

**March 2011**

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Local 1, American  
Federation of School  
Administrators, AFL-CIO



**A Leap for  
Special  
Education p6**



**'Phase One'  
Off and  
Running p7**



**Unions Need To Fight Back**

*McNally at NYCESPA Meeting Outlines Labor Counter-Offensive*

**BY YURIDIA PEÑA**

CSA Executive Vice President Peter McNally's speech at the 78th annual NYC Elementary School Principals' Association Convention was among a number of topics that sparked buzz among the attending educators, union leaders, elected officials and advocates. In addition to Mr. McNally's speech that railed against recent attacks against public employee unions, topics of conversation throughout the day were the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the slated closure of low-performing schools.

"We are the unfair target," said Mr. McNally. His zeal for the topic was transferred to members during the luncheon, which brought cheers from the crowd. He said all workers should have the right to a good pension and a living wage, and that CSA stands in solidarity with the labor community through its ongoing participation with the Municipal Labor Committee in its fight against the public uproar that blames unions for the state's economic plight.

Mr. McNally said that the private sector workers should have what union members

have: the right to collective bargaining, fair pensions, adequate health insurance and safe work conditions.

In addition, Mr. McNally said, the upcoming budget cuts from Albany will be another important battle this year. "It's no longer the fact that we are under attack ... we now have to fight for public education," he said.

Deputy Chancellors Shael Polakow-Suransky and Laura Rodriguez were among the dais guests which also included Comptroller John Liu, Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan and NAESP President Barbara Chester.

The NYCESPA Convention is a daylong event at the Brooklyn Marriott which features more than a dozen workshops and a keynote address plus the gala luncheon. This year's keynoter was Dr. Sally Hampton, who gave



PETER PARELLA

■ CSA Executive Vice President Peter McNally spoke passionately about the labor community's need to push back against attacks.

an in-depth analysis on CCSS. Dr. Hampton is a senior scholar at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

During Dr. Hampton's presentation, she strongly advised that schools focus their budgets on implementing the CCSS.

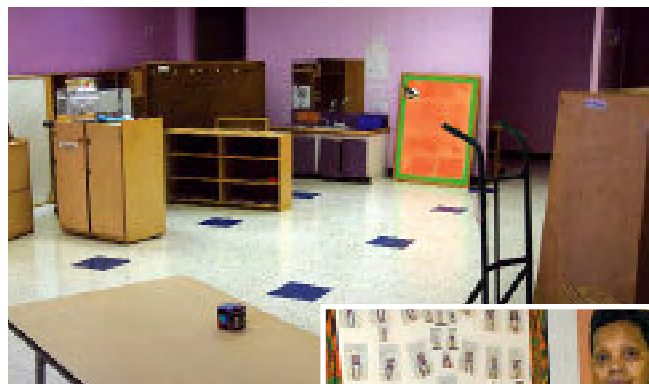
**Day Care Centers' Bumpy Present**

**City to Cut  
16,624 Day  
Care Slots**

**BY YURIDIA PEÑA**

Mayor Bloomberg's proposed budget for fiscal year 2012 includes the elimination of 16,624 child care seats, including 4,000 slots at city-funded early childhood schools run by certified Day Care Directors – CSA members – who offer children a sound early childhood education.

"It is imperative that the Mayor reconsider his proposal, and find other areas, especially within the structure of Administration of Children's Services (ACS), to streamline. President Obama recognizes that early education is a strong founda-



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ Above, Bedford Avenue Day Care Center closed its doors on March 1. Right, Family Director Marie Soutar, who lost her job, finishes packing up the center before returning the keys.



tion for success and has vowed to make it a priority. Now is the time for NYC to support subsidized childcare," said CSA President Ernest Logan.

Since 2002, the Mayor has

closed 52 city-subsidized centers. According to the Day Care Council of NY, nearly 6,000 fewer children are receiving child care than in 2008. The

*Continued on Page 10*

**Union Cries  
Foul on City's  
Tactics**

**BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN**

CSA has asked the NYC Office of Collective Bargaining to intervene in the matter of the stagnant Day Care contract.

The union filed a "demand for arbitration" with the agency in January charging that the city has failed to negotiate in good faith. In February, the OCB ordered the city to respond. At this writing, CSA was awaiting the city's response. (The city has the right to ask for a dismissal of the complaint.) CSA's attorney Charity Guerra is handling the case for the union.

The Day Care contract expired  
*Continued on Page 10*

**CSA AT WORK**

**Ruling  
Confirms  
Right to  
Organize**

**BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN**

In a major decision from the NYS Public Employment Relations Board, the right of charter school administrators to join a union was upheld.

An administrative law judge ruled that despite the fact that a private entity runs a New York City public school, the NYS charter school law provides for charter school employees to be eligible for collective bargaining under the state's Taylor Law, which governs public sector employees.

*Continued on Page 10*

**Principals Forced  
to Spend Funds**  
**2**

**DOE Yields Over  
School Lunches**  
**3**

**Global Tech:  
Providing Tools**  
**8-9**

**Bonding through  
the Ages**  
**14**



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## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

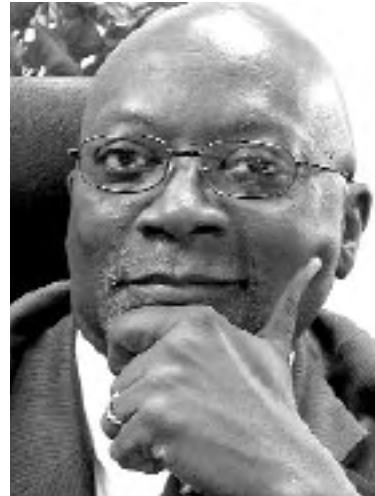
# A Slap in the Face for Fiscally Responsible Leaders

## Principals Told Spend Money Now or Lose It Next Year By Ernest A. Logan

In one of its worst business decisions in memory, the DOE announced in the Feb. 14 Principals' Weekly that schools had to use all the funds saved in Fiscal Year 2011 (for spending next year) or lose 50 percent to Tweed. This Valentine preceded the Mayor's budget proposal which hit three days later, complete with the cruel threat of some 5,000 teacher layoffs. To spice things up, the Mayor and Chancellor also pleaded for the state to overturn Last-in/First out, thus stripping educators of seniority and tenure rights, even though they said this wouldn't save a penny.

As for the rollover funds, CSA members began contacting us immediately. With budgets shrinking again, you had exercised restraint so that next year you could hang onto a teacher and keep down class sizes or replace a retiring teacher or retain a program to help English Language Learners and overage students to graduate with their class. After our raised voices ignited a flurry of media reports on the absurdity of undermining your incentive to be fiscally responsible, the DOE said it wouldn't budge. An official in the Chancellor's office responded to some of your queries with: "If you choose not to participate in the (50 percent rollover) program, with over four months remaining in the school year, I'm certain that you, along with your School Leadership Team, can determine a great use of these resources to support your students and their achievement."

Seriously? When you thought you were the stewards of your own budget, you planned ahead for the urgent basic needs of your children. Now, instead you'll be compelled



to stockpile supplies, repair damaged equipment and get a bunch of SMARTboards. Otherwise half of what you saved will leave your schools forever to "offset overall cuts." For what? To pay back the debt for over-priced auditing systems, keep costly consultants around to design new reorganizations, and raise the salaries of the increasing number of managers supervising you from Tweed? Honestly, I do not believe this imprudent decision will stand.

One thing's for sure: the money isn't going into your salaries or your teachers' salaries. Those will be frozen while you ponder the nightmare of losing 5,000 teachers. If you listened to Gov. Cuomo, who has told us that layoffs are unnecessary, you wonder why the Mayor and Chancellor are pushing for them. This specter has no place in a city

with revenues that are way above projections and a surplus of \$3 billion. Are they pushing layoffs because they're trying to scare the public into believing that layoffs would leave them with the worst teachers unless seniority rights are scrapped? The way they frame Last-in/First-out, they would have the public think that experienced teachers are of less value than newly minted ones. What have we come to when we believe that experience is less important than youthful exuberance?

All the wholesale end of seniority would do is deprive all teachers of their protections against discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual preference and age. I haven't met a good Principal who doesn't know how to do the hard work of identifying and replacing an ineffective teacher. I don't know a Principal or Assistant Principal who doesn't understand the law well enough to know that if teachers are stripped of their seniority rights, Principals and APs will be, too. And I don't know of an education union that isn't willing to sit down and discuss improved ways of evaluating teachers.

To deal with the issues of taking away our rollover funds, implementing layoffs and making draconian budget cuts, we have to work harder to let the media and our elected officials understand what will help or hurt our schools. CSA communicates with the media every day and helps you to bring issues like rollovers and school lunch money collection to the fore. From behind the scenes, we've been able to change or mitigate some unpleasant situations.

What you can do better than we can is notify your local papers of what you're up against. Tell reporters you'll go on record and describe how hard you've worked to save for the future and what you would have done with the funds if the DOE hadn't betrayed you. Make them understand how your students would suffer from layoffs. Your local elected officials depend on community papers for their information as do voters. Speak up locally; your voices will be heard around the city.

Elected officials make a difference. Join CSA on lobby days at the City Council and in Albany. Turn out at rallies on the steps of City Hall. Visit our website to find out how to become a CSA Legislative District Coordinator and actively participate in political affairs. Call legislators to let them know what our schools and Day Care Centers need to survive.

We must summon the will of Wisconsin's public workers, and Ohio's and Indiana's unionists, before we find ourselves in similar situations. The time is now to fight for what we have. Tell NYC why unions are important and why what you do is important.

## Rollover Funds Yanked

# Forced Shopping Spree

BY YURIDIA PEÑA

Fiscally responsible Principals were forced to spend thousands, if not millions, of dollars when an email from Schools Chancellor Cathie Black told them that their schools' rainy-day funds were going to be slashed by half if not allocated in their budgets by March 4.

One small school in Brooklyn is immediately spending \$150,000 on air conditioners, ink cartridges, SMARTboards and electrical upgrades instead of hiring a new Assistant Principal or retaining teachers next year. The Assistant Principal of this school fears future criticism from the community. "Next year we're going to have to excess somebody," she said.

Stephen Duch, Principal of Hillcrest High School in Queens, says \$200,000 will buy furniture, computers for classrooms, consumables and lockers. "I anticipate that the budget for next year will be worse than the budget for this

year," he said. Mr. Duch says Principals should be smart and quickly spend the money by the deadline. "It's not challenging for us," he said.

Thomas A. Edison C.T.E. High School in Queens has a \$400,000 surplus. Assistant Principal Moses Ojeda says the school will increase student services including more Regents prep, and afterschool and extended day programs. The school's vast career and technical program will also get new equipment.

Principals have traditionally been allowed to put aside funds for the next fiscal year through the "Deferred Budget Planning Initiative". But Ms. Black's directive in the Principals' Weekly gave them a heads up that they'll only be allowed to keep 50 cents on every dollar if they don't allocate it by March 4.

"Your students would really be the losers if you chose not to spend the money; they would not benefit

*Continued on Page 5*

# DOE Yields over School Lunches

## CSA Helps Force the Issue: Principals Are Not Debt Collectors

BY YURIDIA PEÑA

The NYC Department of Education backed down from forcing school Principals to collect outstanding balances on unpaid school lunch money from parents who haven't paid their bill after an outcry from Principals and the advocacy efforts of the CSA. The DOE has temporarily rescinded its plan to pay for the deficit from each school's instructional budget.

"We publicly embarrassed them," said CSA First Vice President Randi Herman. In an email from the DOE, Principals had been instructed to work with their network budget liaison to reserve tax levy funding from their budget in anticipation of an adjustment scheduled for Feb. 16 on a line entitled "Uncollected Lunch Fees Set Aside". In other words, administrators who did not collect unpaid lunch money from parents would be docked from their own budgets.

"The Office of School Food [and Nutrition Services] needs to address its own budgetary problems without robbing NYC public schools of scarce instructional dollars," said Dr. Herman at a Feb. 8 City Council hearing. Dr. Herman also appeared on Fox 5's Good Day New York on Feb. 10 where she told anchor Rosanna Scotto that Principals are faced with a tough predicament; they are forced to become debt collectors or pay it back from operating budgets. Principals pointed out that it's already difficult to get parents involved in their kids' educations and that hounding them for unpaid lunch monies will turn away even more parents.

News reports stated that the DOE has spent \$42 million since 2004 because of uncollected lunch money. Some schools already have thousands of dollars in unpaid



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ CSA First Vice President Randi Herman appeared on Good Day New York on Feb. 10. Here she is discussing the DOE's lunch money plan with anchor Rosanna Scotto.

lunch payments this year alone.

While the DOE had said that the current economic situation will no longer allow for the city to pick up the tab, after CSA, Principals, parents and education advocates pushed back, the DOE called for an indefinite delay in this plan. Principals are advised to gather outstanding balances by collecting meal forms, entering student data and collecting monies from families who do not qualify for free meals. About 75 percent of city students qualify for reduced or free lunch.

The reality is, "...a NYC Principal will never, ever, deny a meal to a child," said Dr. Herman. All students receive a free breakfast; lunch costs up to \$1.50 per day. (NYC qualifies for the federal government's universal meal program, which provides subsidized meals to schools.) Families who are receiving benefits through public assistance programs may be eligible for free meals.



■ A child enjoys a school meal at PS 172, D-15, Brooklyn.

# 23 Principals Named as Cahn Fellows 2011

BY CSA NEWS STAFF

The Cahn Fellows Program has announced the 2011 cohort of school leaders who are characterized by their commitment to excellence in schools and their dedication to the public school system.

The Cahn Fellows Program, which is run by Teachers College, is designed to strengthen the city's schools by honoring effective school Principals as well as investing in training them in advanced leadership skills. Furthermore, Cahn Fellows mentor aspiring Principals in their buildings "to support the leadership pipeline," said program officials.

The screening process includes an analysis of three years of data as well as interviews and school visits. The selection committee is comprised of educators from a number of organizations including New Leaders for New Schools, the Leadership Academy, and Teachers College.

CSA has been a long-time sponsor of the Cahn Fellows Program, which was established



CAHN FELLOWS

■ Part of the Cahn Fellows professional development includes a summer trip to Gettysburg where issues of leadership are dissected. Above, the 2010 Cohort poses with the newest Lincoln statue at the Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor Center.

in 2003. Since that first year, a total of 191 Principals have been selected for their distinguished school leadership.

This year, for the first time, Principals from Newark were considered as well. The following Principals are members of the 2011 cohort:

Megan Adams, NYC Lab Middle School for Collaborative Studies, Manhattan; Magalie Alexis, Park Slope Elementary/Middle School 282, Brooklyn; Anthony Barbetta, Thomas Edison Career High School, Queens; Deirdre Budd, PS 178, Manhattan; Franca Conti, PS

217, Brooklyn; Giovanna Delucchi, PS 43, Bronx; Frank DeSario, PS 60, Queens; Colleen Ducey, PS 326, Brooklyn; Ramona Duran, PS 157, Bronx; Danielle Giunta, PS 154, Queens; Jason Griffiths, The Brooklyn Latin School; Paula Holmes, McKinney Secondary School of Arts, Brooklyn; Brooke Jackson, NYC Lab School for Collaborative Studies, Manhattan; April Leong, Liberation Diploma Plus High School, Brooklyn; Yolanda Mendez, Roberto Clemente Elementary School, Newark, NJ; Laverne Nimmons, PS 335, Brooklyn; Robin Pitts, The High School of Sports Management, Brooklyn; Charlene Reid, Bronx Charter School for Excellence; Edward Tom, Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics; Joaquin Vega, Bronx International High School; Deneen Washington, Maple Avenue School, Newark, NJ; Elizabeth Waters, PS 506, Brooklyn; and Jie Zhang, Queens High School for the Sciences.

## COMING EVENTS

( Events are at CSA's Brooklyn Headquarters, 16 Court Street, unless otherwise noted. )

**MARCH 8, 5 PM:**  
ABENY Executive Committee and Board Meeting

**MARCH 16, 5 PM:** CSA Executive Board

**MARCH 18-19:** WNET/WLIW Teaching & Learning Conference, Hilton NY

**MARCH 21, 5 PM:** DOE Irish American Committee

**MARCH 24, 5 PM:** NYCSPA Executive Board

**APRIL 4, 5 PM:** Education Administrators Association

**APRIL 4, 5 PM:** DOE Irish American Committee

**APRIL 4, 5 PM:** CSA Latino Caucus

**APRIL 6, 4:30 PM:** CSA District Chairs

**APRIL 11, 5 PM:** Association of Assistant Principals

Please check with the event organizer to confirm times and dates.

The International Dyslexia Association (New York branch) will hold its 38th Annual Conference on dyslexia and related learning disabilities on March 15 at NYU.

For more information, and to register online, visit [www.nybida.org](http://www.nybida.org)

## Teachers' Retirement System

February 2011 Unit Values  
Diversified Equity: 59.246  
Stable-Value: 19.207  
International Equity: 9.793  
Inflation Protection: 10.713  
Socially Responsive Equity: 10.712

# The Grievance Corner | Bob Reich

## Annual Summer School Selection Process Begins Anew



**After March 30, you cannot be forced to work during the summer.**

Now that the snow is melting, and I sincerely hope it's gone for the year, the annual summer school selection process (for those mandated as 12-month Assistant Principals and those who want to be) has begun.

The Department of Education had until Feb. 15, to notify administrators of all mandated summer school positions.

### Mandated positions

- One Assistant Principal-Administration in each high school. Note that if two Assistant Principals-Administration are employed within the same school, only one is mandated.

- All Assistant Principals, both Administration and Supervision, special education, high school.

- All Assistant Principals assigned to city-wide special education schools.

- One Assistant Principal position for each summer middle, intermediate or junior high school.

### Timetable for selection:

- By Feb. 15, Superintendents were to have filed a form with the DOE indicating mandated and non-mandated proposed positions for summer school.

- The non-mandated positions were to be posted by February 15 to notify all Assistant Principals and School-Based Intermediate Supervisors (SBIS) in each district.

- By March 1, those Assistant Principals and School-Based Intermediate Supervisors not mandated to work should have notified their Superintendent of their desire to work during the summer. This notification should be in writing and you should maintain a copy of the notification you submitted.

- By close of business March 30, Superintendents must have notified those supervisors who will work the non-mandated summer school jobs. If an insufficient number of AP/SBIS volunteer to serve in the 12-month increased work year positions, the Superintendent can assign an AP/SBIS to serve. Those selected/assigned as AP/SBIS

*If you think you should have been selected and you weren't, call me.*

must work the increased work year schedule unless there is a city fiscal emergency.

- After March 30, the DOE cannot require a CSA member to work during the summer unless there is mutual agreement.

If you have any concerns, speak with your CSA Field Director or contact the CSA Grievance Department. Email me at bob@csa-nyc.org. Last year, one of our members contacted the union after he was not selected for summer service and prevailed in an arbitration; he was paid the money he should have earned had he worked!

### Annual Leave

CSA members are entitled to 27 days of annual leave a year that comprises all vacation, personal and religious days. Annual leave is accrued at the rate of 2 ¼ days per month. Days may be scheduled during the winter break, the midwinter recess, the

spring recess and any other periods that can be arranged with your Superintendent.

Annual leave cannot be carried over from one year to another. This means that you must use your vacation within the year or lose it.

If you are a Principal or a 12-month Assistant Principal, your work year is Sept. 1 through Aug. 31. You may request to opt out of July and August under certain circumstances. You must base your request upon extreme hardship or a unique or unusual personal circumstance. The Chancellor or her designee decides such requests on a case by case basis.

Note: If you are permitted to opt out, that period will be deemed a leave of absence. If approved, the appropriate salary and leave prorations will be made.

### In Addition

- Probationary employees who work 12 months are exempt from the requirement for 26 hours of professional development time.

- Those Principals interested in serving as "Principal in Charge" of summer school must submit the application required by the Department of Education. This is true even if your superintendent tells you that you are the "Principal in Charge". There is a \$2,500 lump sum differential paid for those serving as "Principal in Charge."

*Note: Last month, I incorrectly stated that those of you serving under a NYS SBL or SBA certificate must complete 125 hours of professional development every five years. The correct number of hours is 175.*

## Letters



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

■ Recent policy changes at the NYC Department of Education have one Assistant Principal comparing them to an old joke about selling a bridge.

### DOE Policies Waste Time and Money

*To the Editor:* Approximately three months ago, the NYC Department of Education did a "big favor" to school-based administrators by consolidating the submission of an extended use permit with the request for School Safety Overtime into a single process.

This process was so confusing initially that it caused many of us to make countless telephone calls and send countless emails to get requests approved; this, of course, negated the time savings that the process was to

provide.

While that procedure now seems to have settled down, we are now informed in the Principal's Weekly (or as I prefer to think of it, the "Principal's Weekly", as the DOE continues to erode the authority of school-based administrators) that submission of extended use permits and

requests for School Safety Overtime must be submitted three weeks in advance; under the previous system, one week lead time was sufficient. It appears that the DOE not only wishes to remove spontaneity from the classroom, but now from afterschool activities as well.

By the way, if anyone is interested, I have a bridge to sell; if I sell it to you today, I will buy it back from you next year for half of today's price.

Fifty-five never looked so good.

— NEIL EIDELBERG

Assistant Principal Organization/Security  
Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis High School  
for International Careers

### Educators, Not Billionaires, Know What Students Need

*To the Editor:* Isn't it time to bell the cat? Microsoft founder Bill Gates, US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and too many politicians who have theories and huge sums of money to spend on education know nothing about teaching. They have never taught our teens in an urban high school, nor could they imagine what it is to teach 150 students each day, check homework, read unintelligible essays, and deal with a myriad of social and psychological problems. If they spent a few weeks in a classroom, they would understand that students must be willing and able to learn.

No teacher can teach students who show up sporadically or are emotionally unable to focus in class because of serious personal problems. I have seen enthusiastic teachers give up trying to reach a different group of students every day depending upon who shows up for school that day.

Some students will be left behind. With few exceptions, every one of us gets left behind in some way at some time. We don't all make the baseball team, we don't all get a part in a play and we don't all get into our first-choice college. We have the right to

equal access, but no one is really equal in athletic or academic abilities; that's where individual abilities are important, and important to cultivate.

Non-educators of a certain persuasion seem to view children as sausage casings: They think you can stuff them with a curriculum that's good for them and their country. They also believe superior teachers can overcome the resistance or inability of any teenager.

They also have incorrect notions about appropriate teaching methods in high school. While rote and repetition often are appropriate for a young child, teaching to the test in high schools is a diversion and farce because it relies on memorization and repetition. Teenagers require more challenging methods if they are to prepare for college or a career.

Testing is a political device we're using to "rate" schools without concern for the creative and cognitive skills that can't be quantified but can be taught. Tests make teachers drill sergeants, and divorces them from what motivated them to teach in the first place: inspiring students and developing relationships with them.

Bell the cat!

— SAUL KAPLAN

Assistant Principal, Retired  
Martin Van Buren HS, Queens

Send "Letters to the Editor" to [anne@csa-nyc.org](mailto:anne@csa-nyc.org)

# City Councilman Visits ELI Workshop



ANNE SILVERSTEIN

■ City Councilman Brad Lander spoke with ELI participants attending a workshop on Jan. 26. (That's ELI Executive Director Eloise Messineo standing behind him.)

City Councilman Brad Lander visited ELI on Jan. 26 and spoke with participants who were attending ELI's Common Core Standards workshop.

Mr. Lander broached a number of topics during his visit including his support for Principals and schools, as well as his determination to fight for education. He also said that Mayor Bloomberg and others would have one believe that substandard teaching is at the root of the city's (and nation's) school problems as well as their pensions and seniority rules, but, Mr. Lander said, he has found that parents are not on board with that perception.

He also spoke about the following contradiction as it is being expressed today by many public officials: that educators are special people doing terribly important work but that they're overpaid, their pensions are too high, and that they have too many benefits.

# Legislative Agenda | Herman Merritt

## A Circus Is No Place for a Civics Lesson

As I sat in the huge auditorium that was packed to capacity for the February meeting of the Panel for Educational Policy, I had a strange combination of feelings. The atmosphere made me feel as if I were at a circus. A lack of decorum prevailed and much of the proceedings could not be heard over the interruptions. But at other times, I was impressed by what I was hearing. One student from Paul Robeson High School was so articulate and insightful and presented his case in a way that the adults hadn't thought of.

Then there were the Panel members. They may say I misinterpreted their body language, but they appeared inattentive. On the other hand, they may have had a reason: The proceedings in front of them were, at times, so embarrassing, I could almost understand. Since when did a public hearing mean name-calling and carnival-like tactics?

I looked at the many students in the auditorium and wondered if this was their introduction to government and politics. If they never participated before, they might never participate again after this charade of a public hearing.

This was such a different experience than one I had on an icy Friday in January when 300 high school students participated in the annual competition sponsored by "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution." The primary goal of "We the People" is to promote civic competence and responsibility among the nation's students.

I was a judge (along with federal and state judges and lawyers) and I felt such hope watching students explaining and analyzing the Constitution. As they demonstrated their knowledge of the fundamentals of government, you truly felt that our future was in good hands.

More of our students should have the opportunity to participate in civic education programs. The Justice Resource Center (JRC), located on the campus of Martin Luther King High School, has a number of programs and activities to encourage civic education including an elementary and middle school program entitled "School Violence Prevention through Civics."

Other school programs such as Representative Democracy in America, Project Citizen, Moot Court and Mock Trial, offer students the civic dispositions needed to be productive citizens in their schools and communities, promote professionalism and develop skills to participate in the democratic process. The JRC has mobilized the legal community to partner with schools enabling the community to have a vested interest in the cultivation of an informed citizenry. (Visit JRC's website, [www.jrcnyc.org](http://www.jrcnyc.org) for more information.)

We must ensure that all of our students have a positive introduction to our system of government and politics. Although we cannot test our students on the lessons learned and what they learn is not quantifiable, the most important thing we can do is create meaningful opportunities for our students to participate in our democracy.



The Legislative District Coordinator Program is off and running. Members have been assigned to work with various legislators and they have begun the exciting work of advocacy for our union. If you would like more information on this program, visit our website at [www.csa-nyc.org](http://www.csa-nyc.org), or email me at [herman@csa-nyc.org](mailto:herman@csa-nyc.org).



A charade of a public hearing is a poor way for students to learn about civics.

## Black and Puerto Rican Caucus



■ CSA was well represented at the 40th Annual Conference Weekend sponsored by the NYS Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators in Albany. Above, third from right, City Councilman Robert Jackson joins CSA staff and members during the Feb. 20 Gala Scholarship Benefit Banquet at the Convention Center. New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson was the keynote speaker for the evening.

## Shopping Spree

Continued from Page 2

from these funds in the future," said CSA President Ernest Logan.

Many schools, however, don't have this problem according to a number of Principals with whom the *CSA News* spoke. For example, Dr. Laverne Nimmons, Principal of PS 335, Brooklyn, has a \$90,000 deficit and is feeling the pressure from the DOE to raise funds; she faces beginning next year with a negative balance. "I am an educator, I am not a financial person," she said. Dr. Nimmons had a business manager who left for another job. Dr. Nimmons was unable to fill the position because the DOE took the money allotted for that position and never replaced it.

## Nager Per Session Lawsuit Update

BY CSA NEWS STAFF

Some CSA retirees got a nice surprise when they received their pension checks at the end of January or beginning of February: they finally received the long-promised settlement checks from the Nager per session class action lawsuit.

Some confusion arose, however, among those members with direct deposit, who saw an increase in their bank accounts but received no immediate explanation. The explanatory letter arrived several days after the deposits were made. (Mystery money is one of the good problems in life!)

CSA Retiree Chapter Director Mark Brodsky said that those retirees who retired before Nov. 24, 1998 – members of the class action lawsuit concerning per session earnings – will receive their money between now and June. The checks are being sent to those members with earlier retirement dates first and then will follow in chronological order of retirement.

Questions? Contact the plaintiff attorney at (800) 246-9834, or visit [www.persessionpaycase.com/faq.html](http://www.persessionpaycase.com/faq.html) or the NYC TRS website at [www.trsnyc.org/trsweb/news/news.html](http://www.trsnyc.org/trsweb/news/news.html).

## NATION Education

### NEW JERSEY:

#### Learning On eBay

Students at Northern Highlands Regional High School are learning business skills and philanthropy through an entrepreneurship class: selling items on eBay and donating profits to Bergen County's United Way. They are supporting affordable housing for developmentally disabled residents of Allendale. (NorthJersey.com)

### PENNSYLVANIA:

#### Boosting Economy

Middle School students in Chartiers Valley studied what types of businesses would attract patrons to shops in the business district where storefronts were vacant. The project was the brainstorm of a gifted education coordinator. Students did an in-depth analysis of the area, studying previous tenants, parking, and signage. They created 3-D models and beautification ideas. They presented plans to the Commissioner who invited them to the next meeting. (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

### TEXAS:

#### Cuts Keep Coming

The Texas legislature may reduce education funding by 13 percent. Though enrollment is expected to increase by about 160,000 students in the 2012 and 2013 fiscal years, the Texas budget proposes a combined \$7 billion less on public schools during that time period. Other states are also making deep cuts in order to lower budget deficits. US public school funding totaled \$337 billion in FY 2010. One of every three dollars spent by state governments goes to education. (Bloomberg)

### MINNESOTA:

#### RTTT For Districts?

Another round of Race to the Top funds could be slated for school districts, rather than states, according to US Education Secretary Arne Duncan. Mr. Duncan said future monies may be more modest and, therefore, would have more impact at the district level. Minnesota did not win in the first round of RTTT and did not reapply for the second. Gov. Mark Dayton anticipates applying if there is a third round. Last year's proposed budget included a third round but it was not funded. (Minnesota Public Radio)

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:

#### For-Profit Case

The Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU), representing over 1,500 for-profit schools, filed a lawsuit in US District Court asking for rules to be thrown out which are to go into effect on July 1. One rule that is being challenged would put a stop to deceptive advertising; another would prevent recruiters from being paid based on how many students they enroll; and another requires states to authorize post-secondary schools for students to be eligible for federal loans. (Reuters)

— COMPILED BY  
CHRISTINE ALTMAN

## QANDA

# 'The System Wasn't Working'

## A New Effort To Mainstream Special Education Students

In July 2009, Chancellor Joel Klein appointed Laura Rodriguez to the first cabinet-level special education position. Deputy Chancellor Rodriguez came up through the ranks in NYC's public schools, beginning as a high school teacher, and has worked for four chancellors at DOE headquarters. Today, Ms. Rodriguez leads the campaign to build system-wide capacity to accelerate the achievement of all students with disabilities, a plan she and then-Chancellor Joel Klein announced a year ago. The mission: to ensure that all children with disabilities attend their community schools alongside their peers without disabilities when possible. Ten networks – 265 schools – were selected to participate in the reform's Phase One. To give you an idea of Phase One progress and challenges, CSA Communications Director Chiara Coletti met with Ms. Rodriguez at Tweed Courthouse.

### How did this special education initiative begin?

We saw that many students with disabilities were not benefitting from their education. The school system was graduating only 24 percent of students with disabilities in four years. We were out of compliance in several ways. We could see there were so many challenges in this situation that we could do nothing short of mounting a system-wide campaign.

Based on 39 recommendations in a July 2009 report by Garth Harries, a senior member of Chancellor Klein's team, we developed five guiding principles (see box below) as the framework for system-wide reform, starting with the principle that the vast majority of children with disabilities should attend the schools they would attend if they did not have a disability.

### Don't many zoned schools serve children with disabilities?

Yes, but many families were turned away because the school didn't have the specific program or class for their child. Families wanted to access their local schools and we, in our admissions and placement practices, weren't allowing that to happen very often. Children



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ Ms. Rodriguez explains the initiative.

## We visit with Laura Rodriguez

### Deputy Chancellor for Special Education and English Language Learners

with a change in their IEP found that the change sometimes triggered requiring them to leave their school.

We also examined why so few students were graduating in four years. A lot of these students had too little access to the general education curriculum and to general education peers, and this put them at a disadvantage in terms of outcomes. At the same time, increased interaction with disabled peers helps non-disabled students in all the social and emotional contexts that are important to their development.

### Why Phase One?

Our approach was to start working with networks on a small scale and we identified networks with interest in doing this kind of work. We weren't going to prescribe a particular approach, but we were going to strengthen and uphold the IEP and use it as an instructional tool.

### Does your work on the IEP relate to the new state IEP mandate?

In July 2011, the state will require all schools to implement a new IEP. This new IEP supports our reform initiative because it places greater emphasis on instruction. We are already pretty much in step.

What the state said to Principals and to us is that the only way you can be out of compliance is by not doing what's on the IEP or doing something in special education that is not recommended. It's also important to involve parents and include them in the IEP process. We've learned that the more schools personalize instruction and include parents in decisions, the more parents are flexible with innovative approaches.

### What is SESIS and is it working?

We've introduced SESIS, Special Education Student Information System, a web-based case management system for services and processes around students with disabilities. Its purposes are to support the development of sound IEPs; to provide a vehicle for the new NYS IEP; to enable schools to track the progress of individual cases; to centrally manage individual student files so that important paperwork can be retrieved and referred to whenever educators need it; and to replace the old CAP system.

### We hear SESIS has some glitches.

Well, technology is usually complicated. Remember, in the beginning, Phase Two was supposed to start in the school year beginning September 2011. One of the reasons we changed that to September 2012 was because of SESIS. Anything that is technology-based has challenges and we wanted to be sure that we had time to work out the kinks and provide further training.

Our Principals see the value of SESIS, but they rightly believe it requires technical integrity and substantial training. Many Phase One Principals have chosen to send someone, or a whole team, to the training so they will be able to communicate back to the rest of the school. And SESIS requires a better understanding of the IEP process than in former days. You can't just go through the motions. SESIS stops you and asks you to answer questions related to the child and the IEP.

### What are some other Phase One challenges?

We met with all the Principals from all the networks and we're aware of their concerns about funding the initiative. These are tough financial times, and they're going to get tougher. Principals are looking at all their resources so children with disabilities will benefit from the reform initiative.

Principals in Phase One have indicated that keeping all of their students with disabilities is a good thing. They

Continued on Page 8

## SPECIAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE PRINCIPLES

1. Every school should educate and embrace the overwhelming majority of students with disabilities. A cohort of students with low-incidence disabilities or highly specialized needs will continue to be clustered in specialized instructional programs in community and/or specialized schools.
2. Hold all schools and students with disabilities accountable for goals that are standards-based. IEPs should reflect New York State learning standards and emphasize long-term educational outcomes.
3. All schools should have the curricular, instructional, and scheduling flexibility needed to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities with accountability outcomes.
4. Schools must be active partners with parents of students with disabilities.
5. School accountability measures, funding formulas, and enrollment policies and practices will be aligned with the foregoing principles.

# Where Special Education's 'Phase One' is Off and Running

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

**P**hase One of the special education initiative is now well underway at 265 schools – 10 networks – this year. CSA has been monitoring Principal feedback on the pilot program; what the union has found is that Principals support the philosophy of the initiative but many feel the rollout has been uneven.

CSA, in cooperation with the Department of Education, visited PS 304, Bronx, to learn about how one school fared in the rollout. Later this spring, CSA will also report on the initiative at a middle school and a high school.

Principal Joseph Nobile was not enthusiastic when he first heard about the special education initiative.

True, he was already working with Principal Barbara Hanson, the head of P 10, a special education school, who shares a building with him. For seven years now, they have selected a few students from her school to attend some general education classes in his school when appropriate. The school leaders carefully worked with teachers to modify and adapt curriculum when necessary, and the staffs at both schools were encouraged by the results.

Students at the two schools benefited from the flexibility. "Staff too," said Mr. Nobile.

His earlier fears about the initiative, however, were quickly assuaged. "Support has been coming from the top," he told a visitor to his school on a rare sunny day in February, giving a nod to the DOE officials sitting at his conference table: Deputy Chancellor Laura Rodriguez, Lauren Katzman, Executive Director of Special Education, Deputy 6 Cluster Leader Irene Rogan, Network 607 Leader Elmer Myers, and Lisa Scheib, an Associate Director for the DOE. Also at the meeting were PS 304 Assistant Principal Bonnie Boltax and Ms. Hanson.

"Irene rolled it out," he said, with a clear explanation of what the DOE wanted and what the hurdles and benefits would be. In addition, the staff was involved in a lot of professional development in big and small groups. "We always turn-key things to our staff," he said. Teachers and other staff were enthusiastic once it was clearly explained. In addition, through workshops, parents learned about the initiative and were brought on board.

"This whole thing doesn't work unless you give a whole lot of support. Laura's office committed to us and held to those commitments," said Ms. Rogan.

Mainstreaming special education children is not a

new idea, of course. What is new, said Ms. Rodriguez and the others, is that the city is making a systemic effort to reach every child with an IEP and re-evaluate his or her needs. If placement in one or more general education classes a week is appropriate, then so be it. "You'll see different configurations in schools," she said; flexibility is the key to making the implementation work.

A Phase One specialist was assigned to every net-

## Allowing Children to Benefit From Each Other

work, said Ms. Rodriguez. In addition, a new IEP has been introduced and a new data system – SESIS, and the DOE has provided some training on that as well. (The system-wide implementation of the initiative was originally slated for next fall, but because of glitches with SESIS as well as in other areas, the DOE has pushed back the implementation until 2012.)

"We're looking at everything that the state is requiring in either 2011 [or] 2012 for all kids," said Ms. Rodriguez, including how the initiative meshes with the new Common Core State Standards.

At Mr. Nobile's school, 42 students were in self-contained classes; 11 of them have moved into general education classes for part of the day. "We looked at every child in a 12-1-1 class [and asked] 'Why is this kid still in a restrictive environment?'"

"The research says that kids do better no matter what the disability," when they attend school with general education students, said Ms. Katzman, and the general ed children thrive as well. In addition, this initiative emphasizes keeping children in their community schools and providing the services they need in those schools rather than sending them to other neighborhoods, said Mr. Myers.

"You start taking a look at every single child," he said, and then answer the following question: Can you do better for that child?

Said Ms. Boltax, "Scheduling is difficult," of course, but the benefits for most of the children are so dramatic that the school staff is completely supportive of these efforts. Mr. Nobile smiled at that. "It does require some work," he admitted, but they all concurred: "Difficult ain't bad!"

"If we continue to do this work, we will graduate more students who are ready for careers and college," said Ms. Rogan. And that's really the whole point.



■ General and special education students work together.

PHOTOS BY YURIDIA PEÑA



■ From left, Bonnie Boltax, Assistant Principal; MS 101 Principal Kim Hampton Hewitt; Principal Joseph Nobile; and P10 Principal Barbara Hanson.



■ Teachers at PS 304 are enthusiastic and supportive of the initiative.

## New Effort in Special Education

*Continued from Page 1*

understand that making a change on an IEP will not trigger removal of the child from the school; at the same time, the goal is that students with disabilities from other communities will not be placed in Phase One schools. Generally, Principals are saying this is good.

### **How will you prepare teachers?**

The Principals' biggest responsibility, in addition to improving student outcomes, is investing in teachers. Investment in teacher capacity-building is so important. Not just in building capacity among general education teachers who may not have worked much with students with disabilities, but with special education teachers.

### **Tell us more about plans for professional development.**

In addition to ongoing school- and network-based professional development, Phase One schools can send teams to the Teachers College Inclusive Classrooms Project (TCICP) for help in a specific instructional area. TCICP will continue to be our partner next school year when we implement a three-year state-funded institute. This June, TCICP will hold a conference for teachers by teachers where best practices will be shared. We need to continue partnering with organizations like CSA's Educational Leadership Institute with the kind of sessions we did last summer.

As we learn from Phase One schools and the research, we understand the importance of co-planning between general and special education teachers. This needs to be reinforced.

### **How about capacity building for Principals and APs?**

Phase One clusters and networks have created forums for Principals and APs to come together. Their enthusiasm is helping to sustain the momentum.

We have a Principals Advisory Group, which is very powerful, that tells us the good, bad and ugly about what we're doing and they tell us how to shape things. There have been bumps in Phase One. It hasn't been perfect. But there's momentum.

### **If you could say just one thing to Principals and APs, what would it be?**

Let everybody in your school community know what this reform is about. When parents don't know and teachers don't know, when they aren't engaged in the conversation, they think it's something other than what it is. It really is preparing all students, including students with disabilities, for success in high school and beyond. I'd say remember that schools that do well by children with disabilities do well by all children.

# Cutting Edge: Where Techn

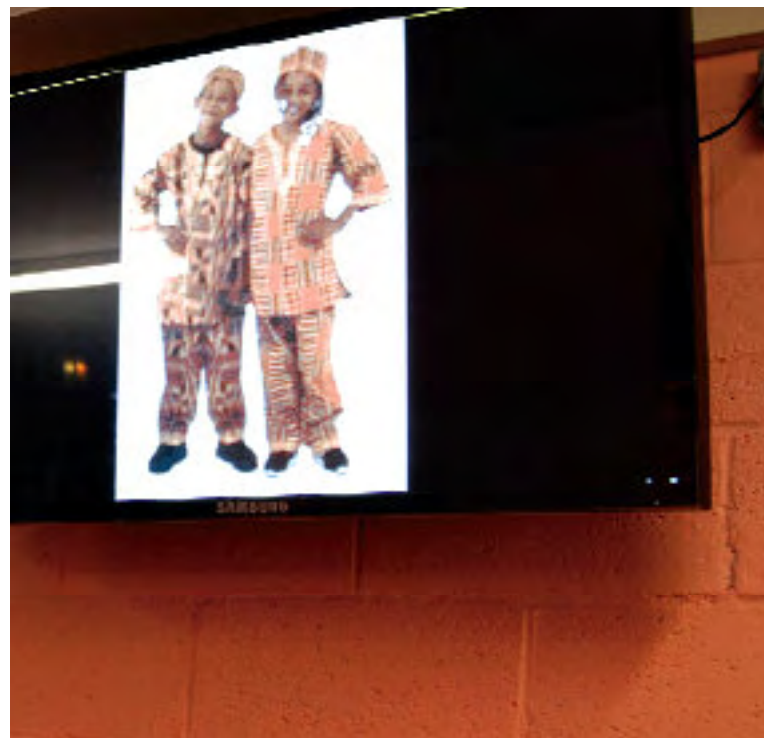


**Clicker** A student shows his remote control that allows everyone in a class to answer the same question simultaneously; the teacher can see all the answers.

YURIDIA PEÑA



**Bonjour!** Students can study different languages side-by-side.



**High Tech** Flat-panel screens are 21st century bulletin boards.

## Global Tech Provides Tools to Compete in Borderless World

BY YURIDIA PEÑA

Michigan native Chrystina Russell is the founding Principal of one of Harlem's latest evolving gems - Global Technology Preparatory- a middle school where each student gets a desktop computer to take home and a laptop at school, bulletin boards are replaced by flat screen televisions and extended-day classes are taught by executives from Google and social media start-up companies.

In 2009, Global Technology Preparatory opened with a sixth grade and added a seventh grade last fall. "The vision of the school is to prepare kids for the 21st century," said Ms. Russell. Her staff is committed to helping students become technologically savvy. Students create videos, web pages, blogs and PowerPoint presentations during their regular classes, activities that add innovation and fun to the classroom.

"We teach content through technology," said Ms. Russell. For example, in one math class, old techniques mix with the new technology to round out the lesson. Each student uses a device called a "clicker", a remote control used to answer questions from the SMARTboard. The teacher can quickly see how students answer: right, wrong or incomplete. But in another portion of the class, students resort to the "old-fashioned" method of solving algebra problems on the white board and explaining their solutions.

### **Online Lessons**

Live online lessons include a software program called Powerspeak12 for foreign language instruction. "We wanted to offer a lot of different languages. It made sense to really harness the fact that every kid has a computer," said Ms. Russell. The result: Different languages could be taught simultaneously in one class. So, one student can review a lesson in Mandarin Chinese while another is tested on Spanish pronouns. Distance teachers (some are from Utah!) teach live and pre-recorded classes online. Ms. Russell strongly believes in training students to think globally and understand how the Internet has dissolved traditional borders.

Ms. Russell knows about upending traditions to some degree. She studied Spanish abroad at the Universidad de Salamanca in Spain. Upon graduating from Michigan State University's Honors College, she became a NYC teaching fellow, which led to a special education and bilingual position at PS/MS 20 in the Bronx. Shortly after, she entered the NYC Leadership Academy program. "It's not as scary to just not be an AP and go straight to Principal if you have an awesome team behind you," she said. Ms. Russell

# Technology Meets Globalization



**Plugged In** Internet access allows students to take classes online that are live or pre-taped creating a borderless classroom.

wanted to make an impact on instruction and open a school that integrated globalization and technology, which she believes are ingredients to success.

**Team Building**

While the NYC DOE evaluated her new school proposal, she worked for the then-nascent Children's First Network (CFN) as a Special Education Administrator. During her time at CFN she learned valuable managerial strategies, she said. The CFN was run as a flat organizational structure

where a minimal amount of bureaucracy existed, Ms. Russell explained, a structure she has adhered to in running a school.

"If you can build a strong team, then it's just not you,"

she said. Her teachers maintain digital portfolios on student and teacher performance. Teachers can access portfolios to track progress.

"The sustainability issue doesn't concern me as much because our teachers are so opinionated and creative and know how to use technology that we're going to be okay, regardless of what happens, regardless of what grants we do and don't get. They'll enhance what we're doing, but the core of what we're doing really lies within the teachers" said Ms. Russell.

During its first year, Global Tech received funding from several private sector organizations and participated in the DOE's Innovation Zone pilot program, which provided support as well as funding. The school continues to be part of the iZone initiative, which currently supports 400 NYC public schools.



## One of the first schools in the DOE's 'Innovation Zone' Program



Ms. Russell takes a minute to watch a student puzzle through a problem.

### NATION *Labor*

**MARYLAND:**

**Pension Reform**

Maryland state employees are upset by the Governor's proposal to implement pension reform after years of furloughs and frozen wages. Employees would have the option to raise their contributions by 25 percent (to 7 percent of their pay) to keep the retirement they had anticipated. They could contribute 5.6 percent but benefits could be decreased. New employees would have no option and their early retirement age would be 60, rather than 55. (Washington Post)

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA:**

**Membership Down**

Union membership was down sharply last year, partially from the number of layoffs in areas such as construction, manufacturing, teaching and local government. The number of unionized employees was lower than it's been in over 70 years, with declines in both the private and public sectors. At 24.2 percent, New York reportedly has the highest rate of unionization, followed by Alaska and Hawaii. North Carolina has the lowest rate, followed by Arkansas and Georgia. (New York Times)

**WISCONSIN:**

**Trade Policies**

Sixty-nine percent of Americans say NAFTA-type free trade agreements are costing U.S. jobs, according to a NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll. Todd Tucker, Research Director at the Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, said US trade policy needs to allow workers to collectively bargain without fear that their jobs will go overseas. He added that we need agreements that will raise incomes on both sides, allowing for other countries to buy our products. (Workers Independent News)

**NEW YORK:**

**Bonuses Suspended**

A pilot program that provided annual bonuses to teachers based on performance has been suspended by the NYC DOE. The suspension was to take effect following this year's bonuses which went to 26 schools, down from 160 schools last year. The door was left open to re-start the program if studies show it had a positive impact. The budget crisis was one of many factors that contributed to the decision to put the program on hold. (New York Times)

**OHIO:**

**Misconduct Plan**

Kenneth Feinberg, an arbitration expert who studied teacher discipline at the behest of the AFT, devised a plan to deal with teacher misconduct within 100 days. Current systems often have delays that can result in high costs to districts. Feinberg's plan was limited to teacher misconduct and did not address the issue of ineffective teachers, something that is also being studied by the AFT. (The New York Times)

— COMPILED BY  
CHRISTINE ALTMAN

## City to Cut 16,624 Day Care Seats

*Continued from Page 1*

proposed cuts to will reduce the capacity of the entire system by almost one third. The Mayor says that cuts in public services are necessary across the board; with child care in particular, costs, per child,

*'I never want to work for ACS again.'*

— ELEANOR CRAWFORD

have increased, but the city will receive fewer federal dollars.

Last year's budget cuts continue to burden families today and the pain will continue; about half-dozen centers will close by the end of this month and by July 1, 15 will have closed in the past year.

The Bedford Avenue DCC closed on March 1. The Center has provided a safe haven for thousands of children from low-income households since 1971. Its former Director, Eleanor Crawford, says ACS targeted the center unfairly because the center was never under-enrolled; on the contrary, the center had a waiting list. How ACS handled the center's closing upset many community members, she added.

For example, ACS ignored the landlord's willingness to negotiate rent. ACS also froze funding, and fired teachers as well as the center's full-time janitor. "I never want to work for ACS again," said Ms. Crawford. The administrative staff was forced to clean and perform other custodial duties. "We've become janitors," said Family Director Marie Soutar.

Ms. Crawford and Ms. Soutar worked at the Center for more than 30 years. Ms. Soutar will continue as an administrator for family day care at another center; Ms. Crawford plans to do consulting work for private centers.

## CSA Cries Foul on City's Tactics

*Continued from Page 1*

more than 4 1/2 years ago. Negotiations have been sporadic over that time period, and the city's focus at one time appeared to be on renegotiating health benefits. However, that series of discussions led nowhere primarily because the city's proposal turned out to be unworkable. Meanwhile, the city has not responded to CSA's proposal to handle the administration of Day Care Directors health benefits – through the Welfare Fund – to save money.

In other Day Care news, about 120 Day Care Directors and Assistant Directors packed the 4th floor conference room at CSA's 16 Court Street headquarters on Feb. 11. CSA officers and staff primarily focused on political action – what individuals can do – to fight the closing of Day Care centers (see related article, Page 1). CSA Executive Vice President Peter McNally and First Vice President Randi Herman addressed the members as did government relations department staff.



ANNE SILVERSTEIN

■ Day Care members listen to CSA officers and staff for an update on budget cuts and closures.

## Ruling Confirms Right to Organize

*Continued from Page 1*

The NYS PERB, in making its decision, consolidated two cases on appeal before it.

The first was filed by CSA against the Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School in Bushwick and the organization that runs it, the National Heritage Academies (NHA). NHA is a for-profit Michigan-based company that runs 60 charter schools in eight states, including four in Brooklyn and Queens, and provides management services for Excelsior's Board of Trustees.

The supervisors at Excelsior had been trying to organize; NHA complained to the Brooklyn PERB office, arguing that CSA could not represent the school's supervisors since NHA, an out-of-state employer, was not subject to the jurisdiction of the Taylor Law. The local administrative law judge (ALJ) ruled in

CSA's favor and NHA appealed to the full PERB

The second case was filed by NYSUT against the Buffalo United Charter School, which is also run by NHA. The employees of that school had been fighting for the right to organize. A local PERB ruling in the case had gone against NYSUT; in that case, the ALJ ruled that PERB had no jurisdiction over the situation, therefore school employees were not covered by the Taylor Law.

NYSUT appealed this case to the full PERB, which then consolidated the two cases before it.

Several organizations filed amicus briefs with PERB: the Atlantic Legal Foundation and the NYC Department of Education on NHA's side; the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association.

After extensive deliberations and

hearings last summer, PERB, in a 45-page decision, held that PERB did, indeed have jurisdiction over these schools based on the NYS charter school law which says that school employees are public employees and therefore subject to the Taylor Law. PERB also rejected the NHA's contention that because NHA is a private company, its employees are private employees. Last, PERB ruled that these employees are eligible for collective bargaining and ordered the certification process to go forward.

In related news, Mr. Bryant said, one of the Assistant Principals at Excelsior, who was instrumental in the original litigation, had been fired by NHA; she received a substantial cash settlement based on the finding that NHA had retaliated against her for demanding union representation.

## The Welfare Fund | Douglas V. Hathaway, Ph.D.

### Shingles Vaccine: Expensive and Complicated



**In specific cases, the Welfare Fund can help with some costs.**

When first approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the public showed great interest and demand for the shingles shot, brand-name Zostavax. Shingles is caused by the virus that also causes chickenpox. Those who had chickenpox as a child are more susceptible, and more likely, to develop shingles. Shingles can develop anywhere on the body and can last for several months, cause great pain and discomfort, and result in periods of confinement to bed or even hospitalization. Even after the initial rash disappears, victims often experience many months of intense pain.

As with any medical procedure, of course, there is a cost associated with the shingles shot; not all insurance plans cover it. The vaccine alone costs about \$200 per dose. Generally, the vaccine is sold in batches of 10 doses, meaning that as interest in the vaccine has waned, providers end up paying for and storing doses. Complicating matters further is the fact that the vaccine must be kept frozen until it is administered. Not all providers (or

pharmacies) have adequate refrigeration facilities to store excess doses until needed. This all contributes to greater difficulty in obtaining the vaccine now than when it first was on the market.

If you wish to obtain the shingles shot, please follow these guidelines:

- You must be 60 years of age or older.
- If you have GHI coverage, GHI will pay for the shingles shot if you are at least 60 and not yet 65, as long as you use a GHI participating provider. Using a non-participating provider will likely result in the bulk of the cost being allocated to your annual out-of-network deductible.

The GHI prescription drug benefit for those not covered by Medicare does not cover the cost of the vaccine, so the vaccine must be obtained through the doctor. The doctor must bill the procedure using CPT Code 90736.

- If you are 65 or over and in the GHI health plan, you must obtain the vaccine through your drug plan and take it to your

doctor for administration. Since you will be paying a percentage of the drug cost as your co-payment, it is to your advantage to do this at the beginning of the year when your co-payment is only 25 percent of the cost of the drug.

- If you are in any other health plan, contact the plan to find out if they will pay for the vaccine. In very specific cases the welfare fund can help with some of the costs.

The New York Times recently ran an article about shingles that may answer some of your questions about the disease. It is available at [www.newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/31/readers-questions-the-shingles-vaccine](http://www.newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/31/readers-questions-the-shingles-vaccine).

#### GHI Rider Reimbursement

The reimbursement checks for those participating in the GHI Enhanced Medicare D drug plan were mailed in mid-February.

If you have not received a check and think you should have, or have any other questions concerning the reimbursement, please contact the Welfare Fund at (718) 624-2600.

16 COURT STREET

# Retirement for a CSA Legend

BY ANNE SILVERSTEIN

Assistant Welfare Fund Administrator Sherri Tabachnick, who has helped thousands of CSA members navigate the complex world of health benefits, will retire at the end of this month.

The news was greeted with sadness in the CSA office, although it was not completely unexpected; Ms. Tabachnick has been with the union since January 1983 when Ted Elsberg was President and Irwin Shanes was the Welfare Fund Administrator. She has been the go-to woman for the CSA staff as well as the membership of the union, both in-service and retirees.

Ms. Tabachnick is moving to Jackson, NJ, to be close to one of her daughters and grandchildren. She will become a member of the Retiree Chapter and looks forward to the Regional Unit's activities, she said from her aerie on the 34th floor of 16 Court Street. Assistant Finance Director Glenda Harry, who has been with the Welfare Fund for 28 years, will take over Ms. Tabachnick's duties as the Assistant Administrator for Finance and Operations.

"Our members will miss her – so many depend upon her to help them through tough times. Her depth of knowledge will be hard to replace, which is why Glenda has been working with Sherri so closely the past few years in preparation for this time," said Dr. Hathaway.

"We'll miss her too. It's hard to imagine



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ Glenda Harry, left, has been working with Ms. Tabachnick, right, for years and will step into her shoes.

the Welfare Fund without her. She's part of the Fund's history."

Mr. Shanes hired Ms. Tabachnick as a bookkeeper "when we did it by hand in books," Ms. Tabachnick laughed. Three promotions later, she became the Assistant Administrator after Donald Singer became President in 1989.

"I got married to my second husband, Lenny, here. I went back to college here. It was a pain in the [neck] but Irwin bought me a pencil case so I had to go. He encour-

aged me to go back to school. My grandchildren were born."

Ms. Tabachnick has enjoyed her work although helping people with sick children or spouses is difficult, she said, because people are suffering so. But making their lives a little easier is rewarding. "It's a people job. No degree in college prepares you for that. What does prepare you is working with a person like Irwin Shanes," she said, speaking about her mentor.

We'll miss you Sherri. Enjoy your life!

## In Memoriam

■ **HAROLD BARON**, 96, of West Palm Beach, a former JHS Principal in District 25, Queens, died Oct. 31, 2010. He retired in 1976. His wife, Anne, died in 2007. He is survived by two children, Judy and Steven. Condolences may sent to Steven Baron, 1 Toms Point Lane, Port Washington, NY, 11050.

■ **MITCHELL CHECRALLAH**, 86, of Baldwinsville, NY, died on Dec. 9, 2010. The former Principal of PS 26, Staten Island, retired in 1988, after serving 37 years in all five boroughs of NYC as a teacher, Assistant Principal and Principal. Born in Providence, RI, he served in the Army Air Corps during WWII. He earned a BA from Brown University and an MA from New York University. Postgraduate work was done at Columbia University and Hunter College. Condolences may be sent to his wife, Estelle, at 2457 Betsy Dr., Baldwinsville, NY 13027. Contributions may be made to Syracuse Home Association, 7740 Meigs Rd., Baldwinsville, NY 13027 or Canton Woods Senior Center, 76 Canton St., Baldwinsville, NY 13027.

■ **DR. HARVEY GARNER**, 84, who served as the interim acting Schools Chancellor during the summer of 1993, died Jan. 22. A Brooklyn native, he graduated from Lincoln High School and attended a number of NYC universities, including CCNY and Brooklyn College, eventually receiving his PhD. He began his education career as a science teacher at PS 209, Brooklyn, and quickly rose through the ranks serving as an Assistant Principal at PS 58, also in Brooklyn, and as a Principal in a Brownsville school. He served the vast majority of his career as the Superintendent of District 18 for 25 years. Dr. Garner also championed the Astor Program for Gifted Students, the first of its kind in the New York school system and a model for future gifted programs. In addition, he was instrumental in resolving the asbestos crisis of 1994. He retired in 1995. Dr. Garner was a veteran of WWII. His wife, Sybil, died in 2002. Condolences may be sent to his sons, Bruce and Steven, at asgarner@optonline.net.

## CSA Leadership Scholarship for 'Academic Promise'

CSA has established a \$1,500 scholarship for college-bound students. This scholarship is open to all students graduating from a NYC public school who will be attending any college, including community college, in the fall 2011. Five scholarships will be awarded later this spring.

The scholarship is intended for a student who shows leadership in school or outside school, and who might have overcome hardships to reach graduation. The award is not based on a student's GPA or SAT scores; CSA would like to choose a student who shows

academic promise.

Each school may submit up to three applications. One scholarship per borough will be awarded; the formal presentation will be at a dinner at Russo's On the Bay on June 15.

Applications are due at CSA by May 6. You may download an application form and instructions from the CSA website, [www.csa-nyc.org/press/member-headlines](http://www.csa-nyc.org/press/member-headlines).

If you have any questions about this scholarship, contact Executive Director Operations Anita Gomez-Palacio at [anita@csa-nyc.org](mailto:anita@csa-nyc.org).

## IBM School Selects Leader



ANTOINETTE ISABLE

■ Rashid Davis at a reception hosted by CSA and IBM last December.

The Department of Education has selected Rashid Davis as the Principal of Pathways in Technology Early College High School or P-TECH, which will open in the fall in the Paul Robeson High School building. (Paul Robeson is slated to close.)

The school was developed in conjunction with IBM, NYC College of Technology, and the City University of New York. CSA, although not a formal partner, facilitated relationships between educators and IBM.

Mr. Davis has been the Principal of the Bronx Engineering and Technology Academy since 2006. The school is considered one of the best in the Bronx.

## Spring Defensive Driving Class

CSA is offering its popular and accredited Defensive Driving Course this spring. This class may help you save up to 10 percent on your car insurance or remove up to four points from a driver's record. (The discount does not apply to fire or theft.)

The course will be offered at 4 p.m. on April 12 at CSA's Brooklyn headquarters: 16 Court St. The class is approved by the National Safety Council.

To register, send a \$40 check, made payable to *Image Driving School* to CSA, 16 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11241, Attn: Driving School. With your payment include your name, title, school, address, the date of the class and a home telephone number.

For more information, call Image Driving School at (718) 922-2600.

CSA is easily reached by public transportation. Take the 2, 3, 4, 5, or R to Court Street / Borough Hall, or the A, C, F to Jay Street / Metrotech. Although on-street parking is difficult in downtown Brooklyn, several parking lots are conveniently located nearby.

## 25 Years Ago

(1986)

CSA urged its members to write to their federal legislators asking them to fight President Reagan's proposed budget cuts to education.

The letter-writing campaign was launched in response to Mr. Reagan's proposed cuts of \$400 million from vocational education, \$50 million in special education and \$750 million in child nutrition programs. The President's budget also sought to freeze spending levels on bilingual education, Chapter I, block grants and Head Start.

CSA President Ted Elsberg contacted CSA's District Chairs and Executive Board members as well as the heads of associations and the United Parents Association to enlist participation in the campaign.

Hundreds of letters were collected by CSA for delivery to Washington DC.



# Notebook

## Orthodox Jewish Teachers Honor Two Principals

The Association of Orthodox Jewish Teachers will hold its 41st Annual Luncheon on March 27 and among its six award recipients are two NYC public school Principals.

Janine Keiran, the Principal of George Westinghouse High School, has been named the AOJT's High School Principal of the Year. Shimon Waronker, Principal of PS 770, Brooklyn, was named Elementary School Principal of the Year.

The other recipients are former Deputy Chancellor Eric Nadelstern, Network Leader Wendy Karp, UFT Assistant Secretary Robert Astrowsky and Stuyvesant High School teacher Warren Donin.

The lunch is at the Renaissance, 5902 14th Ave., Brooklyn. The cost is \$70 for AOJT members, \$75 for nonmembers. For more information, contact AOJT at (718) 258-3585.

## Language Teachers Host March 19 Gala

The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese will hold its 39th Annual Gala on March 19 at John

Jay College for Criminal Justice.

This year's theme is *Cuba: Paraíso Prohibido*. The keynote speaker will be Josefina Leyva, a well-known novelist and poet. For information, contact Bernard Lopez at Blopez@aatspmetny.org.

## 50th Class Reunion for Grads of James Monroe High School

The James Monroe High School class of 1961 will celebrate its 50th reunion the weekend of Sept. 16-18 at the Doral Arrowwood in Rye Brook, New York. For more information about this event, contact Toby Kaye at IM2BK@aol.com or Joyce Lohn at JUSTAJLOY68@aol.com.

## Conference Seeks Workshop Proposals

The New York City Art Teachers Association/UFT announces the 31st Annual City-Wide All-Day Art Education Conference on Oct. 22, at Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School, Astoria, Queens. The Association is seeking to offer workshops that focus on one, or more, of

the seven Common Core capacities. Proposals are due April 7.

Download a workshop proposal form from the NYCATA/UFT website at [www.uft.org/committees/new-york-city-art-teachers-associationuft/services/events](http://www.uft.org/committees/new-york-city-art-teachers-associationuft/services/events).

## FIAME Honors Two Principals at Dinner

The Forum of Italian American Educators will honor a group of community heroes including two Principals at its 27th Awards Dinner Dance on April 8.

FIAME has selected Rosa Casiello-O'Day, the Principal of PS 42, D-2, Manhattan as one of its recipients of its Thomas Giordano Leadership in Education Award. Jeremy Kabinoff, the Assistant Principal of MS 181, D-11, Bronx, and a CSA District Chair, is one of the recipients of the Michael Tomasetti Principal's Award.

FIAME promotes and preserves the Italian culture for a new generation of Italian-American. It is comprised of educators, and their families and friends, from public and parochial schools. Each year, FIAME honors the achievements of community leaders. FIAME also provides modest scholarship to exemplary Italian-American high school students who are entering college.

The other honorees at the April 8 dinner are: Joanne DeMizio, Associate

Superintendent, NY Archdiocese; Sister Patricia Brito, RJM, Principal, St. Raymond's Elementary School; teacher Joanne Cioffi, P.S. 83, Bronx; teacher Christopher Sarcone-Relano, Cardinal Hayes High School; teacher Joan Gianico, P.S. 76, Bronx; teacher Roseann Manna, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Bronx; Anna Blasucci, secretary, P.S. 105, Bronx; Lt. Frank Vignali, NYC Fire Department; and Father Grippo and Ben Alfano, St. Theresa's Church, Bronx, N.Y.

The event is at 6 p.m. at the Villa Barone Manor, 737 Throggs Neck Expressway, Bronx. Tickets are \$85. To reserve your ticket by March 25, mail your check to: FIAME Dinner Dance, c/o Josephine De Pace, 2531 Westervelt Ave., Bronx, NY 1046.

## ABENY Honors Students

The Association of Black Educators of New York is seeking applicants for its college scholarship program. The deadline is April 30. ABENY also will honor students from all grades who have performed noteworthy community service. That deadline is March 31. For information, contact Dr. Sheila Bobo at (917) 412-9099.

Students will be honored at ABENY's Scholarship and Awards Luncheon on June 18 at Antun's in Queens Village. For more information, contact Nora Barnes, Luncheon Chair, at noarbarnes1@aol.com.

## Travel Desk

GARY GOLDSTEIN

# New! The Islands of Spain and Portugal

### Bayonne to Bermuda!

June 26-July 3

No flight required for this cruise which departs from Bayonne, NJ, on June 26. We have a small number of staterooms at a great price. These rates will not last so call soon!

**RATES:** Inside, \$1,134.25 per person per double with a \$50-per-cabin shipboard credit; window, \$1,284.25 with a \$50-per-cabin shipboard credit; verandah, \$1,634.25 per person with a \$75-per-cabin shipboard credit.

### British Isles / Normandy

July 16-28, 2011

Sail on the *Crown Princess* from Southampton, England, and sail to Normandy (with access to Paris), Edinburgh, Inverness/Loch Ness, Belfast, Glasgow, Liverpool, Dublin, Cobh, and Guernsey. Return to London on July 28.

**RATES** per person: Inside, \$2,072.19; window, \$2,672.19; balcony, \$3,172.19; mini-suite, \$3,822.19. Rates include all taxes but do not include air fare. Suites, singles, triples, and quads are available on request. Optional insurance is additional.

### Aloha CSA!

Aug. 20-27, 2011

We 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.

### Crossroads of Sicily

Sept. 16-26, 2011

Featuring Palermo, Siracusa, and Taormina. Tour includes roundtrip airfare from NY, hotels, sightseeing, 15 meals (nine breakfasts, one lunch, and five dinners), portage and transfers.

**RATES:** \$3,365 per person double; single, \$3,845 and triple, \$3,336.

### Easy Cruising to San Juan

Oct. 23-29 or 31, 2011

We depart on the *Summit* from Cape Liberty, (Bayonne) N.J. on Oct. 23 and sail to Bermuda and Saint Thomas and arrive in San Juan on Oct. 29. You can fly home or spend two additional nights in vibrant Puerto Rico (\$279 per person for a double including hotel, transfers, taxes and resort fees). These all-inclusive cruise rates have never been more competitive!

**RATES** per person: Inside, \$591.50 (double); window, \$701.51; balcony, \$811.51; sky suite, \$1291.51. Air fare one way from San Juan to NYC, is additional. (Call Gary.)

### Australia/New Zealand

Nov. 30-Dec. 12, 2011

Celebrity's *Century* will leave Sydney on Nov. 30 and sail to Tasmania, Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound, Dusky Sound, Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington, Napier, Tauranga, Bay of Islands and Auckland. (We return from Auckland but voyagers may book a pre-trip package in Sydney or stay longer in Auckland!) Visit [www.celebritycruises.com](http://www.celebritycruises.com) for more information.

**RATES:** Inside, \$1,769.77 per person; window \$2,069.77; verandah, \$2,609.77; sky suite \$4,039.77. Add tax of \$140.77 per person. Rates do not include airfare. Luxury suites, triples, quads and singles available.

### Spain and Portugal including Las Palmas and Gran Canaria

Jan. 21-Feb. 2, 2012

Sail on the fabulous *Independence of the Seas* – the Freedom Class from Royal Caribbean. We fly to London on Jan. 21 and sail the next day to Vigo (Spain), Lisbon, Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, Funchal (Madeira) and La Coruna (Spain).

**RATES:** Inside, \$1,106.44 per person per double; window \$1,353.44; verandah, \$1,524.44; junior suite \$2,034.44. Transfers, airfare and insurance are optional. Book now for deep discounts on airfares!

We're also offering a two-night London hotel package from Jan. 20-22 for an additional \$429.51 per person based on double occupancy including transportation from the airport and to the pier.

### 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 by email at [ggoldstein@csa-nyc.org](mailto:ggoldstein@csa-nyc.org) or call (732) 786-0314.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

# AP Association Offers 'Mini' Conference

BY CSA NEWS STAFF

In collaboration with CSA's Executive Leadership Institute, the Association of Assistant Principals will offer a special mini-conference for its members.

The event is at 5 p.m. on April 5 at the LaGuardia Marriott Hotel. Participants may attend one of two 90-minute presentations: "Common Core State Standards" and "New Initiatives in Special Education." Ronni Abelman, an ELI consultant, will present on special education compliance. Carol Wertheimer, ELI consultant, will present on the CCSS. After the PD sessions, a buffet will be served. To register, email Bob Kingsley at aapexedir@earthlink.net.

**Other news:** The AAP will offer:

■ The *Martin Safran Citizenship Award* is presented to 15 NYC public elementary or junior high school students who have demonstrated exemplary service in school or in their communities. Assistant Principals who are members in good standing of the AAP may nominate students. Each winner receives \$100 and a plaque at the annual June awards dinner. Applications must be received by April 1.

■ The *Stewart Weiner Scholarship* provides three scholarships of \$1,000 each to an AAP member's child who is graduating from high school this June. The application deadline is May 1. For more information, visit the AAP website at: www.aapny.org.

## A Call for Grassroots Movement



■ A packed crowd gathered in Scholastic's auditorium on Broadway to hear Dr. Elmore speak. The Executive Leadership Institute and Scholastic sponsored the morning event.

YURIDIA PEÑA

## 'Instructional Rounds' Guru

ostensibly Dr. Richard Elmore of Harvard University, one of the pioneers of instructional rounds in schools, was speaking to the 225 CSA members on Feb. 9 about the topic for which he is known.

But before he gave a detailed overview of what instructional rounds entail, he exhorted educators to "take the crucial step" to discipline themselves around a concrete body of practice in the same way that doctors and other professions do. The fact that educators don't have this body of established practice "distinguishes us from real professions."

By establishing a core body that would be the basis for instruction, the teaching profession would be strengthened, he said, and educators could take control of the profession. "Right now, educators are people to whom things are done," he said.

He expanded by saying that education schools have "largely abrogated their responsibilities by being outposts of liberal arts education" and refused to take command of the profession. Other professions control entry into the profession and educators must follow suit. "This has to be a grassroots movement," Dr. Elmore said.

DAY CARE

# Leadership Workshops

ELI offers Day Care Directors and Assistant Directors a series of workshops each school year. The workshops are designed to sharpen a Day Care Director's skills as well bring them new research on child development and teaching practices. ELI works with consultants at the Center of Worker Education/CCNY as well as the Bank Street College of Education to put together workshops that provide a continuum of programming. For information, contact Dr. Angelettie-Wallace, workshop coordinator, at nwallace@csa-nyc.org.

FRIDAY, MAY 13

**The Role of the Family in Assessing Young English Language Learners** Presenter: Liege Motta

**Building Teacher Capacity to Promote Children's Learning: A Collaborative Approach**

Presenter: Vicki Garavuso, Program Head, Early Childhood Education, CCNY

Location: CSA, 16 Court Street, 4th floor, Brooklyn

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

**1) Differentiated Instruction**

Presenter: Elizabeth Matthews, CWE

**2) Creating a Hands-On Workshop for Staff: Science in Early Childhood Classrooms**

Presenter: Vicki Garavuso, CCNY

Location: Center of Worker Education/CCNY, 25 Broadway, 7th floor, Manhattan.

# ELI Collaborates on Intensive Day of Exciting Workshops

BY CSA NEWS STAFF

About 160 school leaders attended a day of professional development on Feb. 5 courtesy of a collaboration that includes the Executive Leadership Institute, the Department of Education and two colleges.

Participants attended a plenary session on teacher effectiveness and two workshops during the daylong event at Louis D. Brandeis High School in Manhattan. The event was presented by the NYC Department of Education, ELI, Bank Street College and Brooklyn College, the organizations that are partners in the NYC implementation of the Federal Education Leadership Fellows, (US Department of Education).

FELF aims to develop aspiring Assistant Principals for high-needs schools through a tuition-assisted program. In January, 30 aspiring Assistant Principals graduated from Brooklyn College and Bank Street; the colleges provide the graduate courses in school leadership, which are designed to lead to NYS certification as a school building leader. ELI's role is to provide mentors to the FELF graduates as they assume Assistant Principal jobs around the city.

In addition to the 30 FELF graduates, 130 CSA members attended, said ELI Director of Operations Nicholas Apostolo.

The program began with featured speaker Robert Pianta, Dean of the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia, who spoke about teacher effectiveness, followed by breakout sessions to discuss the topic in

depth. Participants also selected two of the following workshops to attend in the afternoon: *Time Management*, *Organizing the Annual School Calendar*; *Instructional Walk-Throughs*; and *Moving Your Agenda with High-Performing Teams*.

In addition, ELI's Executive Director Eloise Messineo was in attendance as were ELI staff members: Noemi Angelettie-Wallace, Maria Ciccone, Sherry Gregory, Tony Iannuzzi, Ann Irrera, Carol Ildebrando, Beth Peller, Director of Curriculum and Programs, Michael Schlar, and Leslie Gurka; and ELI consultants Carol Wertheimer, Joyce Henderson, Ronni Solow, Gayle Lockett, Millie Goodman, Virginia Berrios, Terry Feuer, Stuart Sears and Rose Martin.



PHOTOS BY VIRGINIA BERRIOS

■ Carol Ildebrando, seated, speaks with Nicholas Apostolo as Sherry Gregory, foreground, registers participants.



■ Lunch break gave participants a chance to network and relax.



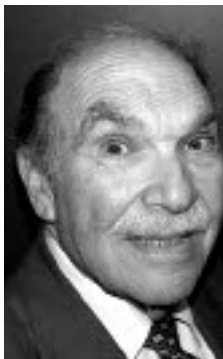
■ Many years of experience standing together! Former school Principals Nicholas Apostolo, Millie Goodman, Tony Iannuzzi and Sherry Gregory pause from their duties for a group picture.

# RETIREE Chapter

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Neil Lefkowitz

## Cynical Manipulation of Economic Woes



**Folks: Fellow middle class workers are not the enemy.**

**F**or the past month, we've been reading about a recent trend: The fiscal crisis in many states has been the impetus for state leaders to demand laws that reduce the bargaining powers of public unions.

The state Capitol in Madison, WI, was under siege as of this writing. Gov. Scott Walker had asked the legislature to limit a public-sector union's right to collectively bargain and the response from labor was unlike anything we've seen in decades. Thousands upon thousands of protestors jammed the hallways and streets, camping out with backpacks and sleeping bags, and, as of this writing, a standoff between Democrats and Republicans continued with Democrats saying that the real agenda behind the calls for fiscal responsibility was to outlaw unions.

Other states followed suit to limit or entirely eliminate bargaining rights. The only good news is that we may finally see the middle class recognize who the enemy is, and it's not a local fireman, policeman or teacher!

What we're seeing is the result of a conscious manipulation of the financial crisis to strip away years of strides

that unions have made in workers' rights and workplace rules. Mayor Bloomberg is just among many others when he blames tenure and Last in/First out for all the ills of society. (I'm only surprised that he didn't blame the snowstorm, as well as the city's abysmal response, on tenured educators.)

Mr. Bloomberg, once again, is threatening massive layoffs unless he gets his way with seniority rules and tenure. If he wins, the city can then fire senior teachers who earn higher salaries and allegedly save money. Children and education are not his real concern because most people would agree that a more experienced teacher is generally a better teacher. Yes, in the current dialogue, we're actually hearing that it is better to be young and enthusiastic rather than to actually have learned a craft. It is completely unimaginable that "experience" has almost become a dirty word! What an upside-down world we live in!

• • •

**C**orporate America, politicians and right-wing activists are blaming education unions for the nation's failure to educate its children. These finger-pointers blame unions for preventing change, thus hampering education reform and ultimately causing our students to fail. What makes them such experts in the field of education, I can't imagine. It's such a cliché but apparently having attended school is enough to understand how to run one. (I've watched thousands of baseball games. Guess that qualifies me to coach by now.)

More than 60 years ago, NYC teachers fought for and gained the right to collectively bargain. Many of us were there for the start of a labor movement that spread throughout the nation, and I remain proud of my role in that activity.

Now we're seeing our foes use the fiscal crisis and the demand for educational reform to destroy what we gained so many years ago. I remain optimistic that the forces of labor, including our collaborative efforts through the Municipal

## Bonding Through the Ages

BY DEE-DEE GOIDEL

**I**t is always wonderful to explore new places. Occasionally, however, a trip becomes a magical voyage, a golden memory from start to finish.

Such was my experience on a recent cruise to the Mediterranean organized by CSA's Gary Goldstein. While the destinations were fabulous, and the ship certainly gracious, something so special happened to those of us who were in Mr. Goldstein's care that other passengers on the ship commented on it.

We were a disparate group when we boarded in Venice. We came from all over the country, and we ranged in age from, say, 50 to 91. Some of us were still in-service, others were retired, and still others were retired from the DOE but working in other jobs.

But, by the time we walked down the same gangplank nearly two weeks later, we had become comrades, a group with common interests who spoke a common language. What made it especially wonderful was that our bonding took place as we explored past civilizations, which created a continuum of time from the 8th century B.C. to the 21st century. We became new friends as we climbed over ancient ruins that played host to so many important events in Western civilization.

In Venice, we, of course, toured the remarkable Piazza San Marco and a number of 15th and 16th century churches and palaces. In Bari, a port in southern Italy, we walked on the walls of a Norman Castle. In Greece, some of us visited the Acropolis of Rhodes while others toured the medieval-flavored Streets of the Knights.

The next port found us in Limassol, Cyprus, where we wandered through the Temple of Apollo, the ruins of which date back to the 8th century. In the village of Kolossi, we visited the remains of a castle once inhabited by the Crusaders. Surrounded by vineyards, it remains a living link to the island's 7,500 years of making wine. We were in Egypt a week before protesters took to the Cairo streets and forced Hosni



ELEANOR GOLDSTEIN

■ A view of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount and the modern city of Jerusalem beyond.

Mubarak from office. When we heard about the uprising, we commented, with irony, that despite the unpaved streets and decrepit modern buildings, the common Egyptian's primary tool in bringing down a dictator was the computer and social networking websites especially Facebook.

In Jerusalem, we put paper prayers into cracks in the Western Wall as is the tradition, and we walked along the Via Dolorosa in the ancient quarter.

From Israel, we sailed to Katakolon (Greece) where we saw the site of the first Olympic games. We climbed on the ruins of the Temple of Zeus, and we collectively gasped when we visited the wonders in the site's museum.

**B**ack in the Adriatic, we zig-zagged our way up the coastlines, stopping for a quick tour of Bologna and then heading for the walled city of Dubrovnik, Croatia, which has become a UNESCO world heritage city.

And through it all, as we listened to articulate tour guides or discussed amongst ourselves the wonders of our trip, we developed a strong sense of camaraderie and of shared adventure and learning. I cannot thank tour impresario Gary Goldstein enough for fostering this dynamic trip and I thank each of my fellow travelers for helping us have an unforgettable experience.

## Nobody Here But Friends of the City

BY DEE-DEE GOIDEL

This month, 12 retirees from the Retiree Chapter legislative committee will return to Albany to renew our contacts with legislators and to introduce ourselves to those newly elected.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has indicated that today's economic woes will follow us into the future unless all NYS stakeholders are part of the solution. In such a climate, our priority is not asking for new benefits; we must work to protect what we have.

Mr. Cuomo has warned legislators not to succumb to the desires of interest groups. That is

why we will advocate in a manner that demonstrates we understand the necessity of austerity measures while explaining how we retirees of the 1970s, '80s and '90s fit in the overall scheme of the pension system.

We'll remind them that during NYC's financial meltdown in 1975, when the state took over financial stewardship of NYC, Albany mandated reforms to the city's pension plans. To help the city, the education unions allowed TRS to purchase \$150 million in city securities. CSA, in addition, avoided layoffs but paid a price to ensure their colleagues jobs: no raises. We remained one

raise behind for the next 25 years, which, of course, affected our pensions as well.

So, when the Mayor blames public employees for the financial disaster created by irresponsible bankers, lawyers and financial wheeler-dealers, and when tabloid editorial boards jump on board, they should really explain to their readers who these terrible pension-receiving people are.

A CSA retiree with a \$40,000 pension was not the public's foe in 1975 and is not the enemy now. With apologies to Walt Kelly, the creator of the comic strip Pogo, we have met the enemy and he is not us.

# RC Regional Units

## BROOKLYN

Our next meeting is March 29 at 10 a.m. at St. Francis College, 180 Remsen St. We'll answer questions about pensions and update you on current legislative issues. Your \$15 dues for 2011 are due. Contact me at rejepsilon66@aol.com.

—RON JONES

## SUNCOAST (FL)

On March 3, we held the final meeting of the year. About 40 people were expected to attend. RC Outreach Coordinator Felice Hannah spoke as did RC Florida Liaison Norman Sherman. Questions, call me at (941) 383-0408.

—MIKE NEMOYTIN

## QUEENS

On March 16, we'll tour the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona, followed by lunch at London Lennies in Rego Park. The cost for the tour is \$6. The cost for lunch, partially subsidized by the Unit, is \$22. Additionally, we have tickets for the April 27 matinee of Neil Berg's *Broadway Showstoppers* at the Queens Theatre in the Park for the special price of \$20 for our Unit's members and \$22 for non-members. Prior to the show, we'll have a special reception for CSA retirees only. For information, contact me at Stermanlen@aol.com.

—LEONARD B. STERMAN

## SOUTHWESTERN

We're looking forward to the March 16 meeting at the Holiday Inn in Casa Grande, AZ. And thank you Stef Their for arranging our recent guided tour of the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art! We look forward to our next outing, a guided tour of the Museum of Instrumental Music in Phoenix on April 4. Unit member Paul Friedman has been involved in the museum's development and suggested this visit. As always, if any CSA retiree plans to be in our neighborhood, you are invited to participate. Just let me know at maishellevitan@aol.com.

—MAISHE LEVITAN

## LONG ISLAND

Our snowbirds are trickling back to New York. That has to signify that we are about to experience warmer weather. (But it continues to snow!) Future activities: a March 28 membership meeting, the distribution of our newsletter, and a March 10 Executive Board meeting. At the Executive Board meeting, we will discuss how to coordinate our activities with the CSA RC Legislative Committee on how to combat the assault on public sector unions. Our meetings are held at the Old Bethpage/Plainview public library. For information, contact Norman Watnick at (516) 747 6291 or normanwatnick@aol.com.

—VICTOR RAVENS

## MANHATTAN

The Unit will hold a special evening meeting on April 6 at 6 p.m. at Terry Goldstein's home, 179 E. 70th St., for members who cannot attend day meetings. **You must RSVP if you plan to attend.** Call her at (212) 472-8090. We will discuss Medicare, organizing your personal papers and the current assault on health benefits. The Unit will hold a general membership meeting on May 13 at 1:30 p.m. at Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School, 240 Second Ave. We'll hear a legislative update and about changes in Medicare (as well as little-known program benefits.) *Save the date:* June 7, for our annual luncheon at the National Arts Club.

—STANLEY H. WILSON

## STATEN ISLAND

We conducted a business meeting over brunch in early February and had a moment of silence for the passing of two Executive Board members, Cathy Pizko, Secretary, and Aaron Stern, a founding member of the unit. We reviewed plans for our upcoming general meeting on March 22 at 10 a.m. at the Staaten restaurant and our closing gala in May. We also discussed a proposal: to hold a late afternoon meeting to encourage attendance by "working" retirees (kind of an oxymoron!). The theme of the meeting will be a health fair. We plan to arrange for service providers within our health care and Welfare Fund network to meet with members. The Florida Units have had success with this format and we're giving it a try.

—AL NILSEN

## GEORGIA

The annual spring meeting and luncheon will be held on May 4 at the Petite Auberge Restaurant, 2935 N. Druid Hills Rd., Atlanta at noon. Save the dates: We are planning a joint meeting and fall trip with the North Carolina Regional Unit to the Biltmore Estate in Asheville, NC, Oct. 18-20, 2011. If you have questions about the Unit, please contact me at (770) 693-2399 or rossmis2@aol.com.

—GEORGIA HARRISON

## NEW JERSEY

Our first meeting of 2011 is on May 11 at 9:30 a.m. in the Monmouth County Library, 125 Symmes Rd., Manalapan. We'll serve bagels and coffee. If you, a NJ Unit member, are attending the Retiree Chapter luncheon at the North Shore Towers on April 30, contact Steve Porter at (732) 431-1081 or stephenpporter@yahoo.com.

—STEPHEN PORTER

## CAROLINAS

The next meeting of the Unit is on May 5, not May 11 as was previously published. (Things changed!) We have, as a special attraction, Dr. Douglas Hathaway, the Administrator of the CSA Retiree Welfare Fund, who will speak about changes in health care and more specifically about your benefits. The meeting will be in Raleigh, although the specific location is yet to be determined. We'll send you more information soon or you may contact me at ellaivy@aol.com.

—ELLA IVY

## BRONX

RC Outreach Coordinator Felice Hannah will speak at our March meeting. She'll discuss government benefits that are available to all seniors. Also, save the date, June 9, for our end-of-the-year gala luncheon at the Harbor restaurant on City Island. Details to be announced.

—LENNY ZAVLICK

### Retiree Chapter Spring General Membership and Executive Board Meeting/ Gala Luncheon, 10:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. on April 30 Towers Restaurant & Caterers at North Shore Towers 272-48 Grand Central Parkway, Floral Park

Come just to the breakfast and meeting, or stay for lunch. (We're offering a choice of salmon, chicken, prime rib or vegetarian.) Wine and soft drinks are included in the \$39 luncheon price. (The Retiree Chapter is subsidizing the true cost of the lunch!)

We're especially excited about our guest speaker, Prof. Jean Arrington.

Register by April 1 and we'll put your name into a special raffle. Two members will participate for free!

Use the coupon on this page to register. 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 related structures. (Maybe you'll see your former school!)*

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,  
16 Court St, Room 711, Brooklyn, NY  
11241

## 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.

### Sept. 27

TOPIC: WHAT'S NEW IN MEDICARE

Learn about the Health Care Reforms for 2011-2012. Understand how the major benefits will affect Medicare Recipients in Medicare Advantage Plans. Learn about changes in Medicare Part A, B, C and D.



**Council of School Supervisors & Administrators, NYC**  
 New York State Federation of School Administrators  
 Local 1 AFSA, AFL-CIO  
 16 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11241-1003

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## Borough Briefs / In The Schools

Compiled  
 by Yuridia Peña

### Bronx (DIST. 7-12)

#### Muchas Gracias

Principal Ramon Gonzalez of The Laboratory School of Finance and Technology, (MS 223, D-7) tells CSA that his school is a finalist in the first middle level "School of the Year" competition organized by the Spanish Embassy for schools providing Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) to students in the Spanish language. The other finalists are Westdale Middle School (LA) and Mills Middle School (MA). More than 70 schools nationwide competed. Fourteen schools have been selected as finalists in all three levels: elementary, middle and high school. The category winners will be announced this month. MS 223 recently was named a 2010 Middle School Mathematics School of Distinction by the Intel Corp.

### Staten Island (DIST. 31)

#### 'Highly Effective' Performances

Kindergarten classes at the Staten Island School of Civic Leadership put on a show on Dec. 17, about the holidays as part of *The Leader in Me*, a school-based program developed by Stephen R. Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. The presentation focused on Habit 5: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood" which is one of the *Seven Habits of Happy Kids* by Sean Covey. The children used songs, poems, dances and authentic garments to teach the audience to "listen with your ears, your eyes, and your heart, and you'll understand as you should."



■ Highly effective children on Staten Island.

### Manhattan (DIST. 1-6)

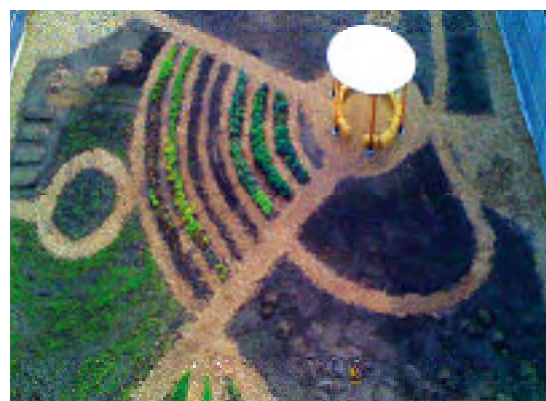
#### Hosting Brazilian Visitors

On Jan. 24, Erica Zigelman, Principal of MS 322, D-6, hosted teachers from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. As the visitors observed classes, they asked questions about best practices, lessons, professional development sessions, ELL curriculum and the use of technology in the classroom.



YURIDIA PEÑA

■ The Brazilian visitors observed classes at MS 322 in January as part of a education tour to learn about a number of things including how US students use technology in the classroom.



■ PS 373's school yard: Before and after pictures.

### Brooklyn (DIST. 13-23, 32)

#### Space Flight and Green Space

Principal Valerie Miller of The Brooklyn Transition Center (PS 373) announced that the Space Foundation has selected one of her science teachers to participate in the 2011 Flight of Teacher Liaisons. Denis Kogan was the only NYC public school teacher included in the group of 38 educators from 19 states this year. The Foundation offers training and resources to educators to help them integrate a space curriculum in the classroom. The NYC Department of Education

received the Harry H. Mellon Award of Excellence in Job Order Contracting for PS 216's edible schoolyard garden. (Job order contracting is a method of building numerous, commonly encountered construction projects quickly and easily through multi-year contracts and was developed by the award's namesake in 1982.) The District 21 garden is the first of its kind in the nation designed to operate year-round. The project transformed 28,000 square feet of yard into a garden complete with a storage shed, paved walkways and wrought iron fence. "Our children will be able to participate in hands-on experiences and learn how healthy eating can translate into healthy living," said Principal Celia Kaplinsky.

### Queens (DIST. 24-30)

#### Giving - Blood, Toys, Respect and Greeting Cards

PS 229, D-24 hosted its annual blood drive for New York Hospital on Jan. 12 and collected 36 pints of blood! Staff and parents drew up their sleeves for the local blood bank. January is traditionally a difficult month for blood banks because fewer people donate; the holidays, travel schedules, inclement weather and illness all contribute to lower turnout.

William Cullen Bryant High School, had several special guests to help observe "Respect For All Week". On Feb. 17, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, City Councilman Jimmy Van Bramer and Felipe Luciano, a community activist (among his many careers), visited the school for a special assembly.

PS 97, D-27, has been active in the community lately. During the holiday season, the student council held its first Toy Drive and made hundreds of greeting cards for American soldiers in



■ PS 97 at the Woodhaven post office with cards they made for soldiers.

Afghanistan. Students also participated in a "Valentine's for Vets" project. In addition, the Department of Education invited parents to an Information Security Awareness workshop conducted by Tom Kordich of the Office of Information Security. Parents learned about "cyber" security risks and how to protect their children.