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the WCT COMMENTATOR

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WCT Contract Official! *BOE Trustees vote 6 to 1*



(Above: WCT President, Pasquale Delli Carpini, addressing the Board Trustees)



(Above: Joe Incoronato speaking out against the negotiated terms of the contract)

Douglass Bitteker - Yes

Joe Incoronato - No

Anthony LoCicero - Recused

Sebastian Rutigliano - Abstained

Marilynn Shultz - Yes

Roger D'Aquino - Yes

Deborah Kuter - Yes

Joseph Porpora - Yes

Aash Shravah - Yes

A Note of Thanks

I just want to take a quick moment to commend the Negotiations Committee on a job well done!!!

The time, effort, and dedication displayed by the committee over the past two years should be appreciated! I truly feel that the committee gave us their best effort and that a better settlement could not have been reached.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all involved in this effort on behalf of the WCT membership!

Sincerely,
Barb Vorel, Speech Therapist - Evans/RCK

NYSUT Hosts an “Ending the Gap” Symposium

NYSUT is dedicated to helping all children achieve. Yet thousands of New York’s urban and rural children — predominantly children of color — are being left behind with low test scores, high dropout rates and limited opportunities for success. Closing the achievement gap is not only a goal — but a responsibility of this union.



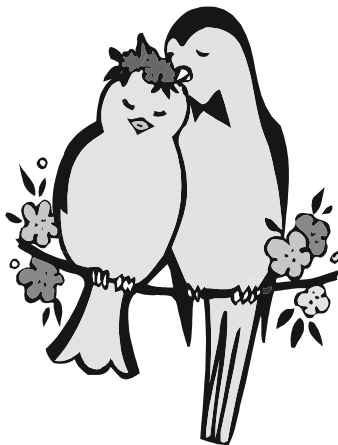
We know that efforts to narrow the gap must be central, not only to our educational agenda, but to our social justice agenda as well.

As we work to improve our schools, we want to partner with parents, elected officials, business owners and other community leaders to break the cycle of poverty and address the social factors that contribute to the achievement gap.

On **Oct. 25-28**, NYSUT is hosting a symposium in Albany featuring nationally-known researchers, key state policymakers and other advocates for change. Find out how you can join us at EndingTheGap.com.

Good News!

Best wishes to Jessica & Joseph Carola on their recent nuptials. They were married on August 11, 2007. Jessica Carola, formerly Tolman, is a school psychologist at Gayhead Elementary.



What it Takes to Lead, Whether it’s a Classroom or a Country

By: Susan H. Fuhrman
President of Teachers College, Columbia University
Reprinted from the *USA Weekend Magazine* - Sept. 7-8, 2007

Ask anyone what the most important and demanding job is in America, and many will answer “the president.” But there are plenty who would say “a teacher.” Both answers are well-reasoned. And both jobs require the same skills to achieve success.

First, there are external talents: Each job requires answering to a large, varied and vocal constituency. You must think on your feet while working in consultation with others. You must function as a role model who is on constant public display and instill in others the fundamental behaviors of good citizenship.

Then there are the internal traits: Presidents and teachers must be receptive to new information while gathering evidence to make decisions based on facts rather than opinions.

For both presidents and teachers, challenges are constantly repeated. Negotiations - whether with nations or individual students - are carried on over extended periods, and today’s failure could set the table for tomorrow’s breakthrough. That’s where the human capacity to connect remains so vital. Policies, curricula and other tools are all important, but if you can’t connect with other human beings, then you probably should be sitting somewhere other than at the head of a classroom or in the Oval Office.

Protecting Yourself

By: Program Services Department of NYSUT

We live in troubled times and school employees need to behave in such a way (and avoid certain situations) to protect themselves physically, medically, legally, and professionally.

Touching Students:

There was a time when schools and teachers acted *in loco parentis* (literally, in the place of a parent), and no one thought twice about teachers touching kids to praise them, to discipline them, to comfort them, or to restrain them. Those days are long gone.

Now a school employee who touches a student for perfectly innocent reasons may be accused of child abuse, sexual harrassment or assault.

Often, the charges are groundless, the case never goes to trial, or the employee is found not guilty. It's not fair, but the reality is the eventual disposition of the charges may have far lesser impact than the original accusations. The reputation and career of a totally innocent employee may be irreparably damaged.

Some students come to school with weapons. An employee trying

to restrain or discipline such a student risks bodily harm. New York prohibits corporal punishment (any act of physical force used to discipline or punish a student) in public schools. It does permit a teacher to use physical force to protect a student or teacher from physical injury, to protect school property, or to restrain or remove a disorderly student. If possible, secure assistance from school administrators before acting. Physical

force should only be used as a last resort in drastic situations.

If you must use physical force to protect or restrain, make sure there are witnesses to the sequence of events. Obtain names and written statements from student and adult witnesses immediately after the incident. Don't use more force than necessary and never use physical force to punish a student.

Medicine and Technology Help the Morelli Family

by Ellen Korz

Please visit carepages.com and visit a care page for Roberto Morelli (Roberto99) and see the miracle of how he received a high risk heart transplant to one lung.

Roberto was born with half a heart and one lung. He started his school at Oak Grove where he has lots of friends and teachers.

Roberto's mom is Theresa Morelli, music teacher at Van Wyck Jr High, Wappingers Junior High, and Kinry Road Elementary. Carepages is a wonderful way to keep in touch, create a photo gallery, and update friends on a child's progress during long-term hospital stays.

Thanks to modern medicine and the WCSD Technology Department, Roberto hopes to return to Gayhead school and his friends in November. He's having a great recovery but your prayers and words of encouragement are always appreciated.

Editor's Note

The e-mail address wctink@hotmail.com is no longer active.

If you wish to contact the editor, please send all e-mails to commentator@wcteachers.org.

You Can Make a Difference

Fair Trade Project: Change the world without going to a meeting

The Fair Trade Project is a part of the NYSUT/Labor-Religion Coalition. Fair trade means that fair living wages are guaranteed for workers and no child labor, forced labor, or slavery is used. There are safe and humane working conditions, workers have adequate housing and medical care and children have an opportunity to go to school. Also an environment of community development and cooperative relationships is fostered and environmentally friendly farming practices are used.

To purchase products made using the fair trade policy simply go online. At www.deansbeans.com to order fair trade coffee. At the final step in your order enter "NYSUT" as the promotion code. For fair trade chocolates and other treats (teas, dried cranberries, almonds, pecans, etc.) go to www.equalexchange.com. In step #2 of checkout, enter "NYSUT" as the promotion code. These products are also available to use as a fundraising idea.

For more information on this project, visit www.labor-religion.org or call 800-342-9810 ext. 6294.



Classroom Makeover Contest for K-12 Teachers

Deadline: October 15, 2007

The 2007 Expo Classroom Makeover Contest, which began at 12:00 am CST on January 21, 2007, will end at 11:59pm CDT on October 15, 2007.

Complete the online entry form and

submit along with an original essay of 100 words or less describing why entrant's classroom deserves a makeover and a photograph of the entrant's classroom demonstrating the need for a makeover.

Two Grand prizes consisting of a \$25,000 classroom makeover and eight first place prizes consisting of a \$5,000 classroom makeover.

*For complete Official Rules and to enter, visit www.expomarkers.com

Dates to Know

- PTA Council meeting @ Fishkill - Oct. 4, 2007
- pay day - Oct. 12, 2007
- *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk* - Oct. 21, 2007
- pay day - Oct. 26, 2007
- PTA Council meeting @ Vassar - Nov. 1, 2007
- pay day - Nov. 9, 2007
- pay day - Nov. 21, 2007
- PTA Council meeting @ Gayhead - Dec. 6, 2007
- pay day - Dec. 7, 2007
- pay day - Dec. 21, 2007
- PTA Council meeting @ Brinckerhoff - Jan. 3, 2008
- pay day - Jan. 4, 2008
- pay day - Jan. 18, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 1, 2008
- PTA Council meeting @ Myers - Feb. 7, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 15, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 29, 2008
- PTA Council meeting @ Fishkill Plains - Mar. 6, 2008
- pay day - Mar. 14, 2008
- pay day - Mar. 28, 2008
- PTA Council meeting @ Oak Grove - Apr. 3, 2008
- pay day - Apr. 11, 2008
- pay day - Apr. 25, 2008
- PTA Council meeting - May 1, 2008
- pay day - May 9, 2008
- pay day - May 23, 2008
- pay day - June 6, 2008
- pay day - June 20, 2008
- pay day - June 26, 2008

COMMENTATOR Policy

The content of the *COMMENTATOR* shall reflect the official positions and policies of the WCT, with the following three exceptions:

1. The President of the WCT should present his/her views in a message to the members from time to time, but not less than bimonthly.

2. Signed Letters to the Editor (of responsible length) containing personal views from members and subscribers shall be published subject to laws of libel.

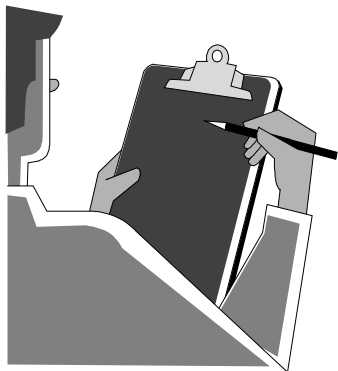
3. Members of the WCT may place articles adhering to the Canons of Journalism concerned with WCT positions, policies, and issues of interest to teachers in the Commentary Section. (For both Letters to the Editor and the Commentary Section, the writer's name and WCT affiliation shall be attached, and an editor's note shall accompany these sections indicating that "The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official views and policies of the WCT.")

The *COMMENTATOR* advertising policy as adopted by the Executive Board is as follows:

Noncommercial (Personal) ads for WCT MEMBERS only will be run for two issues at no charge.

Commercial (Business) ads for WCT MEMBERS only: guaranteed placement for half of the school year, \$35.00 per half year payable Sept. 15th and Feb. 1st or \$5.00 per issue.

Reprints of articles from the *WCT COMMENTATOR* are allowable only with the permission of the WCT President.



Assistance Locating Former Members Needed

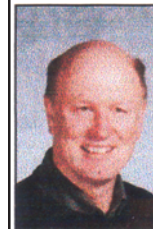
Each year, many NYSTRS memberships are terminated due to insufficient creditable service. The System makes every effort to contact these former members and advise them their contributions are refundable. However, in most cases they do not have a current address on file and have not been able to obtain a revised address. Do you think this applies to you or someone you know? If so, go on the Retirement System's web site - www.nystrs.org, or call (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6090.

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We're on the Web!
see us at:

WCTeachers.org

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FOR SALE: 75 Gallon Bowed Front Fish tank and stand - all accessories incl. paid over \$1100 sell for \$500. Karrie 702-8146.

FOR SALE: 5 hp Ariens snowblower, electric start. Like me, it's old but runs great. \$250.00; six (6) 205/60R15 tires, 4 high-performance winter Dunlops. 2 all season Coopers. Plenty of tread. \$100.00. Call 297-3119.

FOR SALE: Thomasville solid oak queen size bed for sale. The headboard has storage space galore. Asking \$250 or best offer. Call 298-7712.

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