



sta note

Members' Expertise Must Not be Overlooked

NYSUT Communication - 10/28/10

NYSUT is responding to the State Education Department's plan to impose new standards on colleges and universities for training and educating teachers and school leaders.

At the first meeting of the NYSUT Teacher/School Leader Preparation Workgroup, NYSUT Vice President Maria Neira told State Education Commissioner David Steiner that NYSUT's higher ed faculty and leaders want their voices heard in the process.

"As we listen to you, commissioner, we hear your passion," Neira told Steiner this week at his first meeting with NYSUT's higher education leaders. "What you're hearing from us is our need to be engaged in that change. We urge you, at the same time you're bringing your vision, that you also

listen, and be open to make modifications."

NYSUT formed the Teacher/School Leader Preparation Workgroup to develop a practitioners' response to the state's major initiative to revise the curricula for new teachers at colleges and universities, and to introduce new assessments for teacher candidates. The workgroup, made up of faculty from SUNY and CUNY schools of education, is developing recommendations and strategies for the NYSUT leadership to use in its advocacy with policy makers.

Steiner told the group that the changes are in response to uneven performances by students on the state's standardized tests, as well as surveys of new teachers that indicate they often feel ill prepared to enter the classroom.

He also said he believes poor performances by students can be linked to the training and education of the teachers of those students. The work group raised concerns that this position ignores the teaching and learning conditions at schools and the impact of poverty.

Among the changes Steiner's initiative would bring: Non-higher education institutions would have a role in teacher certification, in direct contrast to NYSUT's longstanding belief that teacher training and certification are best supervised by experienced higher education faculty with strong backgrounds in research and clinical experience.

The workgroup will develop an action plan to ensure other options are presented to the Regents.

What You Need to Know About the Changes to ECA Accounts

As many of you are aware, as of July 1, 2010 elementary (Pre-K - 5) schools no longer have a school treasurer and are not allowed to have school fundraising accounts. This change in policy was made in response to NY State education law. This creates difficulties for teachers who wish to raise funds for field trips or school events.

The district recommends that teachers work with school parent groups (PTO) to deposit field trip and other activity funds. This is not a problem if a parent group is organized as a 501(c)3 educational organization and has a tax ID number. Unfortunately, many PTOs are not set up this way and the rules governing such groups are cumbersome and difficult to

navigate. The Parent Partnership Network (x4148) may be helpful in setting up such an account with the parent group in your school.

STA strongly cautions all its members against setting up a personal or team account to receive such moneys and against depositing such funds in a personal account. Members leave themselves open to problems with the IRS and to charges of financial malfeasance. Problems with fundraising accounts can result in disciplinary action and termination. Please don't take such a risk. It can cost you your career.

If you are collecting funds for a field trip or event it should be counted DAILY by at least two people, sealed in an envelope

with both persons signature across the flap, and kept in the school safe. The Principal or another administra-

tor should be aware of any activity of this sort and that cash is being held in the safe.

STA Officer Vacancy

The 2nd Vice President position is vacant. An election will be held at the December Rep Assembly. If you are interested in the position please submit a resume of no more than 400 words to the STA Election Committee C/O the STA Office by 4:00 PM, November 23, 2010. If you would like to submit your resume by email you may do so. Please submit a Word document to kbambacht@syrteach.org by 4:00 PM, November 23, 2010.

Executive Board Vacancy

A Unit 1 Director position is vacant. An election will be held at the December Rep Assembly. If you are interested in the position please submit a resume of no more than 400 words to the STA Election Committee C/O the STA Office by 4:00 PM, November 23, 2010. If you would like to submit your resume by email you may do so. Please submit a Word document to kbambacht@syrteach.org by 4:00 PM, November 23, 2010.

SCSD Budget Workout

On November 16th the SCSD held its first brainstorming session to look at ways to close what is projected to be a staggering \$50 million shortfall for the 2011-2012 school year. STA officers participated along with district officials, representatives from the county, city, Say Yes, the school board and a national consulting firm. Schaffer Consulting facilitated the session that is being described as a "Budget Workout."

Participants worked in three subgroups looking at potential savings (or new revenue opportunities) in the following areas: Revenue/Funding/Grants, Outsourcing/Privatization/Consolidation of Auxiliary Services, and Staffing/Student Services. Preliminary

ideas were presented and discussed, but nothing has been proposed. The Workout is scheduled to be a 90-day process culminating with specific recommendations to the Board of Education.

Despite what you may be hearing at the building level, nothing has been determined yet. This process has just begun and any statements about numbers of positions being cut or wage and benefit concessions are simply not based on the facts. The STA will keep you informed about the SCSD budget and its impact on our members as the process moves forward. If you have questions or want to check on something you've heard, please call the office.

Caz College Spring Courses

Unit 8 members utilize your tuition benefits and call Kate Hubert at the Career Ladder Program to obtain a voucher (435-4538). Cazenovia College has released the dates and locations for their Spring 2011 courses. The courses are listed below by location or type.

HS431-C1 - Thursdays
Rehabilitation Services

SB201-C1 - Wednesdays
Multicultural Contributions
to American Society

SB311-C1 - Tuesdays
Contem. Ethnic Families

On-Campus Courses Jan. 19 - May 2

cazenovia.edu/extendedlearning
HS344-01 - Tuesday 6 - 8:50PM
Intervention Strategies for Alcohol & Substance Abuse

SB-265-01 - Monday 6 - 8:50PM
Alcohol & Drugs in Society

Online Courses Jan. 19 - May 2

HU101-C1
Intro to Philosophy

FA112-C1
Art His - Renaissance. - Present

Nottingham HS
Jan. 18 - May 5 - 5:15-8PM
CM301-C1 - Tuesdays
Speech & Rhetoric

EN101-C1 - Thursdays
Academic Writing I

HU361-C1 - Mondays
Commitment & Choice

HU465-C1 - Wednesdays
Ethical Issues in Organizations

HS101-C1 - Mondays
Intro to Human Services

STA Snapshots...



STA School Budget Group

The STA is looking for members interested in participating in a study group which will examine the SCSD budget proposal for the 2010-2011 school year. This group will look at the SCSD budget process and proposals in the context of how these things impact our work in the classrooms. We believe our members should have an understanding and be informed about the financial decisions that shape our working lives. We also believe the STA's voice should be heard as the SCSD plans for these difficult financial times. Please join us in this important work. Interested members should contact Karen (kbambacht@syrteach.org) at the STA office. The first meeting will be at 12/9/10 at 3:45PM.

Special Ed Leadership Team

The STA and SCSD are looking for representatives for the district-wide Special Education Leadership Team. It would be great if each school had a representative at the meeting. You do not need to be a Special Education teacher to be part of the committee.

Meetings are held at Lincoln Middle School on the first Wednesday of the month at 3:15 PM.

2010 STA Apparel Sale

The STA is holding a winter STA Apparel Sale from November 15 - December 3. If you are interested in purchasing STA logo apparel please go to the following website. All transactions will be done via the website and shipped directly to your home. STA is unable to take orders at the STA Office. If you have any questions please contact Karen at the STA Office.



<http://nysutgear.com>

Rep Assembly Open Forum Q&A

Q: Why are the high speed copiers being taken out of schools?

A: The reason is unclear but the STA is working to make sure the contract is being followed and schools have the appropriate copiers and supplies.

Q: Will there be 200 TA cuts in January or this summer?

A: To date the SCSD has not notified the STA of any potential cuts for January. Budget discussions are ongoing, and the STA will notify members of any potential cuts when information is available.

SB312-C1
Marriage & Family

For registration and course information, please call Sherri Benedict at 655-7288 or email sjbenedict@cazenovia.edu.