

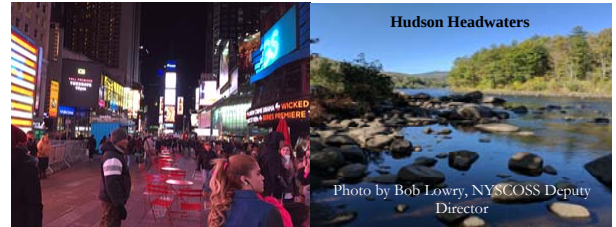


RSA TODAY

News for New York State's Rural Schools

October 2017 Issue

Rural Schools Association of New York State



I don't live in New York!

I live In New York !

David A. Little, Esq. Executive Director, dal295@cornell.edu 518-250-5710 Department of Development Sociology,
 Dr. Gretchen Rymarchyk, Deputy Director, gkr1@cornell.edu 607-254-3557 Warren Hall 275 Flex
 Thomas Marzeski, Associate Director, tem75@cornell.edu 315-317-4823 Cornell University
 Office: 607/255-8709 Fax: 607/254-2896 Ithaca, NY 14853
 www.RSANY.org

RSA Board of Directors :

Linda King, Chair
 Charles Chafee, Vice-Chair
 Scott Bischooping
 Robin Blakely-Armitage
 Joseph Burns
 Christopher Dailey
 Gordie Daniels
 Edward Engel
 Robert Everett
 Renee Garrett
 Adrienne Gliha-Bell
 Linda Gonyo-Horne
 John Goralski
 Doug Gustin
 Christine Holt
 Jennifer Howell
 Thomas Huxtable
 Joseph Kardash
 Christopher Kelder
 Douglas Ann Land
 Kevin MacDonald
 Tammy Mangus
 Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky
 Patrick Michel
 Carolyn Ostrander
 Wayne Rogers
 Sandra Ruffo
 Nicholas Savin
 John Sipple
 Jason Smith
 Heather Zellers



Autumn Adirondack Morning

Photo By: Bob Lowry, NYSCOSS Deputy Director

RSA at

NYSSBA CONVENTION

The frost is on the pumpkin, the hay is in the barn and it's time to get the latest information to help our rural students! Coming to Lake Placid for the NYSSBA Convention? Your RSA is ready to help you make it a great learning opportunity! RSA has partnered with NYSSBA to create a strand of rural programming that highlight issues of concern and help to rural school leaders. Each of the six presentations will take place in Gore on Level 3 of the Conference Center. Each one has been selected by RSA to be pertinent and replicable for rural schools. After years of holding NYSSBA conventions in cities throughout our state, this convention in Lake Placid is a chance to experience one of our truly spectacular rural areas and focus in on rural issues. While you're there, stop by the RSA booth in the Expo Hall to talk with RSA staff, relay any concerns you think we can help with, give us suggestions or just shoot the breeze! Finally, listen for that familiar voice at the Convention Kick Off Celebration. Hint: What the audio technicians refer to as the Voice of God is really only your RSA Executive Director Dave Little. See you there!

PBL Experiences in a Rural School	3081	10/12/17	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center
Nature Inspired Learning in a Rural School	3133	10/12/17	2:15 PM - 3:15 PM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center
Supporting Pre-Kindergartners	3029	10/13/17	8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center
School-Community Partnerships in Rural Areas	3132	10/13/17	11:00 AM-12:00 PM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center
Expanding Opportunities in Small School Districts	3151	10/13/17	1:45 PM - 2:45 PM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center
Disrupting Rural Poverty	3013	10/14/17	8:30 AM - 9:30 AM	Gore, Level 3	Conference Center

Rural Schools Association Winter Conference: Better People-Better Programs

December 1, 2017

*Wayne Finger Lakes BOCES Conference Center
Newark, New York*

- 10 a.m. Registration
- 10:30 a.m. Keynote Speaker Johns Hopkins’ Tyler Enslin on Achievement Now
How to achieve success in every aspect of your life. Determine what really is most important to you and the steps to achieve it Learn the practices that will have the greatest impact on your life. Professional development, managing your attitude, and strategically setting yourself apart are all part of this dynamic training.
- Noon Lunch is Provided
- 1-3:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions
Practical sessions to improve student performance and make your district more efficient stewards of resources!

Registration Fee: \$85 Contact NAM33@Cornell.edu to register for this important summit

A Better You and Better Programs = Better Student Outcomes!

Sposored by:





Farm to School supporters from throughout the state recently convened at Farm Bureau offices in Albany to begin joint efforts to promote this program that can make rural kids healthier and farms more viable.

RSA LEADING THE WAY ON FARM TO SCHOOL NUTRITION

Rural New York helps feed America, but are we feeding our own rural school children? Are overly restrictive regulations and insufficient school lunch subsidies keeping our kids from reaping the benefits of the foods produced in our own backyards? Those are the questions being raised by a new coalition of child nutrition experts, school and farm advocates and others who convened this week to encourage New York State to support Farm to School programs. Your Rural Schools Association is pleased to be taking a leadership role in this vital effort.

For rural communities decimated by the Great Recession and experiencing the double impact of declining population and increased poverty, helping our students eat healthier by boosting the availability of wholesome, locally grown food seems like a “no brainer.” But like anything else, it’s not that simple and all too often, we can see the farm from our schools but can’t gain access to the fruits of their labor. How is this possible? For starters, the state of New York hasn’t increased its school lunch reimbursement rate in years, making it difficult to purchase the (usually) more expensive products. State and federal regulations often compound the problem.

RSA has highlighted several local school districts that are currently featuring Farm to School programs and just recently, we joined a coalition working toward an easier path to healthier food for our kids and increased revenue for our farms. In addition to RSA, the group includes the American Farmland Trust, the NYS School Nutrition Association, NYSSBA, NYSP- TA, ASBO, The Alliance of YMCAs, Columbia University, the University of Rochester Children’s Medical Center, Farm Bureau, Healthy Schools Network, Hunger Solutions of NYS, the Food and Health Network and Rural Health Network of South Central NY and the NYS Department of Ag and Markets. It’s an extensive collaboration for a worthy cause.



At this inaugural effort, the groups listed barriers to Farm to School (such as the inability of schools to pay costs up front while awaiting state reimbursement, onerous state and federal regulations and lack of staff to complete grant applications.) The group then focused on help currently available to districts that want to begin or sustain their Farm

How do we sustain our communities in the face of economic, political and social stress? Your RSA, as part of Cornell’s Community and Regional Development Institute (CaRDI) recently came together with experts in planning, food distribution and governmental policy to take on looming issues facing us in the new global, knowledge based economy.



Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Miner speaks at CaRDI’s Community Sustainability Summit on the impact of failed state and federal economic development policies on our communities.

to School program (like a Farm to School toolkit produced by New York State Ag and Markets available next month, Cornell Cooperative Extension agents who are available to assist schools and Regional Economic Development Councils who can assist in grant writing and developing Farm to School programs throughout the state.)

From here the coalition plans to create a legislative agenda that will include funding requests and ways to decrease the regulatory burden on local farmers and schools who want to cooperate in Farm to School programs. Simply put, Farm to School is too important for rural kids and rural communities to not make participating simpler and cheaper for all involved. Your RSA will keep you updated on progress and resources in this critically important effort.

**A new Available Grant Opportunity has been posted -
[2017 Farm to School Competitive Grant Program](#)**

FARMS AND SCHOOLS A NATURAL CONNECTION



To our schools, local farms provide a source of both wholesome, fresh foods for students and staff, as well as financial support through property taxes. To farms, local schools provide a ready workforce and a market for their products. Linking the two would seem to be a logical and helpful state policy, but that's not always the case. What follows here is a list of ways state legislators are attempting to alter the Farm to School relationship. Not all of these legislative bills represent the approach RSA and its members would recommend (as some represent unfunded mandates on already overburdened local districts.) However, they're all of interest to RSA members and deserve our attention. Take a look at some of the bills being discussed

as we approach the 2018 legislative session:

A. 1081/S. 2768

A. 10479/S. 7706

Creating the New York Farm to School and School Garden Fund

A. 1081/S. 2768 would establish the Farm to School and School Garden Fund. The program's purposes are to increase consumption of local produce and the prevalence of school gardens. Schools may use the funds to purchase equipment and educational materials. The bills direct the Commissioner of Tax to include a space on the state income tax return to allow taxpayers to contribute to the fund.

A. 1179/S. 3588

Concerning a Community Gardens Task Force

S. 3588 would require, rather than encourage, the Commissioner of Education to develop a community gardens task force. It amends existing law to expand the task force's responsibilities to include a report on the state of community gardens and after school program development.

A. 1446/S. 1239

A. 9379/S. 7525 (2016)

Reimbursing Schools for Purchasing New York Farm Products

A. 1446/S. 1239 would direct the Commissioner of Education to reimburse school nutrition programs based on the percent of New York foods purchased. Schools that purchase at least 10% of foods from New York producers will receive an additional 5 cents per meal. Schools that purchase 15% will receive an additional 10 cents, and schools that purchase 20% or more of New York grown foods will receive an additional 25 cents. These bills require the Commissioner to provide schools with an approved vendor list.

A. 2899/S. 3290

Educating Students about Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition

A. 2899/S. 3290 would require all elementary and high schools to incorporate food, agriculture, and nutrition education into health instruction. These bills require school authorities to provide the resources, time, and space needed to adequately teach about food, agriculture, and nutrition.

A. 3003/S. 2003

Appropriating Aid to Localities

A. 3003/S. 2003 would appropriate \$100,000 for school gardens and gardening programs.

A. 3004/S. 2004

Appropriating Funds for Capital Projects

A. 3004/S. 2004 would appropriate up to \$500,000 for community gardens.

A. 3412/S. 5461

Enacting the Food Waste Prevention and Diversion Act

A. 3412/S. 5461 would require food service establishments, including schools, to reduce potential food waste. Food service establishments must, first, offer food for donation; next, feed unused food to animals; and finally, ensure remaining food is composted or anaerobically digested.

A. 3442

Creating a Food Security, Empowerment, and Economic Development Program

A. 3442 would create a grant program to develop community food projects and advisory council to oversee the program. Community based organizations and local governments are eligible to apply.

A. 5204/S. 3832

Creating a Grown in New York Campaign

A. 5204/ S. 3832 would create a Grown in New York campaign to increase production, distribution, awareness, and consumption of locally grown products.

A. 5510

Requiring State Agencies to Prefer New York Vendors

A. 5510 would require state entities to purchase competitively-priced New York grown, produced, or harvested food products. Prior versions of the law only encouraged state entities to purchase New York food products. By requiring state entities to purchase local foods, A. 5510 gives local farmers a competitive advantage and makes it easier for schools to purchase local foods.

A. 5689/S. 4281

Increasing the Small Purchase Threshold for Foods

A. 5689/S. 4281 would amend existing procurement law to allow school nutrition programs to use simplified contract procedures for purchases up to \$150,000, the federal small-purchase threshold. By allowing schools to use informal contract procedures for goods that cost less than \$150,000, A5689/S enables schools to purchase from local farmers.

A. 6123/S. 4486

A. 5445/S. 3248 (2015)

Requiring School Districts to Purchase New York Food Products

A. 6123/S. 4486 would require school districts to purchase food products grown or raised in New York. The state Board of Education may waive the requirements to purchase state products when the existing quantity is insufficient. It may also do so if the price of New York foods exceeds 110% of the price of comparable, available foods. By requiring state entities to prefer New York products, A. 6123/S. 4486 would give local farmers a competitive advantage when bidding on school meal contracts and enable schools to purchase local foods.

A. 7003/S. 1904

Recognizing Students Involved in Farm to School and School Garden Activities

A. 7003/ S. 1904 would direct the Commissioner of Education to create an annual award recognizing students who have demonstrated creativity or initiative working in a farm to school or school garden program. Students may use the award as a credit against tuition fees in their first semester at a state-run or city- run college.

A. 7007/S. 1463

Recognizing School Staff Involved in Farm to School and School Garden Activities

A. 7007/S. 1463 would direct the Commissioner of Education to create an annual award to recognize school staff contributions to farm to school or school garden programs.

A. 7011/S. 1430

Permitting School Districts to Favor Locally Sourced Goods

A. 7011/S. 1430 would allow schools to include language favoring locally grown products in bid specifications for school meal contracts. Such language would give local farmers a competitive advantage and enable schools to purchase local foods.

A. 7058/S. 3374

A. 7090/S. 3625 (2015)

Supporting Local Food, Farms, and Jobs

A. 7058/S. 3374 would create a thirty-five member Council on Food Policy, which includes a school food representative. The Council would be responsible for supporting local food economies; promoting healthy eating; creating jobs; and ensuring that an adequate supply of food exists in an emergency. A. 7058/S. 3374 would also set local food procurement goals for state entities. They would require the Department of Agriculture to develop a database to support farm to school sales.

S. 1471

Concerning a Study on Vermont's VT-FEED Program

S. 1471 would require the New York State Department of Agriculture to conduct a year-long study of Vermont's Food Education Every Day Program. The Department's report must include recommendations that include potential legislation. The bill specifies that the report must also discuss program models, philosophies, curriculum, and staff training programs.

S. 2867

Establishing the Office of Nutrition and Fitness

S. 2867 would create an office of nutrition and fitness within the executive branch. This office is responsible for developing and implementing a plan to educate the public on health and nutrition.

S. 3035

Creating the School-to-Pantry Donation Credit

S. 3035 would create a school-to-pantry donation credit. The bill allows schools to claim a tax credit for garden products they donate to a local pantry.

S. 4607

Creating a Database to Track Agency Food Procurement

S. 4607 would direct the state Office of General Services to report how state entities track local food purchases. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture to help the Office gather this information and to encourage state entities to report local food purchases. The Office can use this information to encourage entities, such as schools, to purchase more foods locally.

S. 4980

S. 6288 (2016)

Establishing an Aggregation, Storage, and Distribution Pilot Program

S. 4980 would require the state Office of General Services to reserve space within at least one of its food warehouses to aggregate, store, and distribute foods produced on local farms. The Office is responsible for working with the Departments of Education and Agriculture to facilitate sales between farmers and schools the warehouse currently serves. After one year, the Office must submit a report assessing whether the state should expand the pilot program.

Lessons in good health: Plans to bring medical care to schools will be very beneficial



State Assemblywoman Addie A.E. Jenne, D-Theresa, introduced legislation recently signed into law that makes it easier for health care professionals to engage with students through videoconferencing technology.

New initiatives that have been implemented are providing schoolchildren with greater access to vital health care services.

Earlier this month, South Lewis Central School District opened a school-based health center. It received approval from the state Department of Health to site the clinic at the middle/senior high school, 4264 East Road in Turin. District officials are notifying parents that the facility, operated by Lewis County General Hospital, is open and ready to accept patients.

“If parents sign up for the service, their children may schedule appointments for physicals, immunizations or allergy shots,” according to a story published Sept. 19 by the Watertown Daily Times. “And clinic staff, upon school nurse referral and parental consent, would also be able to treat them for illnesses and prescribe medication right from the school.”

The goal is to bring health care services to the place where children spend the bulk of their day. Transportation to and from the clinic is provided for students at the district’s other schools. The center will bill insurance but waive copays, offering an additional incentive to families.

This is a wonderful idea to improve access to medical treatment in an underserved region. We encourage parents in this district to enroll their children and make use of this new resource. This also could serve as a model for school/hospital partnerships in other areas.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo recently signed legislation introduced by state Assemblywoman Addie A.E. Jenne, D-Theresa, to enhance telehealth services between students and dentists, mental health professionals and physicians. It allows medical personnel to more easily connect online with charter, private and public elementary and secondary schools as well as school-age child care programs and day care centers.

Ms. Jenne said her bill was patterned on similar telehealth initiatives established throughout the state. One example she cited is the Rochester City School District’s partnership with the University of Rochester Medical Center’s Health-e-Access telemedicine program.

“That program allows a student to be seen by a physician without having to leave the school grounds. A video connection, typically from a school nurse’s office, allows a medical professional to communicate with the student and their guardian, review digital images through instruments such as ear and throat scopes, make a diagnosis and write any necessary prescriptions,” according to information from a news release issued Thursday by Ms. Jenne’s office. “The telehealth model of providing medical care to students from a remote location has proven successful in addressing issues such as ear infections, sore throats and respiratory illnesses. A University of Rochester study found that 96 percent of acute care illness visits could be successfully treated without the need for in-patient care.”

Medical facilities have found it increasingly challenging to provide quality health care in rural areas. This leaves people in regions such as the north country with more limited options in obtaining the treatment they need.

The initiatives begun at South Lewis Central School District and through Ms. Jenne’s legislation have addressed a critical issue. They make use of schools to ensure children are receiving essential care.

These programs don’t address all the problems we’re experiencing here, so more work needs to be done to find adequate solutions. But they fill a crucial health care niche, and that’s progress. They came about through the kind of forward thinking that continues to improve life for north country residents.



The Rural Higher Education Crisis

When it comes to college enrollment, students in Middle America—many of them white—face an uphill battle against economic and cultural deterrents.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/09/the-rural-higher-education-crisis/541188/>

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$



Technology Teacher Grant

Apply Here:

<https://fios.verizon.com/beacon/technology-teacher-grant/>



NYFB Agricultural Youth Scholarship 2018

The New York Farm Bureau Promotion & Education Committee is encouraging high school seniors who have been involved with agriculture and plan on continuing studies in this field to apply for the 2018 New York Farm Bureau Agricultural Youth Scholarship sponsored by the New York Farm Bureau Promotion and Education Committee. Scholarship awards are \$1,500 for first place \$1,200 for second and \$1,000 for third place. District winners will each receive \$100 and a memento. [Click here for more information.](#)

Streamline Purchasing with Cooperatives

Thanks to the local endorsement of U.S. Communities by the New York State School Board Association (NYSSBA) & the New York State Association of School Business Officials (NYSASBO), New York state school districts have a tremendous opportunity to take the lead in utilizing innovative, cost-saving best practices. As they look ahead and develop strategies for the rest of the year, it would be beneficial to consider the use of cooperative purchasing, an effective tool to help save time and money. In an uncertain economic climate where schools are pushed to do more with less, cooperatives can easily assist with purchasing needs.

**We're not just
another pea
in the pod.**

Cooperative purchasing
that is uniquely
U.S. Communities.



What is Cooperative Purchasing?

Cooperative purchasing combines the collective buying power of multiple agencies in order to provide a contract that can be utilized by other public agencies. A cooperative contract can improve the overall effectiveness of the purchasing process by providing volume discounts, administrative savings and other benefits. Essentially, if a public agency (a school district, city, or county, for example) goes out to bid for a product or service, other public agencies can piggyback off of that contract by using a cooperative and receive the same product or service at the negotiated discounted price. By avoiding the bid process, this is a great opportunity for schools to save valuable time and resources – piggybacking lowers the effort and the cost associated with traditional procurement.

About U.S. Communities

The largest national cooperative, U.S. Communities, is the only purchasing cooperative founded by public agencies, for public agencies. Since its founding twenty years ago, U.S. Communities has generated millions of dollars in savings for users. Today more than 55,000 registered counties, cities, education institutions and nonprofits utilize U.S. Communities contracts to procure more than 2 billion dollars in products and services annually. There are no fees to participate and no purchasing minimums, allowing maximum flexibility for participating agencies.

The distinguished sponsors that cofounded and co-own U.S. Communities include: the Association of School Business Officials, the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National League of Cities (NLC), the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), and the National Governor's Association (NGA). In addition, the Virginia Association of School Business Officials, along with 90 state organizations, shows its support for U.S. Communities through sponsorship.

For more information on U.S. Communities or to set up an in person meeting to learn more, please visit www.uscommunities.org. Please feel free to also contact Bob Schneider, NYSSBA Associate Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, at bob.schneider@nyssba.org or 518 783 3702; or U.S. Communities Northeast Program Manager, Zac Adams directly. Email - (zadams@uscommunities.org) & phone - (518) 603-3263.

We're not just another **pea** in the pod.

**Cooperative purchasing
that is uniquely
U.S. Communities.**



Founded by public agencies to represent your specific business interests, U.S. Communities has remained steadfast in its commitment to safeguard your ethical, legal and financial welfare at all times. It is the U.S. Communities difference that delivers savings, efficiency and value through:

- **Supplier commitments** to pricing, economy, sales and corporate support
- Solicitation, evaluation and award process led by an **independent lead public agency**
- Dedicated field **Program Managers** focused exclusively on public agency support

Experience the unmatched value of U.S. Communities. Register today!



Visit us at www.uscommunities.org



U.S. COMMUNITIES®
GOVERNMENT PURCHASING ALLIANCE



2017 Budget Workshop



UNDERSTAND THE BOARD'S ROLE AND THE FACTORS IMPACTING THE BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Attend this interactive workshop to review and discuss these critical issues and more:

- ▶ **State aid:** common misconceptions
- ▶ **Fund balance:** too little? too much?
- ▶ **Reserves:** to use or not to use?
- ▶ **Budgetary Reporting:** when and why

Understand how the long range planning of your district's fiscal health today will effect what happens tomorrow.

DATES & LOCATIONS

WED/THUR EVENINGS	SAT MORNINGS
10/25 POUGHKEEPSIE	10/28 LONG ISLAND
11/2 ROCHESTER	10/28 OLEAN
11/8 SYRACUSE	
11/15 SARATOGA SPRINGS	

REGISTER TODAY AT NYSSBA.ORG/EVENTS

BRING YOUR QUESTIONS. This is your opportunity to get the answers you need to understand the budget process.

1: What are the factors used in **TAX CAP CALCULATIONS?**

2: How will changes in assessments affect the **SETTING OF TAX RATES?**

3: **VETERANS EXEMPTIONS:** Should we adopt the alternative exemption or not?

*We heard you!
Now offering members more workshops in more locations.*

