



R.E.F.I.T. News...

Dr. Robert Dillon, Executive Director

Kristel Lazarus, Executive Secretary

APRIL 2015

www.refitny.org

Longtime R.E.F.I.T. Member and Executive Secretary, Helen Maloney retires.....

It is with mixed emotions that we share the news that March 31st marks the official retirement of Helen Maloney as R.E.F.I.T.'s Executive Secretary. Helen has been a part of the consortium's activities from its beginning in 1980, serving on the Board of Directors as Board Secretary, Vice President and then President through 1991. In 1991, Helen took on the role of Executive Secretary to the Board of Directors and has remained a dynamic force supporting R.E.F.I.T.'s mission.



Helen Maloney's public school service was not limited to R.E.F.I.T. For ten years she served as a member of the Connetquot School District Board of Education including terms as Vice President and President. She has been a member of the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association Executive Committee and the Islip Town School Boards Association. Helen has also been an active participant in the activities of the Connetquot PTA and Suffolk Region PTA. She is a recipient of local, state and national PTA honors and awards. Helen is actively involved on the Islip Town Youth Board and was active for many years in the Suffolk County Girl Scouts, the Salvation Army and the Oakdale Chamber of Commerce.

There are few people associated with education and children who do not know and admire Helen. As a past R.E.F.I.T. president, Helen will be joining us at the table as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. We have been fortunate to have had her energy, commitment and service on behalf of our cause and look forward to her continued participation.

Introducing our new Executive Secretary, Kristel Lazarus...

We are excited to welcome Kristel Lazarus to the R.E.F.I.T. team. Kristel comes to us with 13 years of experience as a business professional with office management, financial responsibilities, membership data processing, website and internet knowledge. We are confident that she will be an asset to our organization.

New R.E.F.I.T. Contact Information

New mailing address: PO Box 527
North Bellmore, NY 11710

New email address: refit411@gmail.com

Please ask your district to add this email address so that it is not blocked by spam filters.

New phone number: **516-313-9043**

Please note we have no fax number at this time and request that purchase orders be either mailed or sent via email.

The R.E.F.I.T. annual legislative breakfast was held on a cold and icy Friday, March 6th at Western Suffolk BOCES. Despite the weather challenges, the event was attended by many of the R.E.F.I.T. Board of Directors, past R.E.F.I.T. presidents and numerous trustees of our member districts. This group met with a distinguished group of Long Island legislators that included Senator John Flanagan, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Education, Senator Philip Boyle, Assemblyman Edward Ra, Ranking Minority Member of the Education Committee, Assemblyman Andrew Raia and Assemblyman Joseph Saladino. In addition, the meeting was also attended by staff members representing Congressman Steve Israel, Senator Michael Venditto, Assemblyman Chad Lupinacci, and Assemblywoman Kimberly Jean-Pierre.

The morning's discussion focused on the troublesome gap elimination adjustment (GEA), unfunded mandates, unaccompanied minors and insufficient funding from the state and federal government. School district representatives continually stressed the dire consequences to their students and communities caused by the insufficient funding of public education to their school districts. Many shared examples illustrating the disastrous impact of the GEA over the past few years to their instructional and non-instructional programs.

In closing, R.E.F.I.T. is committed to pursuing the appropriate funding that provides a sound basic education to all of our students.



R.E.F.I.T. has a newly designed website...we hope you will visit it often at www.refitny.org!

R.E.F.I.T. Joins in Addressing the Political, Financial and Legal Challenges of Pursuing a Sound Basic Education

R.E.F.I.T. joined with the Mid-Hudson School Study Council, Rural Schools Association and the Statewide School Finance Consortium to co-host a breakfast at Rosie O’Grady’s on Monday, October 27th, 2014, during the New York State School Boards’ Association Conference in New York City for 215 registered attendees. This year there was a scheduled panel discussion. The panel included Larry Levy, the Executive Dean at the National Center for Suburban Studies at Hofstra University and Michael Rebell, Executive Director of the Campaign for Educational Equity and Professor of Law and Educational Practice at Teachers College. Unfortunately, Elizabeth Lynam, the Vice President and Director of State Studies at the Citizens Budget Commission, was scheduled to be a panelist but had to withdraw from the panel due to a family emergency.

The event began with a welcome and introductions from Dr. Robert Dillon, Executive Director of MHSSC and R.E.F.I.T. Dr. Rick Timbs, Executive Director of Statewide School Finance Consortium, offered remarks on our mission to secure a sound basic education for all children in New York. The moderator for the discussion was David Little, recently appointed Executive Director of the Rural Schools Association. The panelists spent a few moments sharing their respective experiences and how they related to K-12 public education. The balance of the program was spent by the panelists answering questions that were submitted by school board trustees and superintendents in attendance. The discussion concluded with the recommendation from the panel to the audience that advocacy efforts by public education stakeholders is effective and needs to be continued.



(To view more photos from our events go to www.refitny.org/ and click on the Gallery tab)

- 2014-15
Member Districts**
- Amityville
 - Baldwin
 - Bay Shore
 - Central Islip
 - Commack
 - Connetquot
 - Copiague
 - East Meadow
 - Eastern Suffolk BOCES
 - Eastport/South Manor
 - Elmont
 - Farmingdale
 - Freeport
 - Islip
 - Lindenhurst
 - Levittown
 - Longwood
 - Middle Country
 - Nassau BOCES
 - North Babylon
 - Plainedge
 - Riverhead
 - Roosevelt
 - South Country
 - Uniondale
 - Valley Stream 24
 - West Islip
 - Westbury
 - Western Suffolk BOCES
 - William Floyd

Meetings are held at
Western Suffolk BOCES
507 Deer Park Avenue,
Dix Hills, New York