



PCT PLEDGE

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A NUMBER OF THINGS

By PCT President Morty Rosenfeld

Our Latest Long National Nightmare

On the day this edition of the *Pledge* arrives at our schools, Barack Obama will be sworn in as the 44th President of the United States. On this day our eight year national nightmare the Bush administration has been will come to an end. Once again, we will be able to think about ending our unnecessary foreign wars, restoring our economy, reestablishing our eroded civil rights, ending the national government's war on public schools, restoring our position of leadership in the world and, once again, having a national government that cares about what happens to the least among us.

While I am absolutely sure that we won't agree with everything the new administration will propose, we can be absolutely sure that the belief that government is the cause of our problems rather than the solution will no longer guide the development of policy in our nation. Have you noticed that since the financial crisis has us almost on the verge of a depression, we don't hear too many people talking about privatizing Social Security anymore. Rather, as I write this, the Congress is in the process of writing an economic stimulus bill that will provide funds to New York to help close our state's budget deficit with billions of dollars earmarked to spare public education from the budget cutting axe.

The new administration is coming in with an optimism that sees all of our seemingly intractable problems as providing an opportunity to change the way things have been done that in happier economic times could not even be openly thought of. Imagine if our school district could summon up the political will to do the same.

OUR LOCAL POLITICAL ACTION EFFORTS

I hope each of you has answered my e-mail and has used the NYSUT web site to send faxes to your congress people urging them to pass the federal economic stimulus package immediately. The money that will flow to the states from that legislation must arrive before the state and school districts finalize their budgets. If you haven't already done so, there is still time. Go to www.nysut.org and follow the link on the right hand side of the page.

On February 3, I will be going to Albany along with other NYSUT activists to demand that our

elected state representatives do not abandon the public schools of New York. On the 17th of February, I, along with other Nassau County members of the NYSUT Board of Directors will be meeting with Congressman Peter King to impress upon him the need of the federal government for the financial assistance the states require.

A WORD ABOUT PRIORITIES

I know many of our newer PCT members are deeply concerned about what all the talk about cuts in state aid mean for their future employment in our district. I want you to know that your thoughts and feelings about the future are not abstractions to me. In the early 1970s, I faced the possibility of being laid off. In fact, in one of those years I would certainly have been exceded if a teacher in my department had not fallen seriously ill requiring her to retire on a disability.

But I also want you to know that your union is working hard to prevent there from being any excessing. By the time we have completed our political action work, I believe the state aid picture will be significantly improved thereby obviating the need for any cuts. Finally, I want you to know that the PCT will not support any of the reform efforts like International Baccalaureate we are currently leading if the district proposes to fund those efforts by diminishing their support for other district programs. Our union has no intention of subsidizing the community.

VOTE/COPE DRIVE A SUCCESS

PCT members understood that while political action is always at the heart of what we do, this year the economic problems of our state and nation were going to make our political efforts all the more important and all the more expensive too. In the end, our VOTE/COPE drive generated some \$1800 more than last year. Not only did we receive more money, many more members participated in this year's drive.

The results of our drive by building are below.

RETIREES	575.00
PCT	410.00
POBLA	165.00
ADM	170.00
JFK	5494.00
MMS	1865.00
PMS	1235.00
PARKWAY	975.00
PASADENA	830.00
OLD BETHPAGE	1070.50
STRATFORD ROAD	1665.00
K-CENTER	1290.00
TOTAL	\$15744.50

PCT Office with a check made payable to the PCT for \$25.00.

NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE APPOINTED

The PCT Executive Board has accepted the recommendation of the PCT President and has appointed the following people to serve on our 2009 Negotiating Committee:

Officers of the PCT, CUPCT and SUPCT
Tom Mattone, JFK
Ed Broad, Mattlin
David Gestwick, POBMS
Debbie Laykind, K Center
Wendy Schwartz, Stratford Road
Gen Winter, Pasadena
Lori Stitt, Parkway
Andrea Spector, Nurses
Old Bethpage, To be appointed

While the officers continue to pursue an extension of the current agreement, the process of preparing for a full round of negotiations continues.

Each PCT member should have received a Demand Questionnaire which should be completed and returned to the PCT Office by Friday, January 30. On February 3, the Negotiating Committee will hold its first meeting which will be an orientation for those new to the process. The Committee will also begin the process of putting the Demand Questionnaires together into our formal package of negotiating demands.

Members will be asked to vote on those demands at the general membership meetings scheduled for each bargaining unit.

Clerical Unit - Wednesday, March 4

Teacher Unit - Thursday, March 12

Substitute Unit - Thursday, March 26

PCT members are asked to mark their calendars and to make sure to attend their unit's meeting. General membership meetings on negotiations are the first of many opportunities to demonstrate our solidarity with the efforts of the Negotiating Committee.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING COURSE TO BE OFFERED

At least once each year, the PCT sponsors a defensive driving course, the completion of which provides members with an opportunity to remove points from their licenses and reduce the cost of their liability insurance.

This year's defensive course will be held on Monday, March 30 and Tuesday, March 31 from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. each day in the JFK Library.

Enrollment forms for the course will be arriving at your building shortly. Members interested in enrolling should complete a form and return it to the

NEA and AFT HELP TEACH ABOUT THE INAUGURATION

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) have jointly developed a series of general instructional activities to give teachers lesson ideas to help their students' understand the historic significance of this presidential inauguration. These materials are available at either nea.org or aft.org

Use these instructional activities to teach students about the history of the inauguration and the connections between Obama and previous U.S. presidents (Learning History); to prepare students to witness the Obama inauguration (Making History); and to follow the events during President Obama's term (Living History). Teachers should use their professional judgment to adapt these materials to the particular needs (grade, reading level, etc.) of their classrooms and to best determine how much time should be spent on the activities. The materials have been designed to allow teachers to adapt them to fit into a single class period or to extend over several class periods.

CREDITS FOR SALE

C.W. Post credits. Contact Sharon Lasher at JFK HS or 631-553-9025.

CREDITS WANTED

Hofstra credits. Contact Fran Ferrucci at KG Center or 631-807-8455.