



# THE NEWSLETTER

of the CSA Retiree Chapter, Central New Jersey Region

Spring 2023

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## Message from the Unit Leader

Lucille Vecchiarelli, Regional Unit Leader  
(luluvecch@gmail.com or 732-919-1801)



*Dear Members,*

*Soon spring will be upon us, and we will be glad for the warmer weather that awaits us. Finally, I believe the worst of the pandemic is over and we are now experiencing more of a normalcy to our lives, which means more in-person meetings and luncheons.*

*A new cultural committee was formed this winter and we have been meeting regularly to plan activities for the Unit. Carolyn Telesmanich, Barbara Berg, and Janet Miller have joined the committee along with Fran Capuana who is renowned for her restaurant selections. The committee has decided to continue with the international cuisines that we were enjoying under Fran's direction, possibly doing Chinese and Jewish deli food. We are also putting together the final arrangements for our June luncheon which is scheduled for June 21st. You will be notified by email for all these events.*

*The committee has researched and found that seniors are offered free tickets to PNC events. Carolyn Telesmanich is finalizing this offer and you will be notified about this soon. The tickets are for events in September.*

*I would like to thank the committee members for their hard work and efforts on your behalf. They have put many hours of work into this endeavor and I'm sure you are looking forward to their results.*

*We are very fortunate to be featuring Henry Rubio, our new CSA president, as our speaker for the Bagel Breakfast Meeting scheduled for April 26th. Please sure to attend this very important meeting at which we will be brought up to date about all that is happening at CSA regarding retirees. A flyer with details of this event is included in this Newsletter.*

*Please be sure to pay you your dues for 2023 if you haven't already done so. See you in April at the Monroe Township Library.*

*Lucille Vecchiarelli, Unit Leader*




# CSA Retiree Chapter Central New Jersey Region



**BAGEL BREAKFAST MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 26, 2023 at 9:30am**  
**Monroe Township Library**  
**4 Municipal Plaza**  
**Monroe Township, New Jersey 08831**



	<p><b>Guest Speaker:</b> <b>Henry Rubio, President, CSA</b></p>
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**Be prepared for coffee, tea, bagels,  
and other goodies: useful information, having your questions answered,  
and the pleasure of meeting your colleagues.**

**If you have not yet done so, you can pay your 2023 membership dues  
(\$15) to Sandy Poris at the meeting (or see tearoff below).**

**DOOR PRIZES!**

**DOOR PRIZES!**

**DOOR PRIZES!**

If you have not yet done so, you can use this tearoff to send a check for dues (\$15.00) to  
Sandy Poris, 51 Lakehurst Way, Monroe Township, NJ 08831.  
Make it payable to CSA NJ Retiree Chapter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Print e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

# NEW CSA PRESIDENT HENRY RUBIO'S ADDRESS AT THE 54TH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Brothers and Sisters: I am truly honored to be standing before you today to celebrate the strength and bright future of our union. Before we go on, can we please take a minute to honor a man that has given CSA over a decade of inspiring service and leadership?

As many of you know, Mark first stepped into CSA leadership when he was appointed the Chair for District 31. At the time, he was already an exemplary and beloved principal of IS 75, one of the largest middle schools on Staten Island, and had been an esteemed teacher and AP at IS 34. Throughout that time, colleagues sought after him as a sounding board so many areas of education and leadership. Before he became Executive Vice President in 2012, he had already built the kind of reputation all educators strive to achieve. He joined CSA's team not because he wanted out of his school — he loved it there — or because he felt he had given enough to Staten Island's families. He did it because he saw an opportunity to use his passion and skills to support students and families across New York City.

Before I continue, Barbara, thank you for sharing Mark with us. The love and support you and your children have given him has allowed Mark to give so much love and support to so many others. On behalf of our entire CSA family, we can't wait to see how your lives continue to flourish as you travel the world and become wonderful grandparents.

Mark will forever be honored by our union for his leadership during this pandemic. He listened to you, and he fought for you in your time of greatest need. He grieved with you and spoke truth to power. I remember, the stress and uncertainty we all experience during the pandemic. The remote and blended back and forth. The concerns and challenges with our family. And here again, Mark led employees and team of CSA with calm and compassion. And he fought for every member to have the same peace of mind.

The most important thing, I think, Mark leaves behind will be the personal impact he has had as a lifer in this system: The students whose lives he has saved; the countless Staten Island families he has touched; the colleagues he supported and now have become his lifelong friends. Mark, I hope you can just take a moment today to consider how your work – in this school system for 36 years — has impacted thousands upon thousands of school leaders across not only the New York City and New York State, but the entire nation. I, personally, am so grateful to have you in my life. Your mentorship and loyalty have made me a better man, a better husband, a better father, and a better leader. Thank you, brother!

Mark is one of the main reasons I feel prepared to take on this incredible responsibility and opportunity. And he's one of so many colleagues that I see here today as I look around this room – who have contributed to my personal learning and success. Thank you. I will continue to make you proud!

For those of you who may not know me well yet, who is Henry Rubio? I was born in Harlem and raised in Queens. I first served students as a bilingual social studies teacher in Queens, an assistant principal in the Bronx, and then a high school principal in Manhattan. I joined the Supervisory Support Team in 2011 to formally mentor and coach school leaders full-time across New York City. That's where I learned and witnessed first-hand the incredible talent and tenacity of our school administrators across the five boroughs, whether they are principals, education administrators, assistant principals, early childhood directors, or supervisors of. I witnessed in the trenches their personal sacrifices and the unfair challenges they were facing to support students every day.

Former CSA President Ernest Logan appreciated my passion, and in 2017 he asked me to join his team as First Vice President. And in the Logan way – he too mentored me. Thank you, Ernest! I was honored and taken aback by the invitation to join his team. Taken aback because I knew the incredible responsibility that would be, but also the incredible opportunity to put my energy to fighting for you and with you! To advocating for you and with you! And now, I welcome the opportunity to continue doing the same for each CSA member with even greater passion and commitment. The state of our union is strong, and we have the privilege of advocating for the most dedicated, talented school & labor leaders on the planet.

I've learned so many invaluable lessons throughout my career, and I simply would not have been able to do so without my incredible partners: my wife and our four children. Wildra, everyday I'm in constant awe at how you help balance our family life with the incredible work you do as a high school teacher. I know this next leg of our journey will come with some unexpected challenges, but also some incredible opportunities to do good. I know it will all be easier and more fulfilling because you are by my side. I love you – Tu Eres Mi Eterno Amor!

## HENRY RUBIO'S ADDRESS TO CSA (cont.)

Brothers and Sisters, so what is our vision for the future? Our union has accomplished so much since I joined the team as First Vice President and have served as Chief Negotiator. Mark has detailed some of that for you already. So, I want to end today by sharing a little about what our future holds for 2023 and beyond. As Mark said, CSA's 60th year is a time for transformation. If we are to truly achieve transformation, our partners in this work must adopt the voice of our school leaders every step of the way, and not merely as an afterthought. Our partners recognize that Mayor Adams truly respects school leader, and we will continue to build a transparent & collaborative relationship with him & his team. They recognize that the Mayor's first and best decision was to appoint Chancellor David Banks. David has been a good man, an honest man, and has been a transparent leader who knows what it takes to run a NYC school. I know he wants to truly support you. He knows that without you, there can be no restoration of our school system! Great schools always begin with great leaders! David was a CSA member and understands the value of our union like no other. He wants to be "the best Chancellor CSA has ever seen!" Chancellor, I thank you for your partnership and look forward to our continued and close collaboration.

So, what is first on our agenda? Safety. Our first job as a union is to protect you. You can't do your jobs if you are not safe. And your students simply can't learn if they are not safe. If we're going to work together to bring our back families into our system, then this must be the starting point. In our last survey, by a margin of two to one, you said the DOE was not providing us with the resources we need to keep students safe. We must start with common sense solutions like locking the front doors and equipping all schools with sufficient cameras, buzzer systems. There must be silent alarms, an appropriate number of safety agents— at least two — in every school building.

These sorts of common-sense practices must be worked out before another person gets seriously hurt, or worse. That could have been the case last month at P.S. 28 in Queens. On Sept. 15, a deranged intruder entered the school building. If not for hero Principal Robert Quintana, children could have been hurt. As it is, the intruder injured and hospitalized a school safety officer and school aide before Robert could get to the elevator and subdue the intruder for almost 15 minutes. Thank God Robert has self-defense training, and that the intruder was not armed. We were lucky. Robert was lucky. PS 28 was lucky. But we have been pushing our luck for far too long. I am sick and tired of hearing about assaults on our members with little to no consequences for the assailant! There needs to come a day in NYC that assaulting a school administrator will automatically lead to an arrest and felony conviction!

In addition to safety, we will continue to fight for the time and health that has been taken from you. Listen, we all know our jobs and workload were untenable before 2020 and became even more so during the pandemic. During the crisis, you stepped up and made the personal sacrifices for your community. You kept our system afloat, and it has sucked you dry! It is becoming humanly impossible to be a school administrator. If they truly want to put us in a position to improve this system, then DOE must — once and for all — eliminate all the unnecessary, unproductive, and inefficient tasks that do nothing to support our students' success.

Next: Why does the DOE have to seriously prioritize school leader retention and recruitment? Because so many of our highly effective school leaders have left the system out of sheer exhaustion and overwhelming stress. Our survey before the pandemic was already showing double digits increases in your dissatisfaction with your workload. It's no wonder that school leaders like that we all know like, Brian O'Connell, Ramon Gonzalez, Ed Tom, Fatimah Ali, and Eric Contreras have left the system before retirement age. They call us instructional leaders but then mandate us to do clerical work, deputize us do investigations that they don't want to waste time doing, and shift central office work to the same people that should be focused on student learning and safety. Does that make any sense? Twenty years ago, we would get dozens of applicants for a principalship. Now, we are lucky if we get 2-3 applicants to run most C-30s. Too many great APs and EAs who are ready to do this work refuse to consider the move up to the principalship because of the cost they know it will take on their health and families. If things don't change, I too would think twice about the principalship.

Finally, as you know, it's a contract year for both our DOE and CBO members. In the coming weeks and months, our team will continue negotiations, or with our expert legal team, continue a lawsuit over pay-parity for early childhood directors working in CBOs, of which more than 90 percent are women of color earning half of what our members in the DOE rightfully earn. That is a fight we will not give up!

## HENRY RUBIO'S ADDRESS TO CSA (cont.)

I have had the privilege of serving as your chief negotiator for the last two contracts. Our last contract was approved in 2020 by over 96 percent because you recognized how much it delivered for you and your schools. It was not just the raises and the premium-free health care: We were able to deliver wins because of the unity and strength that we are displaying today.

Just look at this tremendous crowd! Over 1300 strong! This is the crowd that joined us outside city hall in 2019! This is the kind of unity that allowed us to deliver paid parental leave, which can be taken intermittently without coming off payroll. This is the show of strength that allowed us to deliver additional pay for elementary and middle school principals to bring them closer to their colleagues in high schools. It is this solidarity that gave us an AP in every school and a tenure framework for CSA members on probation.

Folks, our patience, persistence, and professionalism has always paid off! It allowed us equitable performance incentives for every member during the pandemic; an unprecedented compensation agreement for the countless hours you work as a result of the Situation Room fiasco. It paid off when protecting our EA's through yet another reorganization, and it paid off when those annual leave days were taken from you, and we fought to bring them back and allow you to go home. These are just a few things we accomplished together! Our accomplishments will only be possible when we stand together, speak together, and stay in sync together as one and only one unit. And I know we will. I know you will respond to our surveys, attend our CSA district meetings, communicate with us, and show up when we call on you. At the bargaining table, we will remind the city of what you do for kids every day. We will remind them that public education in this city survived because you carried it. We will remind them that our public school system will grow stronger because of you.

There is so much to do and so much for us to accomplish together. In this next phase, together, we will win back New York families by making our schools safe. We will create the working conditions that propel our students' learning conditions, while at the same time, attract the next generation of leaders. In closing, Mark, thank you for all your continued support, brother!

Brothers and Sisters, thank you for your support. Thank you for standing with, speaking with, and staying in sync with your union! God bless CSA! God bless you all as we continue this work together! Thank you!

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Henry Rubio began serving as the President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators on January 1, 2023, after having served as the union's Executive Vice President and First Vice President. Prior to those leadership positions, he represented school leaders as the District Chair for Manhattan High Schools and was elected by his colleagues to serve on the CSA Executive Board.

Henry was born, raised, and educated in New York City, and entered the field of education with a background in business and an undergraduate economics degree from Fordham University at Lincoln Center. He later earned a graduate degree from Queens College and administrative certification from the College of Saint Rose. He began his career in 1997 as a Bilingual Social Studies teacher in Queens. Additionally, he completed studies at Cornell University's AFL-CIO Union Leadership Institute and served as CSA's chief negotiator for the union's most recent agreement with the city.

While an Assistant Principal at the High School for Medical Science and Mary E. Walker Medical Science Academy, he played an instrumental role in the academic and organizational development of two new schools that have demonstrated their academic excellence in a 6th to 12th grade setting. During Mr. Rubio's tenure as principal of A. Philip Randolph Campus High School, the Board of Regents and New York State Department of Education recognized the school as a "High Performing School." The school raised student scholarship awards from less than \$500,000 to \$12 million and saw performance statistics improve markedly.

In 2007, Henry was selected to participate in Columbia University's Cahn Fellows program, and in 2011, he became a mentor and coach to school leaders across New York City through CSA's Supervisory Support Program. He also has the privilege of serving as president of the High School Principal's Association, president of the Association of Dominican-American Supervisors and Administrators, and as a board member of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement. He is currently also the president of the New York State Federation of School Administrators and a vice president of the American Federation of School Administrators. In recognition of his leadership and impact on student achievement, Henry has been the recipient of several community service and leadership awards including recent recognitions from Latino Trendsetter in 2010, UNAPEC University in 2011, and the Catholic Teacher's Association in 2013.

Henry and his wife Wildra have been married for 18 years<sup>5</sup> and been blessed with four beautiful children. They now live in Long Island.

# Important Notice: Health Plan Deductibles Reset in January (from Norm Sherman)

Various health plan deductibles reset beginning Jan. 1. For active Department of Education and Day Care members, the SIDS dental deductible of \$ 25 resets, and for active Department of Education members the OptumRx prescription drug deductible of \$50 per person/\$150 per family resets, and are taken from the first applicable dental visit or first prescriptions purchased at a local pharmacy.

**Medicare Part-B Premiums and Deductibles:** For retirees who are Medicare-eligible, the Medicare Part-B deductible will decrease to \$226 in 2023. The GHI Medicare Part-B deductible remains \$ 50.00. The standard Medicare Part B premium will be \$164.90. For those whose Medicare Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) is more than \$97,000 as an individual or \$194,000 for a couple the table below shows the various premiums by income and filing status. The total amount is paid by each individual (for example, a couple earning between \$194,001 and \$246,000 each pay an additional amount of \$65.90).

Medicare Part-B premiums, including the IRMAA amount, will continue to be reimbursed by the City consistent with the negotiations between the Municipal Labor Committee and the City.

**Medicare Part-D Surcharge Continues, Out of Pocket Amount Increases:** In 2023, the out-of-pocket limit will increase to \$7,400 before catastrophic coverage kicks in. The pension deduction, for those enrolled in the GHI Enhanced Medicare Part D plan associated with the Senior Care health plan will remain at \$125.00 per person per month.

As part of the Health Care Reform legislation passed in 2010, manufacturers provide a point-of-sale discount. As a result, the “donut hole” is eliminated and you will pay 25 percent of the cost of generic medications and 25 percent of the cost of brand name medications until you reach the catastrophic stage. The value of the manufacturer’s discount is credited to you as the “amount others paid on your behalf” amount shown on your monthly reports from Express Scripts.

In 2023, those who are subject to an IRMAA assessment on Medicare Part-B will continue to be assessed a surcharge on Medicare Part-D, according to the table B (left). This amount is in addition to the plan premium which is deducted from your pension check. The total amount is paid by each individual (for example, a couple earning between \$366,001 and \$750,000 each pay an additional amount of \$70.00). Unlike Medicare Part B surcharges, Part-D surcharges are not reimbursable by the City.

<b>Medicare B Premiums 2023</b>				<b>Medicare D Surcharge 2023</b>		
(NOT Previously covered by Medicare or NOT taking Social Security Or Subject to IRMAA Surcharge)				Individual Income	Joint Income	Surcharge Amount
Individual Income	Joint Income	Monthly IRMAA*	Total Monthly Premium			
Less than or equal to \$97,000	Less than or equal to \$194,000	\$0.00	\$164.90	Less than or equal to \$97,000	Less than or equal to \$194,000	\$0.00
\$91,001 to \$114,000	\$194,001 to \$246,000	\$65.90	\$230.80	\$97,001 to \$123,000	\$194,001 to \$246,000	\$12.20
\$114,001 to \$142,000	\$246,001 to \$306,000	\$164.80	\$329.70	\$123,001 to \$153,000	\$246,001 to \$306,000	\$31.50
\$142,001 to \$170,000	\$306,001 to \$366,000	\$263.70	\$428.60	\$153,001 to \$183,000	\$306,001 to \$366,000	\$50.70
\$170,001 to \$500,000	\$366,001 to \$750,000	\$362.60	\$527.50	\$183,001 to \$500,000	\$366,001 to \$750,000	\$70.00
More than \$500,000	More than \$750,000	\$395.60	\$560.50	Over \$500,000	Over \$750,000	\$76.40

\*IRMAA stands for Income-Related Medicare Adjustment Amount



Note from Steve Poris (newsletter editor): The following article was written by the Artificial Intelligence program called ChatGPT. The AI was responding to a request by me to “write a 300 word article about being a retired educator”. Personally, I think this article is amazing and troubling at the same time.

## Being a Retired Educator

Being a retired educator can be a mixed bag of emotions. On one hand, there's the sense of accomplishment that comes from years of shaping young minds and helping students achieve their goals. On the other hand, there's the uncertainty that comes with leaving a career that has been a central part of your life for so long.

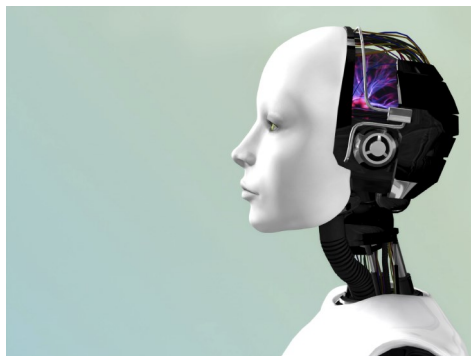
One of the biggest benefits of being a retired educator is having the time to pursue personal interests and hobbies. Many retirees use this newfound freedom to travel, learn a new language, take up a new hobby, or simply enjoy time with family and friends. This can be a welcome change from the demanding schedule of teaching, which often left little time for anything else.

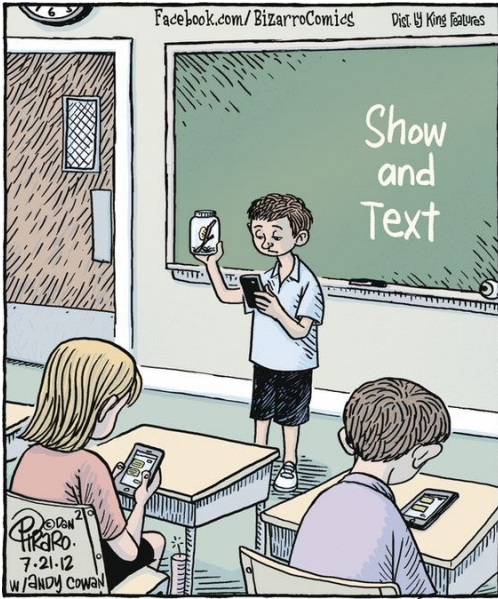
Another benefit of retirement is the ability to stay connected to the education community. Many retired educators continue to volunteer in schools or mentor new teachers, offering their expertise and guidance to the next generation of educators. Additionally, retired educators may join professional organizations or attend conferences to continue learning and growing as educators.

Retirement also offers the opportunity for rest and relaxation after years of hard work. Many retired educators take this opportunity to focus on their health and wellness, taking up exercise or other activities that promote physical and mental well-being. This can be especially important for educators who may have experienced high levels of stress or burn-out during their careers.

However, retirement can also present some challenges for retired educators. Leaving a career that was such a central part of their identity can lead to feelings of loss or disorientation. Additionally, the loss of social connections and sense of purpose that came with teaching can lead to feelings of isolation or boredom.

Overall, being a retired educator is a significant life transition that can be both exciting and challenging. It's important for retirees to take time to reflect on their accomplishments and to stay connected to their communities in order to make the most of this new phase of life.





"BUT IF YOU DON'T LEARN TO READ AND WRITE, HOW ARE YOU EVER GOING TO TEXT?"

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