covid-19?

“You know, I’d love to but I’m just in the middle of cooking. I thought I’d make a few dinners and put them in the freezer so I won’t have to cook for a few days. But thanks, anyway. Maybe another time.”

This is just one of the conflicts people are dealing with in the age of the coronavirus. How safe is safe? Which people do we let inside the bubble in which we enclose ourselves? Who become our bubble-mates? Do we let our children in? A close neighbor who we feel pretty sure is also self-isolating? A lot depends on who else beside ourselves we are protecting. If we live with a spouse or a significant other who has one or two risk factors, if we have elderly parents who live with us or whom we need to see and provide for, if we have a child at home with a debilitating condition . . . of course we’re going to be more careful so we don’t run the risk of infecting them.



Another conflict that has arisen of late is the issue of wearing a mask. There is growing consensus that wearing a mask, while it does not insure that you will not contract the virus, will help stem transmission of the disease. It has been demonstrated that those countries that consistently used masks in

public “flattened the curve” faster and more effectively than those countries where that was not the practice. While initially, we were told that masks should be worn to protect others, the World Health Organization now suggests that masks protect the wearer as well. So . . . to mask or not to mask? That has become the question for some – for those who see a mask as a political symbol. Ever since our president has insisted on going maskless because he thinks it is unmanly to wear one, many of his supporters have followed suit. “When you turn wearing a simple face mask into a political and cultural symbol of leftism, when you view social distancing as a concession to your enemies, you deeply undermine the power of millions of small impediments to viral outbreak.” (Andrew Sullivan in NYMag.com)



There are those who are conflicted by doing anything that causes them to stand out in a crowd. This may even extend to fashion. For example, some swimsuit manufacturers are now creating what they call the “trikini”. . . a bikini bottom, a skimpy top and a mask of matching fabric. Those who would like to avail themselves of going to a beach that is somewhat uncrowded so they can still conform to social distancing may wear a trikini with great panache while others would only wear it to what my friends and I, when we were children, called “tar beach” . . . the rooftop of our six story apartment building.

Some business owners have come up with rather creative ways of dealing with the social distancing aspect of doing business. For example, in Maryland the owner of a restaurant purchased “bumper tables” which are platforms with wheels attached and surrounded by an inflated inner tube. The tube permits a single individual to navigate the restaurant’s parking lot and still stay six feet away from other people. “If you come in to get a pound of shrimp and a beer, you can stand in one of these and walk around,” the restaurateur maintained. Suppos-

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BLACK LIVES MATTER

(cont'd from page 1)

integration. **This is crucial on Long Island where there are underachieving school districts that are, in every practical sense, segregated racially and socioeconomically.** This has to change. There is an economic and educational argument to be made for taking action to continue efforts to build racially and socioeconomically integrated schools and districts, rather than focusing exclusively on improving the effectiveness of high poverty, high minority schools. In this respect, increasing funding will remain important, and establishing partnerships with teacher training institutions as well as with wealthier districts would be good starts. Disparity in the quality of education disproportionately bars access to higher education, and the economic and health benefits it provides. Teacher hiring and retention practices fail to adequately represent America’s diversity and provide role models in the classroom. Districts with predominantly white student populations need to recruit minority teachers and support personnel, so children would know and experience not only what diversity looks like, but also benefit from interactions with people who look different from them.

We could discuss other areas that discriminate against African Americans (for example, the disproportionate number of African Americans who make up our prison population). However, we choose to concentrate on equalizing the playing field by focusing on education and the role schools play.

Finally, we will back our commitment to these principles by supporting candidates for all offices – school board, town council, state assembly and senate, congress and president– who embody these beliefs and have an active record promoting them.

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In MEMORIAM

STANLEY OPAS

Stanley Opas, a valued long-time member of the NYSRSAS Executive Board, passed away on May 26, 2020. A product of the NYC schools, Stan taught in the city schools and in Westbury before becoming a principal in Westbury. After six years, he accepted a principalship in Half Hollow Hills, retiring after 18 years. During Stan’s retirement years, he supervised student teachers at Dowling College and worked at Eastern BOCES. He is survived by sons, Mark and Gary and three grandchildren. Soft-spoken and insightful, Stan was always the voice of reason in his valuable contributions to our discussions. We will sorely miss him.

MARY JUSTINA HAUSLER

Mary Justina Hausler, a long-time member of NYSRSAS, passed away on April 19, 2020. Mary began her teaching career in Syosset and quickly rose from teacher to dean of students to assistant principal to principal. Retiring in 1992, Mary supervised student teachers at Southhampton College for two semesters, then moving to Connecticut with her husband. The couple loved to travel and got to see a good part of the world, while making their permanent home in Florida. Mary’s travels, her quick sense of humor and bright personality contributed to her great success as an administrator.

THE ETHICAL CASE AGAINST DONALD TRUMP

Edward Price

We live in a highly polarized political environment where people with opposing views look at each other as “them and us,” and in this climate, democratic institutions are in danger. As one who holds strong political beliefs, I consider discussion of differing policies as a crucial element of a free society. However, I fear the current president does not share this attitude. He denigrates all who oppose him or his ideas even if they were strong supporters, such as former Attorney General Sessions. Nevertheless, it is important to separate policies which are legitimate matters for debate from personal characteristics. Therefore, I attempted to look at Trump’s character rather than his programs.

It is difficult to agree on what constitutes good personal behavior, so I turned to ethicists who have identified several key values that are universally accepted across cultural, religious and ethnic boundaries. These are truth, responsibility, fairness, compassion and respect. Since I have never met Trump, assessment of his actions must be based on public performance.

Trump’s truthfulness is the easiest of these virtues to review. Although most politicians tend to stretch the truth and, at times, lie to promote their positions, Trump’s relationship with truth is weak at best. He often appears to make up facts while speaking. *The Washington Post* counted 16,421 false or misleading statements during Trump’s first 1,015 days in office. That is an average of 14.6 lies daily. This pattern makes it difficult for American citizens and world leaders to believe him.

Trump also lacks the courage to take responsibility for his actions. When confronted with questions about mistakes or potentially illegal actions, he denies having any involvement. If associates are involved, he denies knowing them despite visual and audio evidence. For a man who demands loyalty, this is truly dishonorable.

Trump is widely viewed as a narcissist who lacks compassion for anyone but himself. He clearly demonstrated his lack of concern for others when he mocked a reporter’s disability for merely criticizing him. Compassion is an essential element of emotional intelligence. Trump’s lack of compassion leads to questions about his emotional stability.

Perhaps Trump’s greatest flaw is his lack of re-

spect for others. This is obvious in his treatment of women who he seems to value only as sexual objects. He mocks the appearance of women with whom he disagrees and brags publicly about sexual harassment in the Planet Hollywood interview. Moreover, Trump disrespects his peers. He pushed aside another world leader to get in the front of a photo opportunity. Respect is based upon trust. As a result of his actions, few truly trust him.



This pattern of unethical behavior leads Americans of all political values to question Trump’s leadership. He has become the brunt of jokes among Americans and world leaders. He is an embarrassment to the nation he represents and does not deserve to continue as president. It is time for honorable people who support Trump’s policies to stand against this immoral individual and either present another candidate for our nation’s highest office or at least oppose his reelection.

Dr. Edward Price served as superintendent in several New York and New Jersey school districts. He is currently a lecturer in educational leadership at Stony Brook University.

YEAR OF THE CORONAVIRUS (cont’d from page 2)

edly, patrons responded favorably to this unusual navigational scheme.

Yes, conflicts abound in the wake of the coronavirus. Wedding plans are cancelled, or are they? One couple had a wedding ceremony on their driveway with several guests six feet apart. Children are being schooled through distance learning. Are they effectively learning? Late night show hosts have a few guests using Zoom. Saturday Night Live is not as alive as it used to be. The conflict is always there . . . what can I do in place of what we used to have before the age of the coronavirus?

Dr. Corine Lipset-Huberman has had extensive experience at all levels of education. She spent the last 19 years prior to retirement as principal of the Village School in Syosset, NY.

EDUCATION AND THE PANDEMIC: SEPTEMBER 2020

Mary Louise Haley

As new cases of COVID-19 rise at an alarming rate across the country, educators and parents face the dilemma of how to plan for a safe reopening of schools in September. Schools in New York State closed suddenly in March in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, and millions of teachers and students transitioned from in-person classroom instruction to remote learning with little time to prepare. As educators move to open schools, they face budgetary, instructional and logistical challenges in preparing for the needs of students and staff.

Budgetary issues are among the top concerns of district administrators as they face returning students to school. Social distancing on the school bus, steps to minimize class size, sanitizing schools, addressing mental and emotional health, will place an additional strain on school budgets during a time when federal and state support is in peril. The American Association of School Administrators has estimated that districts would incur nearly \$1.8 million in costs to meet federal health guidelines, from \$640 million for no-touch thermometers to \$448,000 for additional custodial staff. The American Federation of Teachers reported that budget cuts have already cost local public education systems more than 750,000 jobs, twice what they lost during the recession of 2008. At a time when schools require increased numbers of nurses, teachers, social workers/psychologists to prepare for the needs of their students, states warn that they will need to make deep cuts into their budgets without additional support from the federal government.

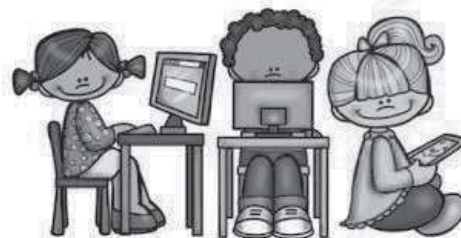
In developing their plans for reopening schools, educational leaders are faced with balancing the perspectives and concerns of diverse stakeholders. Parent surveys show that a majority of parents want their child(ren) to return to school. Teachers point to the importance of forming bonds with their students that come with in-person instruction. But if the virus has a resurgence in the fall, there may be parents who do not want to risk

returning their child(ren) to school, as well as staff with underlying health issues who may not feel safe returning to the classroom. In particular, parents and teachers of students with special needs are concerned that the learning gap for this group is widening due to the lack of direct teacher contact. The New York State Reopening Task Force is encouraging schools to consider three instructional models—in-person, remote, or a combination of the two—to address the safety and educational concerns of the stakeholders in their communities.

Educators are also confronted with determining the best approach to instruction as students may be further behind in the fall than in a typical school year due to the challenges of transitioning from in-person to remote online instruction. The pandemic revealed the disparities in student access to technology with the biggest gaps in schools with the largest percentage of low-income families. Teachers are also cognizant that their students had very different levels of support at home due to myriad factors including parents' work schedules and students' abilities to utilize new technologies to access and submit lessons. In a *USA Today* survey, 46% of parents and 76% of teachers reveal concern that distance learning is causing children to fall behind. These concerns are supported by research from the Annenberg Foundation which projects that students will

make 63-68% of the gains in reading and only 37-50% of those in math as compared to learning gains in a typical school year. These gaps will be larger for low achieving students. Thus, schools and teachers will face an increased challenge to assess student learning and to put in place ways to condense and accelerate curriculum and differentiate instruction to meet varying levels of loss that occurred during the school closure.

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QUARTERLY QUERY RESPONSES – SPRING 2020

In our April issue we asked our readers to share what they did to pass the time while they were self-isolating. We share their responses:

Here are some of the more interesting things I am doing to avoid going stir-crazy. . .

- *I am taking Lifelong Learning classes at Stony Brook University via Zoom.*
- *I have lived in this neighborhood for 50 years and I am now exploring (by foot and auto) areas such as the extensive grounds of the now closed Kings Park Psychiatric Hospital. I am also exploring trails that I did not know existed around nearby woods and lakes.*
- *My wife has been giving me cooking lessons. I doubt that chefs will worry about the competition.*
- *We are practicing new dance steps to music we love.*
- *I am spending more time talking with our kids and grandkids via phone and Skype.*

David Long, Retired from Rockville Centre

My time spent on the computer expanded exponentially during our NYS “pause.” Since I don’t have a TV, YouTube became my preferred way to waste time, finding everything from intellectually stimulating lectures to silly Britain’s Got Talent auditions. All was fine until my desktop computer CRASHED! Since then it’s been the saga of finding and setting up a replacement. Tech is terrific — when it’s working—and an annoying hassle when it’s not.

Pat Galaskas, Retired from Syosset CSD

NYSRSAS BOARD MEETINGS

September 10, December 10, 2020

March 18, June 10, 2021

A special welcome to members of the CAS retirement group who have recently joined us. All members are invited to attend our Executive Board meetings. They begin at 10:00 a.m. and, depending upon the status of the pandemic, may either be conducted via Zoom or held at the Western Suffolk BOCES Training Center located at 31 Lee Avenue in Wheatley Heights. Please contact us via email at info@nysrsas.org to verify which venue will be used and to receive a link for Zoom meetings.



Quarterly Query SUMMER 2020



The **BLACK LIVES MATTER** movement has permeated our thoughts/environment/sensibilities for the past several months. We invite your thoughts, reflections and commentary on your reaction to the movement in general and specifically to some of the suggestions for change (e.g., police personnel reform, departmental financial changes such as De-fund the Police, chokeholds, etc.).

**Please e-mail your response
to**

clipsethuberman@gmail.com

(Kindly include your name
and the district
from which you retired.)

We hope to hear from you.

EDUCATION AND THE PANDEMIC (cont'd from page 5)

Whatever schools and classrooms look like when they open in the fall, it will need to differ from the way they were before schools closed in March. Here are some of the urgent questions that researchers and schools need to answer:

- What mental-health supports will we need to provide students whose families may have experienced serious financial and/or emotional stresses due to illness and/or unemployment?
- What levels of learning loss are students likely to face and what are the best strategies to mitigate that loss?
- Did schools make the right choices about technology during the pandemic? What would they change?
- How do we change teacher preparation?

School districts face enormous challenges during this unprecedented crisis and will require federal and state support to meet the new virus-related costs following school closures during the pandemic.

Mary Louise Haley (Mel). Started her career as a special education teacher. She retired as an Elementary School Principal from the Herricks Public Schools and is presently serving as Education Chair for NYSRSAS.

Do You Know Your X, Y AND Z's ?

Ken Forman

If you've ever felt muddled by this "alphabet soup" of names...you're not alone. A common source of confusion when labeling generations is their age. Generational cohorts are loosely defined by birth year. Now let's take a closer look at Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z.

Let's differentiate X, Y, and Z. A member of Gen X who turned 18 in 1998 is now 40. He or she cares about vastly different issues than we Boomers. Gen X are sometimes called the forgotten generation and includes those born between 1965 and 1980. Gen X grew up before the internet was established. Studies have indicated that they care about life balance, are busy but cynical. They were taught to believe they could get whatever they want.



Gen Y were born between 1980 and 1994 more or less. Gen Y are the first group of millennials. Gen Y consumers will earn 46% of income in the US by 2025. Moreover, in our economy as one generation's spending power decreases (we Boomers), another is increasing. These Gen Y millennials have less brand loyalty than we Boomers. They dislike inefficient or poor service. They trust well-developed products such as Apple. They are at the center of technological change including use of social media. However, Gen Y are entering the workforce with a tremendous amount of college debt and delay major purchases such as homes.



Gen Z were born after 1994 and roughly compose 25% of our population. Millennials out of college are now dominated by Gen Z. Studies indicate that the average Gen Z received their first mobile phone at age 10. They have grown up in a hyper-connected world with the smartphone their preferred method of communication. On average, they spend 3 hours per



day on their mobile devices. Gen Z are more fiscally conservative. They rarely go into a bank. Smartphones and social media are their cornerstones. In the workplace, a survey found that 83% of Gen Z employees prefer face-to-face contact with their managers. Additionally, 69% of Gen Z employees use connectivity and smart devices at work. However, over a third reported burn-out on the job.



Here's some interesting tidbits about these "Gens." Across the globe, becoming a leader was important to 61% of Gen Y, 61% of Gen Z, and 57% of Gen X respondents. But responses varied by country. For example, in the Nordic countries respondents were significantly less likely to covet leadership roles than those in Mexico. Among Gen Y respondents, 76% of Mexicans said attaining a leadership role is important, but only 47% of Norwegians said the same. Among American Gen Y professionals, 77% said that gaining a leadership position was important to them.

Studies indicate that Gen Y and Gen X professionals are more enthusiastic about the coaching and mentoring that comes with management jobs than the higher responsibility. However, Gen Z considers higher levels of responsibility and more freedom as attractive attributes of leadership. Geographically, Gen X respondents in Spain put coaching and mentoring others as what was most attractive about leadership, but this was a lower priority for respondents from Germany, Norway, Denmark, Britain, and the U.S., who all put challenging tasks as the most attractive aspect. Additionally, men's and women's leadership preferences also differed across generational cohorts. For Gen X, 63% of men and 52% of women said becoming a leader was important to them. Among Gen Y and Gen Z professionals, it was 63% of male respondents and 61% of women. In general, Gen X women were more likely to enjoy the challenging work involved in leadership, as well as getting to coach and mentor others. Gen Y women also put opportunities to coach others ahead of other activities, while Gen Z women felt that high levels of responsibility

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YOUR X, Y AND Z'S ? (cont'd from page 7)

ity were the most attractive thing about leadership. Men across all generations were more interested in future earnings and high levels of responsibility.

When asked which technologies were likely to revolutionize work in the coming decade, Gen Z was most enthusiastic about the potential of virtual reality (VR). Gen Y professionals also saw VR as the technology most likely to revolutionize their work in the coming decade, putting it ahead of wearable technology, project management, and audio/video conferencing. Gen X, on the other hand, believed virtual reality technologies would have a low impact on their work. They had the most enthusiasm for project management tools.

So now that we know all about Gen X, Y, and Z, aren't you glad you're a BOOMER?

Kennth Forman, Ph.D, has had extensive experience as an administrator in various New York public school systems. He currently serves as an adjunct professor in the Educational Leadership program at Stony Brook University.

**REMINDER! RESPOND TO THE
2020 CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE**
if you have not already done so!
**Every response will have political and
economic consequences for NYS**

A WORK IN PROGRESS . . . BUT WHEN WILL IT END?

Corine Lipset-Huberman

*We're facing another election
Two conventions to finalize selection
Both Republicans and Democrats risk rejection
If they meet in person or in virtual protection
Against this coronavirus that has proven so deleterious
Its etiology and treatment so very mysterious
It brings fever, coughs, sneezes and chills
It brings a variety of maladies and ills.*

*Our shops have been closed, most factories are still
Trump and gobs argue . . . bear each other ill will
Who's right in the end, will death's numbers climb higher
As left- and right-wingers get caught in a quagmire
Of who's right and who's wrong, both sides are afraught
With the dangers of this virus, what's good and what's
naught.*

*Trump advises hydroxychloroquine, quite against the will
Of doctors who shout, "No, it can make you so ill!"
Our president says, "Well then, perhaps a little bleach."
The Dems respond, "Another reason to impeach!"*

*The fight goes on, another round, another bout
They argue, they bicker, they snicker, they shout
Oh where will it end, the death toll grows higher
As many aged, some young, even babies expire
Are we doomed to stay apart, forever to stay masked
So what say the soothsayers, the prophets of the past
I know what they'd say, so say I,
"Holdfast!"*



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first class