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Minutes
Policy Board Meeting
January, 7, 2026

Cynthia McCarty, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:17 pm.

1. Approval of Minutes

-Motion to accept the minutes from October 2025 – J. Stapley and second B.

Fregeau: Motion carried, unanimous.

2. Fiscal Report

Denise submitted a monthly report of the current status of NCTRC (Attached)

- -Motion to accept the fiscal report dated January 2026 – T. Fioni and second V. Washburn: Motion carried, unanimous.

3. Reports and Communications

Director's report attached

5. New Business

- Motion to appoint Bailey Fregeau as the North Country Teacher Resource Center Director beginning July 1, 2026: A. Waldron 2nd: A. Myers-Lautenschuetz Motion carried, unanimous (B. Fregeau abstaining)

We have 2 new board members attending: Liz Martin from Peru and Marcia Newcombe from Plattsburgh. We welcome them and look forward to working with them.

We have applications for new instructors.

-Motion to approve Eddie Vega as an instructor/facilitator at the NCTRC A. Myers-Lautenschuetz 2nd J. Stapley: Motion carried, unanimous

Jen Kowalczyk presented Mountain Lake PBS updates:

- Beyond the Peaks film festival: high schoolers can submit fills (\$1000 prize)
- PBS Learning Media
 - Mountain Lake will come to schools to present to teachers, and also have field trips to MLPBS for small groups

The next New Teacher's Night Out events for this year will start on January 14. The guest speaker will be Jennifer Jolicouer from Plattsburgh City Schools.

The director asked whether we should let the insurance policy lapse, as it was put in place by request from SUNY Plattsburgh in 2018. The person that issued the request is long gone and nobody has checked in to see that the policy is in place. The price has gone from \$1200 to

approximately \$2000. During discussion, the pros and cons were discussed and we will maintain the policy moving forward.

Denise will be at a Teacher Center State Leadership meeting on May 6, so the May policy board meeting date will now be Monday, May 11.

In order to get the policy board to its most productive, we looked at the bylaws regarding retirees. We discussed that with upcoming resignations we need a bit more flexibility wording in case the NCTRC is unable to find anyone for the position. We will change the language from “two or three retired teachers (at least one from Essex County, one from Clinton County)” to “up to three retired teachers (from Essex or Clinton County)” and “Retired Teacher Representatives will be recommended by the Champlain Valley Council of Retirees (CVCR), at least one (1) from Essex County and one (1) from Clinton County” to “Retired Teacher Representatives will be recommended by the Champlain Valley Council of Retirees (CVCR) from Essex County or Clinton County”

NYSUT Report: Attached

Review Timeline/Upcoming Events

- NCTRC Monthly Meeting Dates 2025-2026
 - March 4, 2026
 - May 11, 2026 (Monday)

- ✓ Motion to adjourn, made by M. McCarty at 5:40 p.m.; seconded by V. Washburn-Motion carried. unanimous

The next meeting will be March 4, 2026 starting at 4:15 p.m. @ NCTRC.

Attendance Records January 7, 2026 Policy Board Meeting Quorum Present

Present:

Vicki Washburn
Heather Walsh
Bailey Fregeau
Theresa Figoni
Jeanette Stapley
Jennifer Kowalczyk
Cynthia McCarty
Marcia Newcombe
Megan McCarty
Liz Martin
April Myers-Lautenschuetz
Kaitlyn Jubert
Angie Waldron

Retired Teacher, Clinton County
Willsboro
LEA Representative
Saranac Central School
Retired Teacher, Essex
Business Person, Mountain Lake PBS
Chairperson, SUNY Plattsburgh
Plattsburgh City Schools
Beekmantown
Peru Central School
Parent representative
Northeastern Clinton Central School
CVES

Also Attending:

Denise Sypek

NCTRC Director

Absent:

Amanda Bokus
Steven Patnode
Melissa Niquette
Tammi Kreckel
Amanda Trombley
Kathleen Morse
Kayla Taylor
Kyle Lang
Laura Corey

Saranac Central School
Chazy Central School
Bouquet Valley School
Moriah Central School
Northern Adirondack CSD
Keene CSD
AuSable Valley Central School
Ticonderoga Central School
Schroon Lake Central School

Minutes Submitted by Denise Sypek, Director 1/8/2026



Room 545 Sibley Hall
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To: NCTRC Policy Board Members

From: Denise Sypek

RE: Budget

Date: January 7, 2026

Attached you will find the budget overview of expected revenues and amounts received in the NYSED account for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025. Expenses to date are reflected in this report. Detailed spreadsheets are on file with specific categories.

Grant	Total Amt.
	\$ 190,102.00

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Unencumbered</u>
400 P Serv.	\$186,626.00	\$30,900	\$26,100
450 Supplies	\$700	\$0	\$700
460 Travel	\$1171	\$899	\$272
Indirect costs PCS	\$1605	\$0	\$0
<hr/>			
Total	\$190,102	\$31,799	\$27,072



NCTRC Director's Report

January 2026

Week of October 6 - 10

- EDU 201 meets
- Practicum meeting
- DKG
- TCI Training
- A Complaint Free World collegial circle begins

Week of October 13 - 17

- CC Research Team meeting

Week of October 20 - 24

- EDU 201 meets
- Practicum meeting
- Academic Affairs meeting
- New Teachers' Night Out Session 1
- NYS MTP meeting
- Educational Leadership meeting

Week of October 27 - 31

- EDU 201 meets
- NYS MTP Meeting
- Practicum Board Meeting

Week of November 3 - 7

- EDU 201 meets
- Documentaries in Education class starts
- Word Play class starts
- Black Solidarity program
- Women in Sports class starts
- DKG
- *The Disengaged Teen* collegial circle starts
- Education Department Meeting
- Adolescence Education Department meeting
- Childhood Education Department meeting

Week of November 10 - 14

- EDU 201 meets
- HDFR Food Drop Off

Week of November 17 - 21

- EDU 201 meets
- *Disability Visibility* collegial circle starts



NCTRC Director's Report

January 2026

- Practicum meeting
- NYS MTP meeting
- HDFR Food Drop Off
- Fulbright Speaker: Education
- Educational Leadership meeting
- HDFR Food pick-up

Week November 24 - 28

- EDU 201 meets
- Speech and Hearing meeting
- EDU 465

Week of December 2 - 6

- EDU 201 meets
- EDU 465 meets
- Peer Mentoring meeting
- CSD meetings
- EDS 424 meeting
- Education Department meetings
- Adolescence Education meeting
- Childhood Ed meeting
- NYS Master Teacher Program meeting

Week of December 8 - 12

- EDU 325 meets
- NYS MTP meeting
- Student Teacher Orientation
- Cardinal Classroom Focus groups
- Practicum Board

Week of December 15 - 19

- CPR Training
- NYS MTP meeting

Week of December 19 - January 4: Closed

Week of January 5 - 9

- Policy Board Meeting
- Teaching In Season class starts
- Winter Wipeout starts

Kudos to all who helped to make the “Making Strides Campaign” a huge success.

The campaign to elect Michael Cashman for the NYS Assembly in a special election was successful. A heartfelt thank you to Peter Kim and his efforts to mobilize phone banking teams. Rod Sherman and the “daytime army” of retirees and in-service members deserve credit for their time and effort.

The November/December 2025 issue has some excellent information on a variety of issues: The 1975 strike in Schenectady; “Early poles give “A” to distraction-free schools;” “What’s Next in our fight for fairness;” “Making Strides” Don’t miss out on the wealth of information.

There was catastrophic flooding over July 4th in Central Texas.

Secretary Treasurer Philippe Abraham received correspondence from Texas AFT President Zeph Capo and Secretary Wanda Longoria thanking the NYSUT Disaster Fund for donation. “We’re deeply grateful for NYSUT’s compassion and solidarity during this trying time and your partnership in helping Texas recover and rebuild.”

ED Report for next meeting will include highlights of the Small and Rural Advisory Committee and the Women’s Committee meeting.

Happy Holidays to you and your family,

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Stapley

Thoughts for any day

“The real index of civilization is when people are kinder than they need to be.”

Louis de Nernieres Novelist

“There is a price to pay for speaking the truth.” There is a bigger price for living a lie.

Cornel West author and philosopher

“Half the truth is often a great lie.” Benjamin Franklin

Melinda Person, NYSUT President

Melinda shared the theme of two books about cell phone usage: the NYTimes bestseller by Cal Newport titled "Digital Minimalism," and "How to Breakup with Your Phone" by Catherine Price. It was an excellent discussion and I would like to quote a slide which summarized the message "unplugged-reclaiming your time and attention."

"The APP Store wants your soul" We're not just talking about how you use your free time or minor distractions. We are talk about your fundamental capacity to build a life that's worth living It's time to take back the reigns."

Jaime Ciffone, NYSUT Executive Vice President, spoke about the RISE program.

???

Fatima Horne Abdullahi, Owner, Mind, Body and Soul Studio

Members participated in a ZUMBA activity; learned about "eating clean and the benefits of growing clean, nutritious food Year-round on "Tower Gardens.

Dana Fournier, NYSUT staff, lead us through an art project; the end product will be sold to raise money for the Women's Committee. Check out their "booth" at the 2026 RA.

Maura Przbylek, NYSUT staff, shared the numerous and variety of offerings of through the NYSUT Member Benefits programs.

Jaime Ciffone, NYSUT Executive Vice President, shared more information on the RISE program.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette

Ron Gross, NYSUT Vice President addressed:

Community Schools, a needs assessment can identify what's lacking (food, clothes, dental care, etc.) What resources are available: at the building level, district level, community partners and public agencies.

It is a good idea to document do to reflect what you are doing. This is especially important when you look at sources for funding.

Member actions (clothes closet, hygiene kit, holiday gift drives, etc.)

He spoke about the United Community Schools, founded by UFT. It's vital to have a positive working relationships with the administrators.

In addition, Ron spoke about the NYS Community Technical Assistance Centers. These centers are run by the State Education Department and are located in Central and Western, Eastern and NYC areas.

Funding Sources can includes: school district, federal, state, city or county, private businesses or foundations, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, and in-kind.

Carrie Andrews, NYSUT Director of Constituencies & Program Services, share all services that are available to members.

Jen Kaseman, Director of Membership Growth and Organizing, announced the MOI (Member Organizing Institute) will be an annual event. She shared data derived from the 2025 MOI: 10,000+ doors knocked, 2000+ meaningful member conversations, 845 new member action center activist recruited, 90%+ of members contacted expressed strong union support. My thought: very impressive! There is compensation, and all, travel expenses are reimbursed. For more information, contact Jen Kaseman. Applications are due March 31, 2026

Peter Applebee, NYSUT Director of Policy and Program Development discussed merger and consolidation updates.

The meeting concluded with a protracted discussion of how to connect with members: offer swag, have one on one conversations, "give to VOTE/COPE to help" **Fix Tier 6**, do small things to include non-tenured teachers.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Stapley

School District Reorganization

*Small and Rural Locals
Council Meeting
November 21, 2025*

Peter Applebee, Director of Policy and
Program Development

Jennifer Coffey, Associate General
Counsel

Jonathan Rubin, Deputy Executive
Director/Director of Field and Affiliate
Services

FORMS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

"Reorganization" is a general term that describes four statutory forms of merging two or more school districts in New York State:

1. Annexation
2. Centralization
3. Consolidation
4. Dissolution

[Guide to the Reorganization of School Districts in New York State: Educational Management: NYSED](#)

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CENTRALIZATION



Procedure creates a new school district that encompasses the entire area of merged school districts.



The centralization process is described in Education Law §1801.



Teachers in the former school district(s) become employees of the newly formed/centralized school district.



The most senior teaching personnel between the merged districts would displace their less-senior colleagues.



If teachers' positions are abolished within a certain tenure area, the least senior teachers are placed on a PEL for a period of seven years following their dismissals.

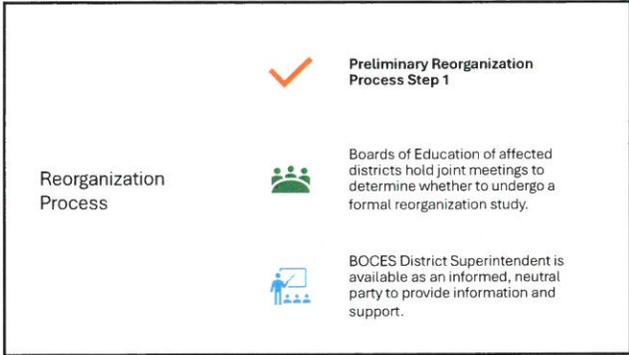
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ANNEXATION

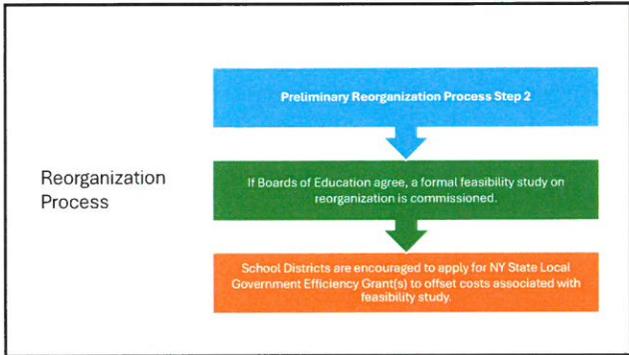
Statutory process where a school district is dissolved and its territory annexed to a central school district or to a union free school district. (Education Law §§1505-a, 1705, 1801, 1803).

- Employees in an annexation involving a **central school district** do not automatically become employees of the annexing central school district, they only have the right to employment in the annexing district if a vacancy exists within their tenure area.
 - They do not have "bumping rights" even though they may be more senior to another teacher in their tenure area in the annexing district.
 - If a vacancy is not available within the teacher's tenure area, the teacher is placed on the preferred eligible list ("PEL") for a period of seven years.
- Employees in an annexation to a **union free school district** become employees of the reorganized district. Length of service in the prior district is credited for salary, sick leave, etc.
- Teaching personnel in all annexation scenarios retain the right to be placed on a PEL in the instance that the teacher is unable to retain employment in the annexing district.
- The annexing district assumes all property rights and debts incurred through bonds or notes.

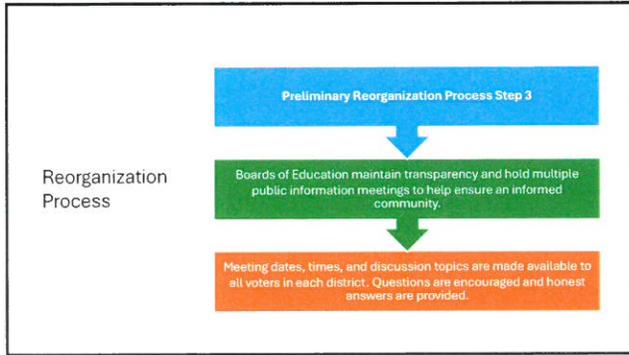
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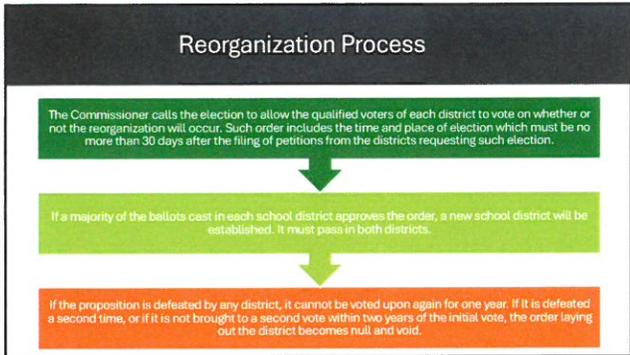
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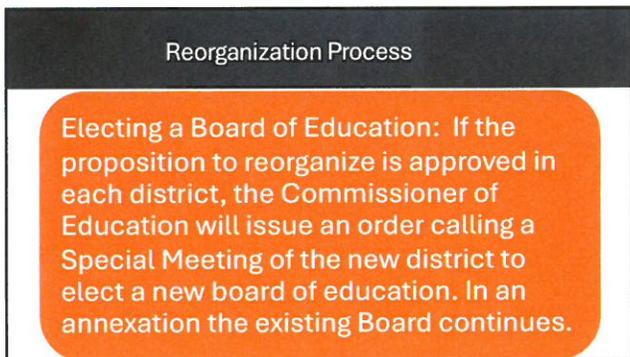
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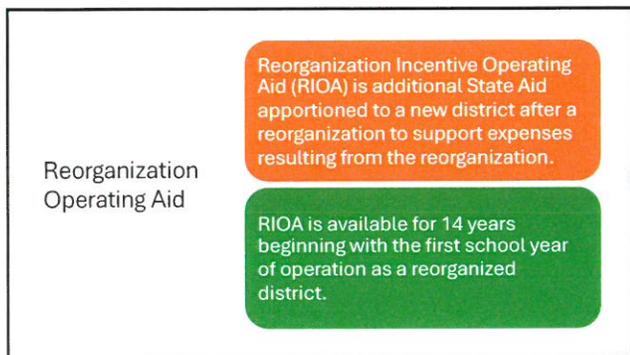
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Reorganization Incentive Building Aid

Merged school districts receive a 30% increase in their Building Aid Ratio, up to a maximum Aid Ratio of 95%.

This applies to new capital projects that start within 10 years of a merger to take advantage of this enhanced Building Aid Ratio.

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Reorganization Incentive Building Aid

Also, Building Aid payments for existing capital debt will be paid using the higher of the two previous districts' Building Aid Ratios.

So, if one district has a 50% Building Aid Ratio, and the other has a 75% Building Aid Ratio – the 75% Ratio is used to calculate Building Aid on existing debt.

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How Reorganization Impacts Collective Bargaining Agreements

- Underdeveloped area of law.
- Education Law provides that, generally, the newly reorganized district assumes the debts of the former school district which it replaces or annexes, specifically assuming the debts incurred through bonds, notes or relating to school building construction.
- A newly reorganized district will assume all property rights and assets of the former district or districts which it replaces or annexes.
- It is unclear whether collective bargaining obligations would constitute such a debt under the Education Law, or further, whether any CBA would even survive any reorganization procedure.
- Even assuming that in all instances of reorganization there are no surviving CBAs, the employees of the new school district would retain their Taylor Law representation rights, allowing them to designate an employee organization as their representative in collective negotiations with the new school district over terms and conditions of employment.

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