



PCT PLEDGE

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WHAT A YEAR

By PCT President Morty Rosenfeld

This time last year, it seemed like our district was being turned on its head- Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum leaving, three new, unproven members of the Board of Education about to take their seats, a very highly touted but failed math program about to be scrapped and a PCT plan for its replacement about to be implemented, an Interim Superintendent named - the school year ended with a degree of uncertainty most had never experienced. To some, it seemed as though their world was coming apart.

How different things look at the close of this year of very significant accomplishments. Chief among them is the absolutely stunning turnaround of the District's math program. After only one year, the curriculum our members wrote last summer and the implementation of it throughout this year produced state assessment scores to brag on. The improvement in the performance of our students was deep and broad and a sterling example of what can be accomplished when teachers working through their union take responsibility for their work and they receive the support they need from the Board of Education, administration at every level and the parent community. At the moment teachers are completing their piloting of a new math program that will be in place for September.

In addition to enthusiastic support, enough cannot be said of the enlightened leadership of Superintendent Dempsey and Assistant Superintendent Bruno in this regard for their foresight and courage in giving our members the professional freedom to do their work, understanding when people have ownership of the work they do it with their heart and soul.

This year was not only about math, however. The PCT Middle School Committee has been working hard to respond to the challenge of raising the academic standards and performance of our middle schools. Working closely with Linda Bruno, they have mapped our ambitious agenda to enhance the credibility of our middle school program. They have begun an in depth investigation of the Middle Years International Baccalaureate Program. They have designed an ELA curriculum writing project for this summer that should bring coherence to the curriculum and provide teachers, students and parents with a common understanding of what students are expected to know at the conclusion of each grade. There is also a plan for a new study skills curriculum

enrichment unit.

Our ELA Committee, too, has done some very important and constructive work this year. In addition to designing summer curriculum projects, the committee has held a number of important discussions aimed at attempting to understand the societal trends that are impacting our students use of language and how we might design a curriculum to counteract what in many cases are negative social pressures on language acquisition and usage.

It's been a great year for revitalizing our district. I'm extraordinarily proud that the PCT has been at the forefront of that revitalization.

I wish each of you a wonderful summer. I trust that you will return in the fall renewed and ready to continue working to make our district second to none.

SUOZZI PROPOSES TAX CAP PCT BEGINS POLITICAL RESPONSE

No one has been more opposed to the property tax as the principle vehicle for financing public education than the PCT. For years, we have believed and worked for a more progressive system of providing revenue to our schools. That, however is not what Mr. Suozzi's commission is proposing. Among the many recommendations of the commission, including the creation of a Tier V to our pension systems, is a property tax cap that would limit increases in school spending to 4% per year or 120% of the Cost of Living Index whichever is smaller. PCT members know full-well that this would mean disaster for the quality of our programs.

The Suozzi Commissions recommendations are a political response to escalating property taxes that must be met with a strong political response of our own. PCT members are asked to participate in firing the first salvo in what is going to be a protracted battle by going to the PCT President's current TeacherTalk column (at pobct.org). There they will find links to NYSUT web utilities that will allow them to conveniently send faxes to Governor Paterson and their representatives in the state senate and assembly in opposition to the property tax cap. It takes literally seconds to send a powerful message that you will not sit idly by as your government attempts to eviscerate the public schools.

EGGLINGER APPOINTED TO SICK LEAVE BANK COMMITTEE

Jolynn Gabel's retirement created an opening on the PCT Sick Leave Bank Committee, the committee charged with managing the granting of sick days to members who have run out of accumulated leave and extended leave borrowed from the district.

At the June meeting of the PCT Executive Board, the officers recommended Maureen Egglinger to replace Jolynn and the Board

concurrent. Maureen will assume her duties effective July 1.

TRACT NEWS DISTRICT TO GRANT INSERVICE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT CREDIT

TRACT courses may now be taken EITHER for one in service credit OR count toward professional development hours. You must first fulfill any hours mandated by your building and then you may take a 15 hour TRACT course. You must take the whole course or a minimum of 12 hours, absolutely no drop ins, and the course must be on a weekday, not a weekend. Detailed course descriptions will be disseminated soon.

When Tract Facilitator Blaise Martinelli (Kennedy High school) was appointed by our Executive Board, he was given the direction to try to build the course offerings of TRACT and to convince the District to offer credit for the courses. This he has very successfully done in a very short period of time. PCT president Morty Rosenfeld said upon learning of the new TRACT opportunities, "This is the first step in a process of teachers assuming responsibility for their own staff development and becoming true professionals."

EXEC. BD. ADOPTS BUDGET

The PCT Executive Board adopted an operating budget for the 2008-09 school year. The budget presumes the present dues structure for teachers, clericals, public library members and substitute teachers. Retiree dues are increased by \$5 to \$65 to cover the increasing cost of servicing that unit.

The 2008-09 PCT budget continues all existing union programs. It projects expenditures of \$681,230 and income of \$683,917. Salaries and stipends are increased in accordance with the contractual increase for next year. The budget projects that number at 3.5% and will be adjusted should the average settlement in Nassau County come in differently. SRC reps have copies of the budget if members wish to examine them.

FALL LANE CHANGES

Teachers taking courses this summer for lane changes on the salary schedule are reminded that they must inform the Personnel Office of the credits they have taken prior to September 10, 2008, even if a transcript is not available until later. Notifying the District will ensure that any salary increase due will be effective from September 1.

403b DEADLINE

Members wishing to start a 403b plan or change their contributions to an existing plan are reminded that they must notify the Business Office by September 15, 2008. Changes made by this date will become effective October 1, 2008.

457 PLAN

The newly negotiated 457 Plan will be implemented in the fall. The PCT will be arranging for a workshop perhaps as early as the first day of school to launch this new benefit.

SALARY NOTIFICATION

A reminder that the PCT will do an e-mail to the membership as soon as the salary numbers for next year become available. Members who have not been receiving e-mails from the PCT throughout the year are asked to submit their addresses by sending an e-mail to pobctorg@pobet.org.

OCTOBER 23 MARK IT DOWN!

That's the day of the PCT Party to welcome new members and honor those retiring at the end of this year. Like last year, the party will be held at **FOUR** in Melville.

SUMMER HOURS

During the months of July and August, the PCT and Welfare Fund Office will be open from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Thursday.