



sta note

UPDATE: Service Provider Reporting

To date the SCSD has not met with the STA to discuss the new Medicaid reporting procedures. The STA is fully aware of the continued issues that all service providers are having on a daily basis. We thank you for persevering through these changes and hope to work with the SCSD to straighten out the issues.

We are going to start communicating through the Service Provider Listserv. If you have not signed up for the Service Provider listserv please send Mike Foley (mfoley@syrteach.org) an e-mail and he will add you to the listserv. If you have any questions or concerns about the new regulations you can also send those to Mike.

PLA's, Bad Budgets and More on the Horizon

PLA Schools Clarification:

Contrary to what has been said about teachers moving from one PLA school to another, we have confirmed with both NYSUT and NYSED that there is nothing in the legislation that would prohibit this. So there will be no need to move middle school teachers to the high schools or vice versa as has been suggested. Of course, this does not mean a teacher can't apply to work in any of the PLA schools regardless of their current secondary position.

Budget WorkOut:

The STA continues to participate in the Budget WorkOut process. The implications of the projected \$50 million deficit for the 2011-2012 school year are devastating to the district and our bargaining units in particular. Our wages and benefits represent approximately 75% of the district's total operating budget. If no other significant savings are realized through the WorkOut process, the SCSD will be looking to eliminate 750 positions, most of which will come from the STA. We are committed to protecting as many of our positions as possible, but some very difficult choices will have to be made. If you have any thoughts or insights regarding this crisis, please let us know.

Payroll Issues:

The district is still unable to provide contract salary or sick day accumulation information on our paychecks. According to the SCSD, the culprit is PeopleSoft and a fix is on its way, but they

have been unwilling to provide us with a specific completion date. We will continue to work toward getting this done ASAP. In the meantime, you can call payroll at 4419 to verify your information if necessary.

Another PeopleSoft glitch has caused some members with mid-year anniversary dates to miss their contractual salary increases. Payroll assures us this is a very small group and will have them all paid (retroactive to their anniversary dates) by January 15th.

Thoughts for the New Year: PLA schools, a new evaluation system and a \$50 million budget deficit are just a few of the issues the STA will be grappling with in the new year. It may be somewhat comforting to know that we are not alone; throughout the state and country, poor urban districts are experienc-

ing similar troubles. On the one hand the government is clamping down and trying to "reform" our schools and the teachers who work in them, on the other hand they are taking away all our funding. Something has to give. Let's make sure it's not us.

We're confident these difficult times will get better. It may take a few years, but things will improve. In the meantime, we need to stick together and support each other. This is not a time to be divisive. This is not a time to pit the veterans against the newly hired or bargaining unit against bargaining unit. This is the time to be united and work toward coming out of these difficult times together. We hope you'll take some time over the break to refresh yourselves with friends and family. As always, we wish you the very best and thank you for your support.

STA Reminder to Reps

REMINDER: All STA Reps please remember that there will be an election for 2nd Vice President and a Unit 1 Director at the January Rep Assembly Meeting. Please try to be in attendance since the December meeting was cancelled due to weather and the January 12th meeting will have a lot of information.

Season's Greeting's 

From :

The STA Office -

Kevin, Mike, Joan, Ed,

Nancy, Karen

& Audrey 

Reflecting on 2010 and Looking Ahead to 2011

By: Michael Foley
Executive Vice President for Labor Relations

2010 brought changes within our union and the district, and upon reflection I see we made it through some tough spots. Looking forward I see many more challenges ahead of us.

In 2010 we faced undeserved public scrutiny, budget shortfalls, PLA schools, new evaluation systems, Tier V, larger class sizes and Treasures just to name a few. We looked at each other in the buildings and thought, "Can it get any tougher? Can more get thrown on my plate? Is there an end to this madness?"

Unfortunately there is no end in sight in the near future. In 2011 our union will face many of the same issues

it has faced in 2010. We will be negotiating two of the four bargaining unit contracts, and the other two the following year, while a huge budget shortfall will continue to be a major issue in our district. In addition, four more schools just received the label of Persistently Low Achieving (PLA), moving the total to seven schools in Syracuse.

I do not mean to write a grim tale of misfortune, focusing only on the negative. Yet this spring could potentially be the toughest spring our membership has ever faced. Working together is the only way we will continue to remain strong and protect each other from these demands. The leadership of the STA has already started working on some of these issues. We

will not operate in a vacuum and will be soliciting help from the membership. We will need your help.

There are four main pieces that we will focus on this spring. One is preparing for the new evaluation system. The leadership of STA will work to preserve our current Model for Practitioner Evaluation (MPE) with some adjustments. The second is working with our members in the identified PLA schools to design schools that will flourish. Third is the school budget; we need to stand together for the good of our members and the students we serve. Lastly, to negotiate contracts for Units 7 & 8 that protect our members and include wages and benefits that are fair and just.

Looking ahead I see that our union has a choice to make, I see two paths. One path will lead us down the road to being a shell of what we once were. The other will make us stronger. I feel that if we work together, lean on each other and provide each other with the supports necessary we will make it down the right road. I am honored to be representing you. I go to work everyday knowing that we have 3,400 members doing great things for the students of Syracuse. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Heading into the winter break I wish you and yours a happy new year on behalf of the STA. Take time to enjoy your families and friends and get ready to band together and work through these issues.

If you are interested in joining a subcommittee to help design the new evaluation system please contact Karen (kbambacht@syrteach) at the STA office to sign up...More information will follow.

Timeline for New Eval System

July 1, 2010
Chapter 13 Law takes effect.

September 2010
Regents Task Force on Teacher/Principal Effectiveness begins to formulate recommendations.

December 2010
Commissioner reports on progress to Board of Regents.

January 2011
Task Force forwards recommendations to commissioner on some aspects of the regulations.

May/June 2011
Task force forwards remaining recommendations. Commissioner presents plan to Regents.

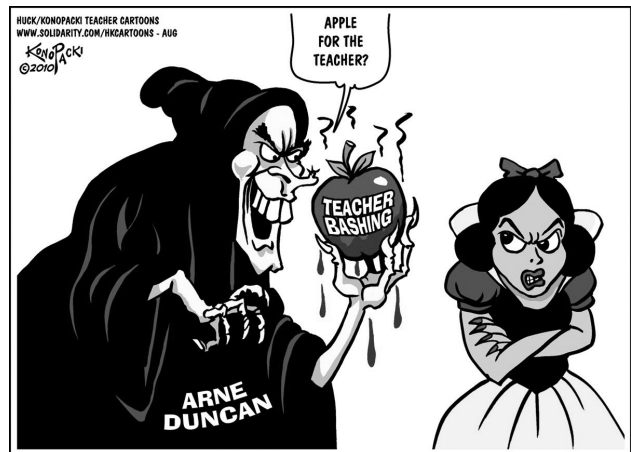
June 2011
Regents adopt implementing regulations

2011-12 School Year
New evaluation process begins for districts with new collective bargaining agreements (Not SCSD besides PLA schools); student performance data used in evaluations for (common branch) teachers with grades 4-8 math and English language arts assignments. The new 100-point evaluation system will create four rating categories.

- Highly Effective
- Effective
- Developing
- Ineffective

2011-12
Training evaluators

2012-13
In districts with new CBA's, student performance data will be used in evaluation of all classroom teachers. Districts must implement Teacher & Principal Improvement plans for those rated "developing" or "ineffective."



How Will Teachers be Rated in the New Teacher Evaluation System?

100-point composite score based:

- 20 percent on student growth on state test or comparable measure if student growth is not available;
- 20 percent on locally selected measures determined to be rigorous and comparable across classrooms; and
- 60 percent on locally developed measures consistent with regs.

