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CSA NEWS

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL SUPERVISORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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Rollover Funds: DOE Compromises to 30%

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

City lawmakers, union leaders and parents exploded in anger after Schools Chancellor Cathie Black announced in February that Principals had to return 50 percent of their year-end surpluses, which they planned to spend in the following school year.

After protests erupted at schools, and thousands of words were written on blogs and websites across the city, Ms. Black retreated a little; the percentage was lowered to 30 percent, as a result of "thoughtful feedback" from Principals, said Ms. Black.

That decision did not satisfy CSA, Principals, a number of City Council members or many parents. CSA President Ernest Logan said, "The DOE holds Principals accountable for how schools perform. They should



WILLIAM ALATRISTE

OUTRAGE City Council member Elizabeth Crowley, at microphone, and council members Daniel Dromm, Daniel Garodnick, Robert Jackson, Mark Weprin and Margaret Chin joined parents on March 10 to demand restitution of funds.

have trusted my members to spend the money in an intelligent manner in their schools. The money belongs to those

children."

Each year until now, Principals have been allowed to

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LEGAL UPDATE

Union Battles for Assistant Principals

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

CSA continues its battle with the city over snow days and parking permits as well as with negotiations about Assistant Principal pay at transformation schools.

With regard to transformation schools, CSA has filed a grievance that all the supervisory staff at a school so labeled should receive a low-performing school differential as per the CSA contract.

"By definition," said CSA General Counsel Bruce Bryant, "these schools are low-performing." Assistant Principals at the 11 NYC transformation schools have complained to CSA about their increased workload, Mr.

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'My Teacher, My Hero'

When Did Educators Become the Public Enemy?

By Ernest A. Logan

This column is dedicated to Rose Alpert, my fourth-grade teacher. July 24, 1918 - March 4, 2011

On Feb. 28, CSA members joined UFT members to speak out against threatened teacher layoffs. No one from CSA asked why we stood with the teachers. I knew you wouldn't.

We were there because I know you are fed up with the ridicule teachers are facing coast to coast. Most school leaders are taking this personally because we are teachers, too. You can become a chancellor, a commissioner or a secretary of education, but once a teacher, always a teacher.

Layoffs, never a good thing, are sometimes necessary for financial reasons. However, the 4,600 threatened teacher layoffs in NYC aren't necessary; the current administration is using teachers as pawns in a political game. Mayor Bloomberg is threatening mass layoffs as a way to get rid of seniority rights, a loss that would affect you, too.

We've become so used to teachers as punching bags, no one is shocked when a public official suggests we get rid of a bunch of them. Around the country, corporate heads and political conservatives are blaming the fiscal crisis on teachers and other public workers while the wealthy have successfully managed to shirk paying their fair share of taxes and governors blithely bust teachers' unions or threaten to. Many Americans have been



lulled into forgetting that the corporate and financial sectors are the real culprits behind this recession and have not changed their ways. Meanwhile, these same people are trying to gut teachers unions as well as open the door to a minimum-wage work force for everybody. (Sometimes, the attacks on teachers are less cynical; they're born from a frustration over social challenges such as escalating child poverty.)

These motives and frustrations have coa-

We need to honor educators, not attack them.

lesced into a free-for-all attitude that demonizes teachers as incompetent, unintelligent, overpaid, lazy and terribly privileged. It's an attitude that makes it easy to talk about eliminating the teachers we have and replacing them with new, lower-paid ones or maybe even with computers. Then everything would be better, right? America, have you lost your mind?

This craziness literally cheapens our nation. A nation that turns its back on what may be its most sacred professions is a nation that has lost its way. What is rational about this?

On March 3, Trip Gabriel wrote a front page *New York Times*

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Conference Focus: Worldwide Competition

BY YURIDIA PEÑA

This year's Celebration of Teaching and Learning hosted by Thirteen/WLIW21 drew thousands of participants – mostly educators – to the two-day professional development conference. CSA has been a major sponsor since its inception six years ago.

"I find the trade show very interesting (because) I'm constantly involved in buying cutting-edge equipment for my schools," said Assistant Principal Michael Weinstein, Assistant Principal of the Leon M. Goldstein High School for the Sciences, Brooklyn.

Hot button issues like the Common Core State Standards,

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

'My Teacher, My Hero'

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ANTOINETTE ISABLE

■ Teachers and school leaders joined CSA President Ernest Logan and UFT President Michael Mulgrew at a Feb. 28 press conference to protest Mayor Bloomberg's threatened and unnecessary teacher layoffs. Second and third from left: Assistant Principals Eugenia Ellsworth and Debra Handler.

Continued from Page 1

story about the scorn being heaped on America's teachers. Writing about a 30-year-old Wisconsin science teacher, he said, "The jabs Erin Parker has heard about her job have stunned her. 'You are glorified baby sitters who leave work at 3 p.m.,' read the online comments and placards of demonstrators." In reality, Ms. Parker is such a dedicated teacher that she's pulling up stakes and moving in with her parents in Colorado so that she can afford to remain in the profession she loves.

As recently as last month, Bill Gates, America's newly proclaimed education expert, co-authored a *Washington Post* op-ed that focused on teacher failure. Among his claims was that over the past four decades, "our student achievement has remained virtually flat." However, education researcher Robert Rothstein points out in the Economic Policy Institute website that on the NAEP exams – which were established in 1980 – American students, particularly black students, have improved substantially, in some cases, even phenomenally.¹ Mr. Rothstein isn't saying that this is anywhere near good enough, but he is suggesting that it makes teacher bashing irrational.

And, yet, the neo-experts have nearly convinced the rest of the middle class that teachers make too much money, have too many benefits and have so many protections that they can stay in their job even if they're no good at it. The undercurrent is that unions protect too many teachers and that is undermining student achievement by placing the well-being of teachers before that of children. Explain then why states without teacher contracts are among the lowest performing: Texas,

North Carolina, Georgia, Arkansas, South Carolina, Arizona, Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.²

Then there's Finland, the country that Education Secretary Arne Duncan touts as having the world's best education system. The entire teaching force there is unionized. What I am suggesting is that this recent rage against teachers' unions has been largely manufactured.

America seems on the road to stripping its educators of dignity and protections to such a degree that we will be unable to replace teachers we lose or create a pool of future Assistant Principals and Principals.

On March 16, Sam Dillon warned of this in a *New York Times* story: "If educators are so disreputable and expendable, it is curious that there is hardly an adult American who can't tell you about at least one teacher who transformed his or her life." For me, it was Rose Alpert, my fourth grade teacher from P.S. 224 in Brooklyn, who transformed my despair over my father's death into the will to make something of myself in his honor. If you counted up all the individual teachers whom our fellow citizens brag about, yes, you would surely be talking about America's most sacred profession.

1) *Washington Post*, "The Answer Sheet," Valerie Strauss, "How Bill Gates Misinterprets the Facts," 3/11/2011: Economic Policy Institute, Web Site, Richard Rothstein, 3/8/2011.

2) *Washington Post*, "The Answer Sheet," Valerie Strauss, "The Real Effect of Teachers Union Contracts," 10/25/2010: Albert Shanker Institute blog, Matthew Di Carlo, 3/11/2011. (Di Carlo doesn't claim that this is evidence that a unionized teaching force produces better outcomes; he simply says it shows that a unionized teaching force doesn't produce worse outcomes.)



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ CSA First Vice President Randi Herman speaks at the March 11 press conference at the Chung Pak Day Care Center in Chinatown. Behind her right shoulder is Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer.

Saying 'No' to Day Care Cuts

CSA First Vice President Randi Herman joined city officials, labor leaders, parents, education advocates and community activists to protest the city's proposal to eliminate 16,500 child care seats in the upcoming fiscal year.

Among those who attended the March 11 press conference hosted by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer were City Councilwoman Margaret Chin, CSA Vice President Richard Oppenheimer and DC 1707 Executive Director Raglan George.

"The working families that keep this city running have to have their jobs and day care services for their children," said Dr. Herman.

Since February, the city Administration of Children Services has sent notices to 11,000 families that they will lose their day care subsidies; the city has projected that the cuts will save \$70 million.

-YP

Sorrow and Outrage

100th Anniversary of the Triangle Factory Fire

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

On March 25, hundreds gathered to pay their respects to the 146 victims of the Triangle Waist Company factory fire near Washington Square 100 years ago. At a time when labor is under attack across the nation, CSA urges its readers to take a moment and remember that unions formed in response to hideous work conditions, greedy bosses and federal and state governments that turned a blind eye to the exploitation and suffering of millions. To learn more about the fire and its impact on organized labor, visit www.ilr.cornell.edu/trianglefire/story/introduction.html.

The 10-story building, which housed the Triangle shirtwaist factory, is today a federal and city landmark. Several plaques commemorating one of the state's worst industrial accidents are affixed to its front. The steel-framed structure at 23-29 Washington Place, was donated to NYU many years ago.

The fire's victims were mostly women, Italian and Jewish immigrants, mostly teenagers or young adults. The Triangle Waist Company's owners, Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, were "the very prototype of sweatshop bosses. They billed their female employees for needles and other supplies, taxed them for the chairs on which they sat, charged for their clothing lockers, and imposed fines treble the value of goods

accidentally spoiled by the girls."¹

On March 25, 1911, 500 to 600 employees sat elbow-to-elbow and back-to-back at their sewing machines on the eighth, ninth and tenth floors. At closing time, the girls prepared to leave. A fire of unknown origin – perhaps a carelessly tossed match? – broke out. Flames rapidly engulfed the eighth floor.

"Inside the flaming building, horror was being piled on horror. Like many lofts, this one had no sprinkler system. There was a stand-pipe hose; but the working girls panicked, and the hose was never used. Eighth-floor windows blew out, sprinkling glass slivers onto the sidewalk. Sheets of flame now licked out of the glassless windows, only to be sucked into other windows two floors above... [Elevator operator Joseph Zito] rammed through a gauntlet of flames to the ninth floor, bringing down 25 to 30 girls [in each of five trips.]

Girls on the eighth floor ran to the stairway exit on the Washington Place side, but the door was locked. Fences of flame cut them off from the elevators. Screaming, praying, coughing, and clawing, they stampeded to the windows, leaned out and tried to gulp fresh air. Other girls, unable to reach the windows and suffocated by smoke, collapsed on sewing machines and burned to death. When the inferno became unbearable, young women at the windows started jumping."²

Blanck and Harris were acquitted of manslaughter after a judge effectively directed a verdict of not guilty. The Literary Digest, a news magazine, commented a week later, "Capital can commit no crime when it is in pursuit of prof-



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ Above, each year, labor commemorates the Triangle shirtwaist factory fire at the Brown building at NYU, the site of the disaster in 1911. On March 25, hundreds of people commemorated the 100th anniversary. Right, the bodies of some of those who jumped to their deaths.



its." But the outrage over the fire was widespread and could not be silenced. Eventually, a state investigating commission for the fire was organized including the future governor, Alfred E. Smith, and state Sen. Robert F. Wagner, father of the future mayor of the same name.

"... [the state's] entire labor code was

rewritten, becoming the best of any state in the nation. Labor unions, so long ignored and repressed, began to come into their own. Some historians pinpoint this tragedy and its consequences as the genesis of the New Deal."³

1-3) "The Epic of New York City: A Narrative Account," Edward Robb Ellis.

We Will Not Forget

The Workers of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, March 25, 1911

- Lizzie Adler, age 24
- Anna Altman, 10
- Rose Bassino, 31
- Vincenza Benanti, 22
- Yetta Berger, 19
- Essie Bernstein, 10
- Jacob Bernstein, 30
- Morris Bernstein, 19
- Gussie Bierman, 22
- Vincenza Billota, 10
- Abraham Binowitz, 30
- Rosie Brennan, 28
- Sarah Brennan, 17
- Ira Brodsky, 15
- Sarah Brodsky, 21
- Ada Brooks, 19
- Laura Brunetti, 17
- Josephina Caminarata, 17
- Francesca Caputo, 17
- Josephine Carlisi, 31
- Albina Caruso, 20
- Annie Cimindillo, 30
- Rosina Cirrillo, 18
- Anna Cohen, 25
- Annie Colletti, 30
- Sarah Cooper, 16
- Michellina Cordinano, 25
- Bessie Dasherfsky, 25
- Joelle Del Gaudio, 21
- Clara DeDonati, 19
- Kaiman Donick, 24
- Celia Ebenberg, 17
- Dora Evans, 18
- Rebecca Feibisich, 20
- Yetta Fichtenholtz, 18
- Daisy Lopez Fitze, 20
- Mary Floresta, 20

- Mari Florin, 28
- Jeanne Franco, 10
- Rose Friedmann, 18
- Diana Gerjov, 18
- Molly Gerstein, 17
- Catherine Giannatasio, 22
- Celia Gilin, 17
- Esther Goldstein, 20
- Lana Goldstein, 22
- Mary Goldstein, 18
- Yetta Goldstein, 20
- Rosie Grasso, 10
- Bertha Grieb, 25
- Rachel Grossman, 18
- Mary Herman, 40
- Esther Hochfeld, 21
- Fannie Hollander, 18
- Pauline Horowitz, 19
- Ida Jakotzky, 19
- Ida Kanowitz, 18
- Tessie Kaplan, 18
- Bessie Kessler, 19
- Jacob Klein, 28
- Beckie Koppelman, 18
- Bertha Kula, 19
- Tillie Kupferschmidt, 10
- Benjamin Kurtz, 10
- Annie L'Abbate, 16
- Fannie Laner, 21
- Maria Lauffelt, 20
- Jennie Lederman, 21
- Mari Lehrer, 19
- Sam Lehrer, 19
- Kate Leone, 14
- Mary Leventhal, 22
- Jennie Levin, 19
- Pauline Levine, 19

- Nettie Liebowitz, 28
- Rose Lirman, 19
- Bertina Malala, 18
- Frances Malala, 21
- Catherine Maltese, 30
- Lucia Maltese, 20
- Roseita Maltese, 14
- Maria Manara, 27
- Rose Markofsky, 22
- Rose Mehl, 15
- Yetta Meyers, 19
- Gaetana Midolo, 10
- Annie Miller, 10
- Beckie Neubauer, 19
- Annie Nicholas, 18
- Michellina Nicolosi, 21
- Sadie Nussebaum, 18
- Julia Oberstein, 19
- Rosa Oringer, 19
- Beckie Ostrovsky, 20
- Annie Pack, 19
- Providenza Panno, 40
- Antonietta Pasquellio, 16
- Ida Pezzi, 20
- Jennie Pildescu, 18
- Vincenza Pinelli, 20
- Emilia Rato, 21
- Concetta Prestifilippo, 22
- Beckie Reines, 18
- Louise Rosen (Loeb), 30
- Fannie Rosen, 21
- Israel Rosen, 17
- Julia Rose, 35
- Yetta Rosenbaum, 22
- Jennie Rosenberg, 21
- Gussie Rosenfeld, 22

- Nettie Rosenthal, 21
- Emma Rothstein, 22
- Theodore Rotner, 22
- Sarah Sabasowitz, 17
- Santina Seleni, 24
- Saralina Saracino, 25
- Teresa Saracino, 30
- Gussie Schiffman, 18
- Theresa Schmidt, 22
- Ethel Schneider, 20
- Viola Schochet, 21
- Golda Schpunkt, 19
- Margaret Schwartz, 24
- Jacob Seltzer, 33
- Rose Shapiro, 17
- Ben Sklover, 25
- Rose Solkin, 18
- Annie Stein, 20
- Jennie Stein, 19
- Jennie Stiglitz, 22
- Sam Teback, 20
- Giulide Terranova, 22
- Isabella Tortorelli, 17
- Meyer Udal, 28
- Catherine Uzzo, 22
- Frieda Velkoffsky, 20
- Bessie Viviano, 15
- Rosie Weiner, 20
- Sarah Weintraub, 17
- Tessie Welner, 21
- Dora Wolfowitz, 21
- Bartha Wendorff, 19
- Joseph Wilson, 22
- Sonia Wisotsky, 17

Tragedy and Reform

A hundred years ago, this NYC factory fire trapped and killed 146 workers, mostly women. Their deaths spurred legislation that advanced safety laws and unionism:

- Minimum hourly wage
- 40-hour work week
- Health care benefits
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Child labor laws
- Paid sick days



www.csa-nyc.org



Union Supports Wisconsin Workers

On March 16, the CSA Executive Board passed the following resolution:

"CSA stands proudly with the public employees of Wisconsin and other states whose collective bargaining rights are under siege. We are one with our fellow public school educators and all the public servants of Wisconsin who have sacrificed their personal lives in the short term to defend their right to bargain collectively in the long term. Without that right, they stand to lose salaries that are commensurate with their service, working conditions that make professionalism and productivity possible, and benefits that foster family security and a dignified old age. They have been struggling for all of us, the current and future workforce of every state in the union, setting an example that has brought working people together now and far into the future.

Global Ranking Concerns Educators



■ CSA Executive Vice President Peter McNally, left, gave kudos to a group of Assistant Principals who are participants in the Advanced Leadership Program for Assistant Principals during a March 18 plenary session. Center, participants filled every chair and left standing room only for Charlotte Danielson's presentation.

■ Assistant Principals David Fanning and Crystal Bonds, from Brooklyn Technical High School, were enjoying themselves.

Continued from Page 1

the nation's global ranking of student performance, teacher tenure, preparation and effectiveness, Principal accountability measures and the shortfalls of the No Child Left Behind law were stressed throughout the conference.

Dozens of guest speakers led workshops, plenary sessions, lectures, presentations and panels. Well-known education consultants/authors Charlotte Danielson and Michael Fullan conducted lectures in crowded rooms with dozens of participants sitting on the floor and standing. Ms. Danielson is the author of *Talk About Teaching: Leading Professional Conversations*. A former teacher and administrator, she specializes in teacher quality, curriculum planning and student performance.

Mr. Fullan's talk on *Moral Purpose Realized* had conference participants squeezing in to a full room. Mr. Fullan addressed the poor implementation of edu-

'Leading with accountability doesn't motivate people.'

cation reform in America, and how much better some foreign students perform compared to their American counterparts. According to Mr. Fullan, the United States' focus on accountability is the wrong path to take. International test results show that Shanghai, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Finland and Canada stand out as the strongest overall performers, Mr. Fullan said, and these nations are not focusing on accountability. (US students are average in reading and science and fall below average in math.)

"Leading with accountability doesn't motivate people," he said. The right drivers

are a focus on instruction, mobilizing school leaders and transparency.

"I loved Michael Fullan; he was a phenomenal speaker; he was warm, practical and knowledgeable about schools," said Crystal Bonds, Assistant Principal at Brooklyn Technical High School.

The Executive Leadership Institute, CSA's educational branch, offered three single topic workshops: *Moving Your Instructional Agenda Using Effective Communication*; *Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners*; and *Moving Forward With the Common Core State Standards*.

Other notable speakers at the conference were education historian and NYU professor Diane Ravitch; Mayor Cory Booker of Newark, NJ; Dr. Mehmet Oz, host of "The Dr. Oz Show"; Brian Williams, Anchor of NBC Nightly News; and Leymah Gbowee, Executive Director, Women Peace and Security Network Africa (Ghana).

ELI Summer Institutes Return

The Executive Leadership Institute, the Leadership Academy and the DOE's Office of Talent and Leadership Development, will offer the following programs this summer aligned with the School Leadership Competencies and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.

PRINCIPALS' SUMMER INSTITUTE

July 11 - 14 (For Principals Only)

A menu of workshops allow Principals to design their own programs. Several workshops will be "nuts and bolts", centered on accountability/data tools and the implications for students. Others will concentrate on teaching and learning. Last, we'll offer workshops that focus on personal leadership. Stay tuned for details and registration information in an upcoming issue of the *CSA News* and on the CSA and DOE websites.

SCHOOL-BASED INTERMEDIATE SUPERVISORS INSTITUTE

July 18 - July 21 (For newly assigned, first- and second-year Assistant Principals)

SBISI is a two-year program that builds fundamental skills through the study of "nuts and bolts" strategies, engagement in critical thinking, and the exploration of leadership-related literature. Seven workshops make up the SBISI series. During the summer, participants take four workshops; they take three additional workshops during the school year. (Participants who enter the series in the fall must attend seven workshops during the 2011-2012 school year.)

Leadership Summit

July 25-July 28 (For all members)

The Leadership Summit enables all CSA members to participate in course work that serves to support school improvement and advance student achievement. Our goal is to provide professional development for school leaders where they can learn and share best practices, and begin to design plans for their own schools.

Retirement

■ **ELIZABETH SCIABARRA**, the CEO of the Office of Student Enrollment since 2003, has retired after serving the NYC public schools for 37 years. Ms. Sciabarra began her career as an English teacher at Brooklyn Technical High School. She was the Principal of New Dorp High School for nearly 10 years. A party will take place on June 1 at Gargiulo's Restaurant, 2911 W. 15th St., Coney Island. RSVP with a \$65 check to Mary Raymond, New Dorp High, 465 New Dorp Lane, SI, NY 10306.

The Grievance Corner | Bob Reich

We'll Support You Through Difficult Times



Always say: 'I want my union here with me when I answer questions.'

The staffs conducting investigations for the Office of Equal Opportunities, the Chancellor's Office of Investigation and the NYC Special Commissioner of Investigation have been greatly expanded. Hopefully this expansion has, at its root, the goal of completing investigations promptly rather than to waste time with "gotcha" moments.

In light of this expansion, however, you must know how to respond to visits or inquiries from investigators.

First and most important, if you are required to report an incident or an allegation, do it. Secondly, if the investigator comes to your school or requests copies of documents, provide them. But make sure the investigators sign for the copies you provide.

The investigator also has the right to speak with staff witnesses as they request. It is not your role to tell staff that they should not speak without representation; it is their union's role. You should not ask a staff member who has been interviewed what was asked nor should you suggest what they say, period. Interference in an investigation can result in disciplinary actions against you.

When the investigator asks to speak with you, you should state, "I will speak with you with my union representative present." Ask for the investigator's card and immediately email me at: bob@csa-nyc.org or call me at (718) 852-3000, x1023, to report that an investigator has asked to speak with you.

A CSA specialist in investigation representation will contact the investigator to schedule a meeting and then will contact you. Your CSA advocate will meet with you prior to the investigatory conference and then will be there with you during the meeting.

Should the findings of the investigation implicate you, your CSA representative will accompany you to the next conference where the findings will be formally presented; at that time you have an opportunity to reply.

The CSA staff is here to support and represent you during investigations, at disciplinary hearings and at rating hearings.

Each member is responsible for making sure that she/he has met their certification requirements. If you have been promoted, you must still meet the requirements for permanent certification under your prior license. **Failure to complete permanent certification requirements may result in your inability to revert to your prior title should you desire or be forced to leave your higher position.**

On the subject of taking care of yourself, you are also responsible for maintaining documentation that you have completed the required professional development hours.

Bob Reich is the CSA Director of Grievances and writes this monthly on contract-related issues. If you have a question about the contract, email him at bob@csa-nyc.org

Retirees Cry 'Foul' to Proposed Benefit Changes



PHOTOS ALITHIA ROLON-RODRIGUEZ

■ Above, Retiree Chapter members and CSA First Vice President Randi Herman review their materials outside the Capitol. Inset, Manny Korman and Dee-Dee Goidel with state Sen. Carl Marcellino, right, of Long Island.

BY DEE-DEE GOIDEL

Ten members of the Retiree Chapter Legislative Committee spent March 14-15 in Albany visiting 54 of our elected officials or their representatives. (*Kudos to RC member Pat DeMeo for arranging them!*)

We began each visit, as we always do, discussing a current education issue because we remain committed to the children in the NYC public schools. Our recent focus is the development of a universal full-day program for three- and four-year-olds.

To that end, CSA supports state Sen. Velmanette Montgomery's bill, S328, which would require the State Education Department, in consultation with other state agencies, to develop a set of recommendations for a comprehensive educational system for children below the age of five.

We also discussed pensions. Current retirees simply could not absorb changes because through the years we have lost purchasing power due to inflation.

The vast majority of our members retired well before the large salary increases of the past decade. We have 39 retirees who are older than 100, 484 members between the ages of 90 and 100, 2,257 members between the ages of 80 and

90, and 3,172 members between the ages of 70 and 79.

Their pensions have not kept up with the true cost of living. Any change would certainly result in an increased reliance on government programs for food, medication, and utilities.

Legislators from both political parties told us that they believed it was only fair to keep past promises. (Pensions are protected by NYS's Constitution, and any change would require a change in that document.) They did indicate that they expected to draft a new tier for future employees, but details were unavailable.

In related business, the Bloomberg administration gave the Municipal Labor Committee a proposal for changes to our health plans. Those changes include employee contributions, eliminating reimbursement of Medicare Part B for retirees and requiring 20 years of service to vest in retiree health benefits.

Medicare Part B reimbursements date back to the Lindsay administration; retirees were required to take part in the new Medicare program and the city agreed to reimburse retirees whose health insurance had been covered prior to Medicare's creation.

Health benefits are collectively bargained by the Municipal Labor Committee, but changes to retiree benefits must go before the City Council.

Legislative Agenda | Herman Merritt

History Provides Lessons for Future

This month, as we go to press, we commemorate two significant events in the history of our country: the 100th anniversary of the Triangle shirtwaist factory fire and the 43rd anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The fire, which killed 146 workers on March 25, 1911, was a call to arms for organized labor. It was the catalyst for the adoption of labor laws as well as safety and building codes designed to protect factory workers and others. It was a step forward for the working men and women of this country. (*To read more about the Triangle shirtwaist factory fire, see story and photos on Page 3.*)

On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was in Memphis supporting the city's striking sanitation workers when he was assassinated on the balcony of his motel room. The nation, upon hearing the news, was rocked to its core.

Forty three years later, on April 4, millions of Americans were set to demonstrate around the country to protest the assault on collective bargaining in Wisconsin and the pattern of "union-busting" around the country. Forty-three years later, we have stepped backwards.

When Dr. King went to Memphis, he was supporting a strike organized by AFSCME, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees. AFSCME had its origins in Madison, WI some 30 years prior. Now, Gov. Scott Walker of Wisconsin has stripped some AFSCME workers of their collective bargaining rights in the birthplace of that union. As many states look for ways to reduce spending in these difficult economic times, public employees and their unions have become a popular target.



Forty-three years after Dr. King's murder, we have stepped back in time.

There is no time better than the present to take an active role in supporting your union. One of the ways that you can support CSA is to stay informed. Check the website, read the Member Updates and follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Contact your local legislators and let them know how you feel about the issues affecting your union. Attend the many rallies and events supporting unions that are taking place around the city. Join the Legislative District Coordinator (LDC) program of CSA. The LDC is a small group of members who work with local legislators to keep them abreast of CSA's agenda; they also represent CSA at local events.

We Are One. We must look at what is happening in the midwest as an attack on ourselves. The purpose of the AFL-CIO is to work to improve the lives of workers and their families – to bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our nation. Organized labor has performed a great service in the lives of workers during the past 180 years. Many have apparently forgotten what it took – and the lives it cost – for most of us to have good pay, health benefits and a safe workplace.

Middle School Principals

A Gala Luncheon Tops Day



■ The Middle School Principals Association held its annual conference on March 12 at the NY Marriott at the Brooklyn Bridge. The association honored Judith Chin, the retired CEO for Integrated Curriculum and Instruction LSO; and Ben Waxman, Network Leader for CEI-PEA.

YURIDIA PEÑA

Dr. Cashin Appointed as Regent

Kathleen Cashin, a former school support network leader and currently a professor at Fordham University, has been appointed by the NYS legislature to the Brooklyn position on the 17-member NYS Board of Regents. Two other new Regents were approved: Dr. James Cottrell, an anesthesiologist and professor, and James Jackson, a former high school Principal from upstate.

NATION Education

MASSACHUSETTS:

Adjusting Trips

The tradition of field trips in school districts is being adjusted to fit the economic times. Schools are revamping their trips to include more budget-conscious outings taken on foot or in-school. Some venues, such as the US Constitution, are feeling the pinch with the loss of school groups during the week. (www.boston.com)

MINNESOTA:

Distance Learning

Ten school districts will share a federal grant of \$333,008 to upgrade interactive video technology to enhance distance learning. Distance learning connects districts to allow students in one school to take a class offered in another, such as engineering and design. Other applications could include gifted and talented programs, special education updates, staff development and virtual field trips. The grant is a matching grant; participating districts must match their portion of the grant. (Echo Press)

COLORADO:

Latino Perspective

Teachers are incorporating the Latino historical perspective into lessons on Colorado history. In addition, an extensive collection of primary sources has been gathered by the Center for Colorado, along with the Metropolitan State College of Denver's Teaching With Primary Sources, History Colorado and the Auraria Library. It is hoped that history will be brought to life through these sources that directly connect Latino students to their descendants who settled in the area. Resources will be available to all online in the near future. (The Denver Post)

ILLINOIS:

Language & Math

A recent study through the University of Chicago of profoundly deaf Nicaraguan adults gives evidence of a link between language and math. The study has important implications for work with children as those that present with certain language disorders also often have disorders in math. Similarly, the study may support the idea that those with early math problems could benefit from language-based intervention. (Education Week)

CONNECTICUT:

NCLB Loss

Connecticut's six year battle over how to fund yearly standardized tests as required by the No Child Left Behind law came to an end with a US Supreme Court decision not to hear the case. The state had hoped to have the testing rules changed or to have the federal government cover the cost of the additional testing. The Supreme Court's decision was based on a federal judge and lower court's decision that said the lawsuit was premature. It is uncertain what steps, if any, will be taken next. (www.msnbc.com)

— COMPILED BY
CHRISTINE ALTMAN

All-Out Fight Against Asthma

No. 1 Reason For Missed School Days in the US

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

Back in the mid-20th century, we rarely buckled our seatbelts, we smoked with impunity and women drank while pregnant. But thanks to public health campaigns, many of us changed our ways.

And thanks to a non-profit organization called the Asthma Free School Zone, children breathe easier in many schools around New York City.

Since 2001, the Asthma Free School Zone (AFSZ) has worked to raise the level of environmental health in schools. "Health is linked to student achievement," said AFSZ founder and Director Rebecca Kalin. Studies have shown that asthma is the number one health-related reason children miss school nationwide, and, despite the overall improvement in air quality, more children suffer from asthma than ever.

AFSZ provides training for schools to improve a building's "health" as well as to improve the area around the site, said Ms. Kalin. More than 150 schools, and some pre-schools and Day Care Centers have participated, receiving training, support materials and street signs. Many have also participated in neighborhood events.



The idea for doing something about asthma occurred to Ms. Kalin one day as she walked past a school. At the time, she was completing her master's degree in public health at Hunter College. She noticed school buses idling in front of the school and thought, "What asthma needs is a creative thinker ... I thought 'that's me!'"

Much credit goes to AFSZ for city and state anti-idling legislation as well as a state lawsuit (successful) against eight bus companies. Ms. Kalin's aim was simple: to develop a program that prevents the disease among children, who are extremely vulnerable to pollution, thus reducing asthma-related absences and helping them to perform better in school.

The longterm goal of the program is to make the reduction of asthma triggers part of a school's culture. "If there's any disease that requires 'It needs a village', it's asthma," said Ms. Kalin.

The longterm goal is that one day, everyone will know what to do to prevent asthma without a second thought. Just like they put on seatbelts.



ANNE SILVERSTEIN

■ Above, Rebecca Kalin with some of her educational materials her organization, the Asthma Free School Zone, provides to schools. Left, AFSZ, with Ms. Kalin leading the charge, was behind city and state legislation (and a lawsuit) that finally forced school buses to stop idling engines in front of schools. To learn more about AFSZ, or to arrange to talk with a staff member, visit www.afsz.org.



ASTHMA affects 20 million Americans nationwide, including 9.9 million children, whose rates are rising nationwide.

POOOR and non-white NYC children bear a disproportionate burden. One in 11 school-age children have asthma. In some NYC areas, the rate is one in four, nearly three times the national average.

ASTHMA costs the nation \$14.7 billion in health care dollars annually. It is number one health reason children miss school.

EVERY YEAR, asthma accounts for nearly 500,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths across the US at a cost of nearly \$20 billion.

Thinking About Retiring?

CSA has scheduled the following workshops to provide you with information about your city-provided health benefits as well as your Welfare Fund benefits as a retiree. These workshops are for Department of Education members ONLY.

Reserve your spot by calling the Welfare Fund at (718) 624-2600. (If you cannot attend, please call to cancel so we may make your spot available to another CSA member.)

All workshops start promptly at 4 p.m.
■ May 12, June 7, June 20: CSA, 16 Court St., Brooklyn.

■ May 31, Room 2020, MS 127, 1560 Purdy St., Bronx.

■ May 24, PS 193, 152-20 11th Ave., Queens.

■ June 16, Michael Petrides Center, 715 Ocean Terrace, Staten Island.

■ June 22, Food and Finance High School, 525 W. 50th St., Manhattan.

Phase One: A School Where Special Education Is for Everybody



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ Left, 10th graders set up a shoot. The assignment was to create a suspense scene using light to create emotion. Here, they experiment with different types of lights to get the effect they want. Right, in the shop, professional equipment stands at the ready for student use.

Focus is Meeting Educational Needs Of All Students

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

Phase One of the special education initiative is underway at 265 schools in 10 networks. Principals tell CSA that they support the philosophy of the initiative but some feel the rollout has been uneven.

Last month, CSA, working with the Department of Education, reported on the initiative at PS 304, Bronx, which has had a successful experience with Phase One. In March, we visited the Academy for Careers in Television and Film in Long Island City to see how the implementation was faring; the report is below. Later this spring, CSA will also report on the initiative at a middle school.

The Academy for Careers in Television and Film, now in its third year of existence with 317 students, is on target to graduate 95 percent of the class of 2012 next spring. That will include 10 of the 12 students with disabilities (SWD) in the 2012 cohort, an 83 percent rate.

This percentage is well above the average for the city – 24 percent of SWD graduate in four years, a number Deputy Chancellor Laura Rodriguez quotes often when explaining that the 2010 special education initiative was imperative for the city’s children.

While the school’s founding Principal Mark Dunetz agrees that 83 percent is probably a number of which to be proud, he also says he’s not settling; his school’s goals are to graduate all students in four years, to ensure that they graduate with the skills needed to attend a two- or a four-year college, and to teach students about career paths and how to pursue their goals.

In designing the Academy for Careers in Television and Film (ACTvF), Mr. Dunetz and his staff have, in effect, incorporated the goals of Phase One, well before Ms. Rodriguez introduced the special education initiative a year ago. That was one of the reasons Mr. Dunetz was involved in early discussions about the special education program. Said Ms. Rodriguez, “A lot of [his] structures already matched the

goals of the initiative,” so his school was a natural fit moving forward in Phase One.

“One of the strengths of this school has been clarity of purpose,” said Mr. Dunetz during a group meeting with Ms. Rodriguez, teachers, staff members, network personnel and staff from Ms. Rodriguez’ office. “... This school is not a collection of past practices,” he added.

Mr. Dunetz said he wants to provide a high level of support for all students, and that includes students with disabilities, who are never segregated. “In a nutshell, students with disabilities participate equally in all activities in this building with little or no stigma. They are vested in being successful in high school and graduating.” Segregating SWD “from the life of a school will have serious ramifications for their success in school,” he said.

Focused, talented staff

From the beginning, Mr. Dunetz said, all of ACTvF’s services were integrated so special education students were never apart from general education students. Students who need help, with or without an IEP, are provided with extra support. He credited a focused and talented staff with helping him design a set of systems and practices that keep students on track.

“The more we help students up front,” said Ms. Rodriguez, “the fewer students may need IEP referrals.”

Mr. Dunetz wants to add targeted skills classes for all students. “We’ve started to experiment with that,” he said. For example, pairing a targeted skills algebra class with a regular algebra class so that a student who needs help – any student regardless of classification – remains in his algebra class but has an additional class in which he can relearn concepts he missed.

One problem Mr. Dunetz wanted to avoid was one he had encountered in past schools in which he worked. Students were the “go-between” between adults, carrying their records with them or orally providing information.

To avoid the lack of communication such a system engenders, Mr. Dunetz designed a data system. (He uses Google Apps Education Edition, a free suite of applications.) Any adult working with a child has access to that child’s data including writing samples, test data, attendance records, and notes about what the student is doing. This allows that provider to give

meaningful support to the child and his or her teachers. “The efforts of all adults are coordinated,” Mr. Dunetz said. In a small school, he and his staff agree, it is imperative to keep on top of everything.

Demystify special education

Ms. Rodriguez asked Mr. Dunetz what resources he needed to make the initiative go even more smoothly. Mr. Dunetz cited two things: increased flexibility in funding formulas and the demystification of special education instruction.

Mr. Dunetz said some funding formulas seem to favor one program over another. He also finds some funding methods are unintentionally punitive. More flexibility would not mean more money for schools; it would allow more creativity in using the funds a school has.

Mr. Dunetz also said the DOE needs to develop a quick and cheap way for dual certification for teachers. Special education qualifications are perceived as obscure and hard to learn, he said; there’s a belief that the skill set necessary to teach SWD is so different from general education teaching skills. In

high school, content is the goal and teachers are used to addressing a broad range of skills in a classroom. Reaching SWD is just another dimension of that broad range. Teachers always “have a large range of abilities, and the goal is to provide [students] with the content they need in the shortest amount of time,” Mr. Dunetz said.

Twenty percent of the teachers at ACTvF are dual certified, and special and general education teachers have a common prep time together to share information, said Assistant Principal Edgar Rodriguez. In co-teaching situations, the general ed teacher takes the lead in content management and the special education teacher takes the lead in differentiated tasks.



■ Above, Principal Mark Dunetz, left, and Assistant Principal Edgar Rodriguez.



■ Left, an 11th grader works on an Apple Box, a ubiquitous piece of equipment in film or TV for providing support for furniture, light stands and a thousand other uses. Actors also stand on Apple Boxes to appear taller.

The Welfare Fund

Douglas Hathaway, Ph.D

Spring Tulips and Reimbursements

Ah, springtime! It's always nice to see April on the calendar because it lets me know that winter is over (especially nice after the winter we just had!) and that spring is here. It also tells me that one of our busiest times of the year is upon us as we greet retirees returning from warmer climes at Retiree Chapter Regional Unit events, conduct several pre-retirement workshops on health benefits, and schedule our vacations in such a manner that the work of the Fund continues uninterrupted during the summer.

There is also one particular thing that is guaranteed to happen each year just as the swallows return to Capistrano. I refer to it as "The Arrival of the IRMAA checks" and I can set my clock by it.

Medicare-eligible retirees who qualified for Income Related Medicare Adjustment Amount reimbursements from the city's Office of Labor Relations receive their checks right about now. They tell their friends about the checks. And sure as the sun's gonna shine tomorrow, their friends call the Welfare Fund to ask, "Why didn't I get a check from the city?"

So, let's review IRMAA one more time and how you apply for reimbursement.

Up until 2007, everyone paid the same amount for Medicare Part B. In 2007, the federal law that created the Medicare Part D drug plan also introduced "means testing" for Medicare Part B premiums. Essentially, this means that if an individual has an adjusted gross income of more than \$85,000, or a couple has an adjusted gross income of more than \$170,000, they would be considered "rich" and would pay more for their Medicare Part B coverage each month. The Adjusted Gross Income from two years ago is the number used for this calculation. For example, income from 2009 is used to calculate Medicare Part B premiums in 2011. The government notifies Medicare beneficiaries in writing before the start of each year that they will be paying more through IRMAA.

Reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums for retirees dates back to Mayor Lindsay and the introduction of Medicare. The city became the secondary insurer for retirees and the cost for health insurance dropped. Mayor Lindsay passed on the savings to retirees. Later, the amount reimbursed to retirees was lowered, but after a fullscale campaign by retirees, the full benefit was restored by the City Council. In 2007, the reimbursement for Medicare Care Part B automatically extended to include IRMAA.

Since the amount each retiree pays for IRMAA, if any, varies, each individual must send the city documentation of his or her IRMAA deduction. For those receiving Social Security, you must send the letter received before the year's start that shows the IRMAA amount to be paid and the SSA-1099 form, received at the year's end, which shows how much you paid for Medicare Part B.

Send copies of these documents plus a transmittal form, (available on the Office of Labor Relations or Welfare Fund websites), to the city after you receive the Part B reimbursement in August. All submissions, (more than 3,000 in 2010), are manually reviewed and check requests are manually entered. The city begins sending IRMAA reimbursements the following March.



Thanks to unions, NYC retirees get back Medicare Part B payments.

Union Battles AP Differential

Continued from Page 1

Bryant said, and the union's officers have been proactive in dealing with the DOE. The city is expected to announce its next round of transformation schools in the next few weeks. Last year, the DOE designated 11 schools as transformation schools. "Transformation" is one of the four models of "turn-around schools." Each model is a distinct strategy for improving school performance. (To read about these models, visit the NYS website at <http://1.usa.gov/dKL4Zy>.) School districts that implement these strategies are eligible for federal funding through the state.

All four models require the removal of the Principal. CSA went to bat for the Principals at the 11 schools and negotiated a Mentor Principal title to prevent the forced removal of a school's Principal who had tenure. (Of the 11 schools, six had tenured Principals.)

On March 17, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that NYS will receive \$45.9 million to turn around its persistently lowest achieving schools through the School Improvement Grants program. The funds are part of \$546 million available to states for the SIG program in fiscal year 2010. In fiscal year 2009, states received a total of \$3.5 billion for the SIG program.

The union's three-year battle with the city over parking permits moved into its next stage recently after the city appealed a trial level court's ruling in CSA's favor to the NYS Appellate Division. The city has filed its brief and CSA expected to file its brief by the end of March. CSA won its first victory in the August 2009 when an arbitrator ruled in the union's favor. The custodian's union, Local 891, received a similar decision from PERB. Mr. Bryant said, and both Local 891 and the UFT are filing amicus briefs in CSA's appeal. "We are the lead case in this dispute," Mr. Bryant said.

This legal battle began after Mayor Bloomberg announced in January 2008 that he wanted every department to reduce the number of parking permits distributed to employees because of rampant abuse of the coveted permits throughout the city. Parking near schools is difficult for employees especially for Education Administrators, who often travel between schools on a daily basis; they told the union they waste an inordinate amount of time looking for parking.

Mr. Bryant expected the hearing to be held when the Appellate Division is next in session in May; he expected to have a decision in time for the fall, although the city could appeal the decision to the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, which would delay distribution again.

CSA has also been fighting about a number of snow days. One grievance concerns March 2,



ANTOINETTE ISABLE

■ UNION BATTLEGROUND. A Staten Island street after the Dec. 26 blizzard.

2009, Feb. 10, 2010 and Feb. 26, 2010. The cases were filed on behalf of non-school based personnel who were required to be at work even though schools were closed. The first hearing before an arbitrator was held Jan. 24; a second hearing will be scheduled this spring. "Extensive efforts have been made to settle this case," said David Grandwetter, CSA Counsel, "but the DOE would not agree to the proposals we put forward."

On Dec. 26, NYC was whalloped by its sixth worst snowstorm in its record-keeping history, and the city's snow removal efforts were dismal; despite Mayor Bloomberg's dictum that city government would remain open, many city employees simply could not get to work including many of CSA's Education Administrators. CSA has filed a grievance on their behalf because they were docked a day's vacation. (Mayor Bloomberg also told New Yorkers to stay off the streets to keep roadways clear for emergency vehicles and to avoid accidents, but apparently city workers didn't count in that decree.)

Mayor Bloomberg closed schools and government offices on Jan. 27 but changed his mind mid-morning. City workers were told they would be docked a day if they didn't come in.

When asked about this on Feb. 2, Mr. Bloomberg said, "I don't know how you were brought up; I was always brought up that you had an obligation to work. Maybe it's different in your world ... When you look out the window and it's not as bad as you thought it was going to be, maybe a bell should go off and say, 'Hey, maybe I can get to work today.'"

Mr. Bloomberg apparently does live in a different world, responded union officials. "When we're told we should stay home, we do and don't second guess a decision made at the top," a union official said.

CSA worked out a deal with the DOE that those CSA members who could not get to work had to provide their supervisors with a written explanation to avoid losing a vacation day.

IMPORTANT UNION BENEFIT NOTICE

Open Enrollment for Dependent Child

The NYC Office of Labor Relations has announced open enrollment periods for those employees and retirees wishing to have a dependent child, not otherwise eligible for health benefits, added to his/her plan. All coverage will be effective July 1, 2011.

The open enrollment period for retirees with children eligible for coverage on their health plan is April 1 through April 30. The open enrollment period for in-service employees is May 1 through May 31. It is critical to comply with these open enrollment periods. The city can deny coverage to an existing dependent, over 18 years old and not eligible for cov-

erage elsewhere, if enrollment is not done during the open enrollment period.

Necessary forms and instructions will be posted on the Office of Labor Relations website at the beginning of the open enrollment period. They will also be available on the Fund's website, www.csawf.org.

If you mail the application, be sure to keep a copy and send the application certified with a return receipt. In the event that your application is not processed, you will then have the appropriate backup documentation to prove you complied with the instructions and CSA can advocate on your behalf.

The 2010 financial reports for the CSA Welfare Fund and the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund are online at www.csawf.org.

In Memoriam

■ **MEL HARDIN**, 69, died on Sept. 27. Mr. Hardin was married to Margaret Harrington, the retired Chief Executive for School Programs for the NYC school system. Condolences may be sent to Ms. Harrington at 27 Fern Ave., Staten Island, NY 10308. (The Editor apologizes for the delay in reporting his death.)

■ **SOLOMON KANTOWITZ**, 97, the former principal of East New York-Vocational Technical High School, died on Jan. 4. Mr. Kantowitz fought for the dignity of vocational high schools helping to make NYC's vocational system a model for the rest of the country. He began teaching history in 1937 at Brooklyn Tech High School and also taught at Alexander Hamilton HS. He became Chairman of Academic Subjects at Maxwell Vocational HS and was Acting Principal there from 1964-68. He became Principal of East New York Vocational - Technical HS in 1968, retiring in 1976. (The school is now called the



■ Mr. Kantowitz

Transit Technology CTE HS.) In addition, Mr. Kantowitz headed several regional Manpower Training and Development Centers, was an examination assistant to the NYC Board of Examiners and an Adjunct faculty member of Pace University. He served as President of the Vocational HS Principals' Association. His wife, Ruth, a former biology teacher and guidance counselor, died in 1998. Condolences may be sent to his daughters, Joyce Hartstein and Barbara Kalvert, at The Kalverts, 8 Woodland Rd., New City, NY 10956.

■ **DR. NOEL N. KRIFTCHER**, 71, a former Superintendent of Brooklyn and Staten Island High Schools, died on March 10 after battling brain cancer. A graduate of Tilden High School and NYU, he earned a doctorate in education from Hofstra University. He rose through the ranks of the city's schools to become a superintendent in 1988, retiring in 1996 after 40 years of service. Prior to his appointment as



■ Dr. Kriftcher

Superintendent, he served as the Principal of Seward Park High School, Manhattan. Author and reporter Samuel Freedman noted in a 2006 interview: "Noel Kriftcher was a uniquely talented guy who was bright, experienced and savvy dealing with the board and had high standards. He also was a physical presence and an athlete, someone who could do well in an urban school and keep order without metal detectors." After he retired, he became a founding Director of the David Packard Center for Technology & Educational Alliances at the Polytechnic Institute of NYU. Donations may be sent to the Dr. Noel N. Kriftcher Scholarship Fund; the Pediatric Cancer Foundation, or the Brain Tumor Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

■ **ANTHONY J. PUMILIA**, 86, a former Assistant Principal at PS 17, D-14, Brooklyn, died on Feb. 14 in Grants Pass, OR, where he had recently moved to be near his children. A veteran of WWII, he earned a bachelor's degree from Brooklyn College and a master's degree from NYU. He began teaching at PS 17 in 1954 and remained there his entire career becoming an Assistant Principal of grades five and six in 1974. He retired in 1987. His wife, Marie, predeceased him. Condolences may be sent to his family at 6703 10th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11219.

Angry Principals Chastise Tweed

Continued from Page 1

"roll over" savings from their budgets to the following year. (Not all Principals can afford to do this.) The rules changed in February when, for the first time, the Chancellor told Principals either allocate the funds by March 18 or lose a percentage of it by the year's end.

Principals were outspoken in their anger. Edward Tom, Principal of the Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics, said, "This is a very disappointing day for the 1.1 million children and their families who have placed their trust in NYC's public schools. It is particularly disappointing for Principals who bought into Mayor Bloomberg's management philosophy that Principals are to

be treated like CEOs of their schools with full fiscal autonomy and responsibility."

Said Joseph J. Lisa, Principal of IS 61, Queens, "I am following the Mayor's leadership of rolling over my surplus to offset future cuts. [Mr. Bloomberg] has established a goal of putting children first. Why would he tax them 30 percent and take away services from them?"

At the Bronx Center, Mr. Tom said, his School Leadership Team spent four agonizing weeks negotiating what to do; he had saved \$250,000 to spend, in large part, on next year's afterschool program. The school will roll over \$200,000, losing \$60,000 to Tweed, he said, to avoid program cuts.

CSA and school leaders have questioned

what the DOE will do with the money.

"The idea of moving funds further away from schools and classrooms where learning takes place seems contradictory," said Mr. Tom.

"The only thing that is clear is that the [pullback] will result in approximately \$24 million that will be redistributed to Tweed," Mr. Tom said, or one-tenth of one percent of the DOE's \$20 billion operating budget.

"It was impossible for me to balance my budget and preserve afterschool programs in the face of NYS and NYC budget cuts to education without demonstrating fiscal restraint by rolling over funds into FY 2012 even at the heavy price that was imposed upon us by the DOE," Mr. Tom concluded.

Travel Desk

GARY GOLDSTEIN

Price Drop for October San Juan Cruise

British Isles / Normandy July 16-28, 2011

Sail on the *Crown Princess* from Southampton, England, to Normandy, Edinburgh, Inverness/Loch Ness, Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool, Dublin, Cobh, and Guernsey.

RATES per person: Inside, \$2,072.19; window, \$2,672.19; balcony, \$3,172.19; mini-suite, \$3,822.19. Rates include taxes but do not include air fare.

Aloha CSA! Aug. 20-27, 2011

Fly to Honolulu and sail on the beautiful *Pride of America* to Maui, Kauai, and the "big island" of Hawaii including Hilo and Kona, site of the Mauna Loa Volcano. Rate includes roundtrip air from NY and all taxes. Pre- and post-Honolulu packages available. Suite, single, triple and family rates on request.

RATES per person: Inside, \$2,545.47; window, \$2,743.79; balcony, \$3,001.62; large balcony, \$3,071.04. Optional insurance is additional.

Easy Cruising to San Juan Oct. 23-29 or 31, 2011

The *Summit* leaves Cape Liberty, (Bayonne) NJ and sails to Bermuda, Saint Thomas and San Juan. You can fly home or spend two additional nights for \$279 per person for a double including hotel, transfers, taxes and resort fees. Rates have just dropped!

RATES per person: Inside, \$501.51; window, \$551.51; balcony, \$611.51; sky suite, \$1141.51. We are holding 20 staterooms at these rates until April 30.

Australia/New Zealand Nov. 30-Dec. 12, 2011

Celebrity's *Century* will leave Sydney on Nov. 30 bound for Tasmania, Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound, Dusky Sound, Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Napier, Tauranga, Bay of Islands and Auckland. (Voyagers may book a pre-trip package in Sydney or stay longer in Auckland!)

RATES: Inside, \$1,769.77 per person; window \$2,069.77; verandah, \$2,609.77;

sky suite \$4,039.77. Tax per person, \$140.77. Rates do not include airfare.

President's Week Sailaway! Feb. 19-26, 2012

Registration is now open for our in-service members and retirees for a Caribbean cruise that features the award-winning *Celebrity Solstice*, back by popular demand.

We depart Feb. 19 from Ft. Lauderdale and sail to Grand Cayman, Cozumel, Honduras and Costa Maya while experiencing *Celebrity's* best! Roundtrip airfare is included in the rates listed below. These prices won't last. Book now!

RATES: Inside, \$1,587.43 per person per double; verandah, \$1,857.43 pp; verandah concierge, \$1,927.43 (best value!); aqua class, \$2,017.43 per person; sky suite, \$3,067.42 per person. Singles, triples, quadruples on request. Optional insurance available.

For more information, contact Gary Goldstein at (732) 786-0314.

NATION Labor

OHIO:

Unions Rally

Workers around the country are speaking out in defense of their collective bargaining rights; Ohio workers are no exception. As Republicans worked to push for legislation ending union rights for state workers, those workers marched on the state capitol. AFSCME took about 15 buses from around the state to the statehouse. Numerous other unions turned out in a show of solidarity. (Workers Independent News)

TENNESSEE:

Gov. Seeks Changes

Gov. Bill Haslam is seeking changes in teacher tenure that would extend the waiting period from three to five years and would require a performance review. In addition, he hopes to eliminate a law that limits the number of charter schools to 90. The union representing the teachers, TEA, indicated a willingness to work with Mr. Haslam. The day before, the TEA fought with legislators who are seeking to remove the union's power to collectively bargain with school boards. (www.tennessean.com)

NEW JERSEY:

More On Tenure

Acting Education Commissioner Chris Cerf, formerly of the NYC school system, delivered details of Gov. Chris Christie's plan to re-make teacher tenure at an invitation-only presentation. The plan reportedly looks very much like the system now used in Colorado in which tenure is given after demonstrated performance for consecutive years, with the ability to remove it if performance proves not to be up to par. In addition, Mr. Cerf addressed issues of teacher evaluation, seniority and pay. (NJ Spotlight)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

Good Relations

At a time when tensions are running high between labor and management, the federal Education Department organized a conference on "Advancing Student Achievement Through Labor-Management Collaboration". The conference brought together superintendents, school board and union presidents from 150 school systems. It was hoped that all sides would work collaboratively toward their common goal - what is best for students. (eSchool News)

Teachers' Retirement System

(www.trsnyc.org)

March 2011 Unit Values

Diversified Equity: 61.050

Stable-Value: 19.186

International Equity: 10.065

Inflation Protection: 10.823

Socially Responsive Equity:

11.176

RETIREE Chapter

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Neil Lefkowitz

'Everybody Wants Ta Get Inta Da Act!'



We're seeing a public relations nightmare for unions.

One of the late Jimmy Durante's catch phrases when interrupted was "Everybody wants ta get inta da act!" We could well be crying that as we hear more and more "expert" testimony on every aspect of school financing, from pension reform to how much teachers should earn and whether organized labor is good for education.

An article in the March 3 *Wall Street Journal* states that the billionaire Bill Gates believes that the present funding for pensions and health care is stifling funding for public education.

"These budgets are way out of whack," Mr. Gates told the WSJ. "They've used accounting gimmicks and ... things that are truly extreme."

Mr. Gates urged that states must change how they calculate employee-pension funding and health care benefits. Mr. Gates blames states for creating pension fund shortfalls because they used a higher rate of return on investments to calculate their own obligations. The higher the rate, known as the discount rate, the smaller is the state's assumed obligation

to contribute to the pension fund. This calculation, in light of poor investment returns since the mortgage debacle and the Wall Street meltdown, has led to widespread funding shortfalls for pension funds across the nation.

The upshot, plain and simple, is states are reducing funding for classrooms, and politicians are falling all over themselves to point fingers at teachers and their outrageous pay and benefits. (Haven't heard any of our state elected officials offering to reduce the pensions they'll receive.)

On March 6, *Newsday* reported that various public agencies failed to make the necessary contributions to the pension funds when stocks plunged in 2007-8, and showed poor judgment when they decided to drop employer contribution rates to near zero when investment returns were considerably higher.

Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy wants to replace the defined pension system for county employees with a 401K savings plan similar to those in the private sector.

Our main concern is this: businessmen and government officials, including Mayor Bloomberg, are creating a public relations nightmare for us because they are threatening tax increases to pay for years of improperly funding the various public employee pension systems.

• • •

I am afraid the attack on collective bargaining rights by the governors of Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin, to name just a few, is merely the beginning of a national trend. What we have today in pensions as well as in health care benefits is a result of years of contract negotiations between the city and municipal unions.

They are not union rules or union pensions or union health benefits. They were benefits that the city's mayors agreed to over many years only after very capable city lawyers and negotiators worked out details with union negotiators. That seems to have been forgotten in the scuffle to point fingers at unions.

'Reach to Teach' Strives to Combat All Types of Bullies

BY YURIDIA PEÑA

During an anti-bullying lesson at PS/MS 37, Bronx, the anecdotes told by retired school administrator Michael Fisher grab the attention of every student. Most of the students can relate since most kids have been bullied, have witnessed bullying or, whether they know it or not, are bullies.

Mr. Fisher brings his *Reach to Teach* program into schools with the cooperation of a building's school leaders. The program is designed to help prevent juvenile violence in schools with a focus on bullying in all its forms: physical, verbal, exclusionary and online.

Even though bullying is most prevalent at the middle and high school levels, Principal Kenneth Petriccione addresses the issue in the PS/MS 37's fourth grade. The goal is for every student entering middle school to understand what comprises bullying, how to prevent it, what to do if you're a victim or what to do if you witness students bullying others. Students are taught to detect signs of bullying, to see both sides of a story, to look out for "triggers" of fights and to resolve conflicts.

Reach to Teach is designed to work with classes in cycles of four to ten lessons. Each lesson is related to a theme that specifically deals with violence prevention such as building awareness, developing a "winning class" of students who don't allow bullying and improving individual communication skills.

"We have a real family atmosphere," said Mr. Petriccione. "[We are] small enough where we can analyze what the individual needs of these students are ... When you have a winning class, kids don't allow bullying to happen," said Mr. Fisher.

The "winning class" concept is carefully integrated into every lesson. Peer mediation is encouraged and students share their bullying stories. Mr. Fisher says a good classmate is like a good teammate. Therefore, students learn how to respect and support one another. He strongly believes that once students believe they are a part of a "winning class," better academic performance follows.

"We found that it had a positive impact ... it didn't happen overnight," said Mr. Petriccione.



PHOTOS BY YURIDIA PEÑA
 ■ Mr. Fisher conducts an anti-bullying lesson that includes information about reading facial expressions.



■ Principal Kenneth Petriccione with his Assistant Principals, Effie Najarian, left, and Maria Diaz.

He was also impressed with how a literacy component was integrated into *Reach to Teach* when he read student testimonials at the program's end.

The anti-bullying work doesn't end after fourth grade. Mr. Petriccione has introduced a program in his middle school as well that is conducted by Soren Bennick Productions, a messaging company that focuses on the performing arts. Soren Bennick produces shows at schools that teach lessons; *The Power of One*, a touring show of skits, provides examples of different types of bullying and ways to manage them.

A Visit With Our California Colleagues



The Pacific Coast Regional Unit met on March 15 at Carrows Restaurant in Laguna Hills. The Unit was joined by Dr. Douglas Hathaway, Welfare Fund Administrator, (in red shirt), who provided an update on health benefits and related issues. Unit Leader Gil Gotfried is in the striped shirt.

CHERYL FRIEDBERG

RC Regional Units

ROCKLAND/ORANGE/BERGEN

The Unit welcomes Jeff Karger as our new legislative representative. Jeff has worked on legislative issues while he was an in-service member. His expertise will be a benefit to the Retiree Chapter and our Unit. We will hold our spring meeting at 10 a.m. on May 13 at the Casa Mia Manor House in Blauvelt, NY. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Douglas Hathaway, CSA Welfare Fund Administrator, who will discuss our health care and Welfare Fund benefits along with the threats to our health care costs. For more information, contact me at namkoob42@msn.com or Arnie Abrams at stacor2@optonline.net.

—BART BOOKMAN

SUNCOAST (FL)

The Unit held its second and final meeting for the 2011 year at Evie's Catering, (formerly Marie's Italian Kitchen), in Sarasota on March 3. Forty attendees heard Outreach Coordinator Felice Hannah and Florida Liaison Norman Sherman discuss Medicare benefits and services available to our members. CSA retirees are truly fortunate to have such great resources. Travelling more than 100 miles to hear our knowledgeable and personable presenters is not unusual for Suncoast members: some come from north of Tampa, more than 70 miles away, while others drove more than 120 miles from Fort Meyers. Have a question or a problem? Call me (941) 383-0408.

—MIKE NEMOYTIN

LONG ISLAND

Our snow birds have returned to the fold. The March 28 membership meeting program was an informative one; we made an offer to our members that they can't refuse. We will give them a 50 percent discount on the price of tickets for the Retiree Chapter's upcoming April 30 meeting and our June 14 annual luncheon. At our next Executive Board meetings, we will continue our discussion of an action plan to support the midwestern public sector unions and to resist the predatory "give-back" program of the Bloomberg administration. For more information, communicate with Norman Watnick, at (516) 747-6291 or norman-watnick@aol.com.

—VICTOR RAVENS

CAROLINAS

Spring is just around the corner after an unusually cold winter for us in the Carolinas. It is time to get together and catch up on CSA activities. Our next Regional Unit luncheon meeting will be held on May 5 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the North Carolina Museum of History, 5 East Edenton Street, Raleigh, North Carolina. Dr. Douglas Hathaway, CSA Welfare Fund Administrator, is our guest speaker. This is an excellent opportunity for you to review your medical benefits and get updates on CSA political action to protect our benefits. (Plan some time to visit the museum and other attractions in the state's capital.)

—ELLA IVY

**The Retiree Chapter's
Legislative Report
is on Page 5.**

QUEENS

If you haven't done so already, please renew your Unit membership by sending a \$15 check, made payable to Retiree Chapter Queens Unit, to: Florence Klein, 270-10 Grand Central Parkway, Apt. 2N, Floral Park, NY 11005. We still have a few tickets for the April 27 matinee performance of "Neil Berg's Broadway Show Stoppers" at the Queens Theatre in the Park. The price is \$20 for Unit members and \$22 for non-members. There will be a reception for CSA retirees prior to the show. Hope to see you at the Retiree Chapter April 30 General Membership/Executive Board Meeting at North Shore Towers. (See coupon on this page.) This year, for the first time, we're subsidizing part of the cost for our Unit members. For information about purchasing tickets for the luncheon, contact me at Sermanlen@aol.com.

—LEONARD B. STERMAN

MANHATTAN

The unit's next meeting will be held on May 13 at 1:30 p.m. at The Manhattan Comprehensive Day and Night School located on Second Avenue and East 15 Street. Changes in Medicare benefits will be discussed. A legislative/political update will also be given. Our annual luncheon will be held on June 7 at The National Arts Club. Stay tuned for details.

—STANLEY H. WILSON

NEW JERSEY

Our spring luncheon will be held during the first week of June with the date and location to be announced soon. All are invited to our "bagel breakfast" on May 11 at 9:30 a.m. in the Manalapan Library. Members wishing to attend the April 30 Retiree Chapter general membership meeting at the North Shore Towers in Queens, please get in touch with me at (732) 431-1081.

—STEPHEN PORTER

LOWER HUDSON VALLEY

Our Unit will hold its first meeting of the year on May 11 at the Greenburg Hebrew Center starting at 10 a.m. Dr. Douglas Hathaway, CSA Welfare Fund Administrator, is our guest speaker. Please RSVP if you are attending the April 30 Retiree Chapter general membership meeting at the North Shore Towers. Our Unit will subsidize 50 percent of the cost for those Unit members attending the event. Questions/concerns call me at (913) 238-5266 or email johnat26@aol.com.

—JOHN GENTILE

GEORGIA

The spring meeting will be held on May 4 at noon at the Petite Auberge Restaurant. The cost is \$20 per person. Dr. Douglas Hathaway, CSA Welfare Fund Administrator, will be our guest. For further information contact me at (770) 693-2399 or email me at rossmis2@aol.com.

—GEORGIA HARRISON

BROOKLYN

Our next meeting is June 7. Please remember to send in the surveys included in your Unit newsletter. Feel free to contact me at rejepsilon66@aol.com

—RON JONES

Spring Outreach Workshops

The Retiree Chapter Outreach Program will offer the following workshops this spring. To register, call (718) 625-3434. Please leave your name and number. Your call confirms your registration. All workshops are at union headquarters, 16 Court St., 4th Floor, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

May 3

TOPIC: VISITING NURSE SERVICES/ACCESS-A-RIDE/LONG TERM CARE

Learn about what should be included in a "hospital discharge plan" and when Medicare pays for home health services. Know what your financial responsibility is if your spouse

is placed in a nursing home. Get answers about eligibility and application for paratransit services.

June 7

TOPIC: SOCIAL SECURITY/WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE NOW THAT YOU'RE 65
PRESENTER: CSA Outreach Coordinator Felice Hannah

Ms. Hannah will answer your Medicare-related questions and a Social Security representative will explain Social Security benefits, the Medicare Part B maximum adjusted gross income and when and how to apply.

Retiree Chapter Spring General Membership and Executive Board Meeting / Gala Luncheon

10:30 am – 4 pm on April 30

Towers Restaurant & Caterers at North Shore Towers
272-48 Grand Central Parkway, Floral Park

Our meeting and luncheon provides you with an opportunity to socialize with friends as well as learn about member benefits.

We will honor newly retired Assistant Welfare Fund Administrator Sherri Tabachnick as well as Arnold Nager, the man behind the per session lawsuit, which has benefitted so many of us. We also are featuring Prof.

Jean Arrington who will discuss C.B.J. Snyder, the architect of so many of the city's schools.

Wine and soft drinks are included in the \$39 luncheon price. Use the coupon on this page to register. (If you paid for your lunch by April 1, we will enter you in a special raffle. Two winners will have their lunch fees reimbursed!) We hope to see you there!

AGENDA

10:30 – 11 a.m. Registration and continental breakfast prior to the meeting

11 – 11:15 a.m. Greetings from CSA First Vice President Randi Herman; Dr. Douglas V. Hathaway, Welfare Fund Administrator, will provide an update on the Fund and its benefits.

11:15 a.m. – Noon. Guest speaker: Professor Jean Arrington of the Borough of Manhattan Community College

Ms. Arrington will discuss Charles B.J. Snyder, the architect, engineer and NYC Superintendent of School Buildings from 1891 to 1923. Mr. Snyder viewed the expansion and building of schools as a commitment to the public. He improved fireproofing, enlarged windows to allow more light and air into buildings, and designed ventilation systems to improve the circulation of air in schools. He is credited with the design of more than 400 schools and structures.



■ Charles B.J. Snyder oversaw the largest overhaul of a public school system's buildings in the nation at the turn of the last century.

Noon – 1 p.m. Executive Board/General Membership Meeting
1:15 – 4 p.m. Luncheon and time to socialize

Cost: \$39 per person (The Retiree Chapter is subsidizing much of the cost.)
(You must cancel at least four days prior to the event to be eligible for a refund.)

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City, State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

I wish to be seated with: _____

NOTE: Requests honored ONLY if the people you request as table companions request you as well.

I (we) will attend:
Meeting only _____ (no charge) Luncheon only _____ (\$39) Meeting and luncheon _____ (\$39)

Number of tickets _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Date _____

Send this form to: Alana Segura, Event Coordinator,
CSA Retiree Chapter, Room 711,
16 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11241



Borough Briefs / In The Schools

Compiled
by Yuridia Peña

Staten Island (DIST. 31)

Savvy Seniors Certified in Finance

On March 3, 50 Tottenville High School seniors were recognized for achieving high test scores in a financial literacy certification exam.

The test concluded a 10-week course on how to become money savvy. *Working in Support of Education (WISE)*, an educational non-profit, provides this financial literacy certification program for hundreds of NYC public school students citywide.

At the Tottenville ceremony, senior Amir Sedrak said he thought that all high school students should learn basic financial do's and don'ts. "They're not going to be victims of predatory lending," Mr. Sedrak said.

City Councilman Vincent Ignizio's office provides the funding for the



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ City Councilman Vincent Ignizio gave Tottenville High School seniors their certificates in financial literacy after they completed a 10-week program.

WISE program at Tottenville. WISE, which began in 2003 in NYC, is also available to schools on Long Island,

upstate New York, California, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.wise-nj.org.

Queens (DIST. 24-30)

Dr. Seuss' Birthday



■ Celebrating and reading aloud at PS 97.

On March 2, the school community of PS 97, D-27, celebrated Dr. Seuss' 107th birthday with a read-aloud of *The Cat in the Hat Comes Back*. Children and the parents enjoyed the book, cake and refreshments and everyone received a free copy of the book. The Principal is Maureen Ingram.

Brooklyn (DIST. 13-23, 32)

Student Film Club in Contest Finals

Saving Water 101, a mini-documentary produced by the film club at PS 8, D-13, was one of six finalists in National Geographic's "Find Your Footprint" contest. The club's eco-friendly film was selected from 75 entries. Students researched the topic after they noticed running water fountains in school. In the film, they look into how much water is wasted from one fountain in an hour. (360 cups leaked in an hour!)

The ambitious film club is now working on a movie about their school and they hope to send it to a center for orphans in Tanzania.



■ PS 8 kids get involved!



PS 22 BLOG

■ The chorus from PS 22, Staten Island, met many celebrities on Oscar night before and after they performed. Here they are, with Nicole Kidman, in black jacket, and her husband, country music star Keith Urban, in white shirt, as well as their choral director and chaperones.

PS 22 Says: Hooray for Hollywood!

PS 22 chorus' performance at the Academy Awards received a standing ovation from Hollywood's A-listers on Oscar night. The kids' rendition of *Over the Rainbow* concluded the show with the winners joining them on stage for a grand finale. Gregg Breinberg, the choral director, is responsible for the chorus' success.

The following day, the group returned to an after-Oscars party at the Kodak Theatre to perform with Katy Perry – singing her latest hit *Firework*. The chorus became a YouTube sensation a few years ago and gained nationwide popularity.

United Airlines sponsored the students' trip to Los Angeles.

For updates on the chorus' whereabouts visit the blog at <http://ps22chorus.blogspot.com>.