

**Rockville Centre Teachers Association**  
**Executive Council Meeting**  
**January 23, 2017**  
**Talking Points**

- 1 On January 23, 2017, members of the RVCTA met with Dr. Johnson and Veronica Lalo to address the payroll department personnel changes. All questions on payroll should be emailed to Veronica Lalo, who heads the department, with a copy to the level vice president. W2s were to be sent to members on Friday, January 27. We will meet again in a month.
- 2 Thanks to those who participated in the January 19 “Day of Action.” Your shields were amazing! Thanks to those who wore their RVCTA Pride shirts in support of public education. See our RVCTA Day of Action advertorial that appeared in the January 19 *Rockville Centre Herald*, below.
- 3 As of this meeting, Betsy DeVos is still under consideration as Secretary of Education— who has no experience or expertise in education — has used her family’s vast fortune in Michigan to push for the proliferation of for-profit charter schools and the implementation of voucher schemes that have siphoned millions from public schools. (Confirmation vote is now rescheduled to January 31.) Please keep calling our senators. Phone numbers are in the advertorial, below.
- 4 Thanks to those who attended our January 17 General Membership meeting. We hope that you liked our new “home.”
- 5 Save the Date – Tuesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m. – South Side High School Auditorium – Join Senator Todd Kaminsky and education officials for a forum on Diploma Options for Students. (flyer is attached)
- 6 Dues are now being deducted from paychecks.
- 7 Viri is representing NYSUT in attending the NEA Leadership Summit, to be held in mid-February.
- 8 NYSUT’s annual Representative Assembly will be held on April 7-8, 2017 in New York City. Viri will serve as chairperson of the Education Issues committee.
- 9 Thanks to those who attended the January Board of Education meeting.
- 10 Politics –
  - a. January 21 – Women’s March on Washington, DC was an amazing event. It was great to see RVCTA members who attended the DC advocacy event, or any of the sister rallies held on the same day. An extraordinary turnout, statewide, nationally, worldwide. Lynn DaSilva and Viri attended the DC rally. If you attended a Women’s March rally, please let your building representative know.
  - b. Governor Cuomo – State of the State Highlights
    - Free tuition at state colleges for families making \$125,000 or less.
    - Concern that it doesn’t target the state’s neediest students.
    - Push to increase state’s funding for schools, roughly \$24.8 billion last year. State aid is front and center because most other hot-button issues like Common Core and school evaluation are being overseen by the State Ed Department.

- This could steal spotlight from K – 12 (way to pit K-12 against higher-ed – per Billy Easton). Regent James Tallon (chairs Regents state aid subcommittee – helped draft aggressive school funding proposal doesn't want this to happen.)
  - K -12 includes \$35 million in grants to support after-school programs
- c. On Saturday, January 28, Viri participated in a protest at JFK Terminal 4. Roughly 5,000 people attended, giving voice to the President's executive order, barring seven countries whose residents were not permitted to enter the United States because of their religious beliefs.

11 Important for Members - Please remember:

1. If in a difficult situation at a meeting with an administrator, please remember to state, "At this time, I feel that I need a union representative."
2. Register with our union website, found at <http://ny.aft.org/rvcta>. You are not permitted to automatically access website contents! You must register.
3. Consider what is written while using RVCUFSD email and when you are using BYOD for your personal use.
4. If subpoenaed, please let RVCTA building rep or level vice president know immediately. Need a copy of the subpoena.
5. The member is responsible for maintenance of his/her certification. If you are teaching in a class in which you are uncertified, please advise your level vice president immediately.

As shown in the January 19, 2017 Herald, on our Day of Action



## RVC Teachers Move Forward to Preserve Public Education

By Viri Pettersen  
President, Rockville Centre Teachers Association

*Would you have confidence in a doctor who has not been educated or has no experience in his/her chosen field?  
Would you trust an uncredentialed or unlicensed doctor to perform surgery on your child?*

With that thought in mind, consider the nomination of Betsy DeVos as U.S. Secretary of Education. A billionaire activist from Michigan with degrees in business administration and political science, DeVos has no educational experience. Neither she nor her four children have ever attended public schools. This background deficiency, coupled with the fact that she has never worked in any school environment, should immediately disqualify her as a nominee.

Educators at all levels have essential credentials to contribute to their public school communities; therefore, the question remains why a nominee would not carry the required courses or connections to a public school system.

With 85% of our nation's children attending public schools, the concern should be on their current needs to ensure a successful future, one that is grounded in a positive, proactive and focused public school system.

It is deeply concerning that the prospect of a DeVos selection could well affect Rockville Centre's public school system. Consequently, we ask that you join us in a call to action, to contact our U.S. Senators, Chuck Schumer ((202) 224-6542 ) and Kirsten Gillibrand ((212) 688-6262 ). Join us in solving this problem - be clear in telling our senators to vote AGAINST a Betsy DeVos confirmation.

Let us work together – educators, students, families, community members – to reclaim the promise of public education so that our children, and our children's children, may benefit from its potential.

*"This background deficiency, coupled with the fact that she has never worked in any school environment, should immediately disqualify her as a nominee."*

Paid for by the Rockville Centre Teachers Association, 2017

**#NYSDiplomaOptions**

*Join*

**Senator Todd Kaminsky**  
*and education officials for a forum on*

# **Diploma Options for Students**

**Tuesday, February 7**  
**7 p.m.**

**South Side High School  
Auditorium  
140 Shepherd St.  
Rockville Centre, NY 11570**



*Panelists include:*

*NYS Board of Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa*

*Long Island Regent Roger Tilles*

*Christopher Suriano*

*Assistant Commissioner, Office of Special Education  
New York State Education Department*

*Assemblyman Brian Curran*

*Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer  
Chair, Subcommittee on Students with Special Needs*

***Albany needs to hear your voice***

Senator Todd Kaminsky  
55 Front Street, Rockville Centre, NY 11570  
(516) 766-8383 | [kaminsky@nysenate.gov](mailto:kaminsky@nysenate.gov)  
[kaminsky.nysenate.gov](http://kaminsky.nysenate.gov)