



## **PCT PLEDGE**

**Plainview-Old Bethpage  
Congress of Teachers  
303 Sunnyside Boulevard - Suite 90  
Plainview, New York 11803  
(516) 349-1310  
On the Web at:  
[http:// pobct.org](http://pobct.org)**

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## **PUNISHED FOR OUR SUCCESS**

**By PCT President Morty Rosenfeld**

Do you suppose that if teachers were still making poverty level wages that we would be talking about all these different ways the so-call reformers want to pay us? Do you suppose people would even think about whether there is a correlation between the educational level of a teacher and the achievement of her students? The reformist criticism of our pay schedules that amuses me the most is the criticism heaped on the increment system, a system which was established in New York by statute prior to the advent of public sector collective bargaining. Just this morning the New York State School Boards Association announced its opposition to the governor-elect's 2% property tax cap by noting that in some districts the yearly cost of increments would consume the lion's share of the 2% increase permitted. While short of calling for a legislative abolition of the increment system, the real agenda appears to be doing away with the Triborough Doctrine by which increments are paid even when a successor contract is not negotiated.

If we have to change the way we pay teachers, and if we continue to want to be fair about it, we can't pay them on the basis of student scores. Even most of those who preach this approach know it's stupid. We know that just about all of the "merit pay" experiments have failed. Why don't we start paying people for the job that they do? That's right. You do the same work; you get the same pay. Sure there needs to be an apprenticeship of some length. I could live with the current three year probationary period. Upon being judged to be a journeyman teacher, you would get the going rate for teacher, currently the amount in the M+60 column of the salary schedule. What could be fairer than you do the same work, you get the same pay? Looked at from this perspective, the increment system is a bargain for management. In some of the districts on Long Island, a teacher goes through 35 or 40 steps before becoming a journeyman. When you come

to think about it, the much criticized increment system has in reality favored management, permitting them to pay people to do the same job \$60,000 difference in pay.

## **CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**

Members attending conferences should be reminded that the conference expenses they enter on My Learning Plan are the total reimbursement they are going to receive.

The District has a budgeted amount for these conferences. To manage that budget line, they have to count on the information members provide when they sign up for the conference. They can't do that and honor requests for additional reimbursement upon returning from a conference. **Be sure you know the total expenses ahead of time!**

## **VOTE/COPE DRIVE WINDS DOWN**

The winter recess will mark the close of this year's VOTE/COPE drive. SRC reps will be making a final push to raise as much money as we can for what figures to be the most difficult political year we have had in a very long time.

Thus far our collection is off somewhat from last year, although for the first time one of our schools, the Kindergarten Center, has achieved 100% participation, teacher and clerical. PCT President Morty Rosenfeld called attention to this very significant accomplishment at the December meeting of the Executive Board saying, "Here's the proof of what outstanding building leadership can accomplish."

With the Governor-elect having just about declared war on the public employees of New York, we can't afford to curtail our political action. Remember all of our political action is financed by the voluntary contributions of our members. Remember too that up to 40% of member contribution will come back to our local for political work on the Board of Education, Library Board and budget elections. **Members are urged to give themselves a holiday present. Give a contribution to VOTE/COPE.**

## **APPR COMMITTEES BEGIN WORK**

A significant portion of the agenda of the December meeting of the PCT Executive Board was devoted to organizing the work of the committees of special area teachers to create the PCT's position for the negotiations for the required new Annual Professional Performance Review that will be a part of the new contract we will have negotiated by the end of this year. If you work in one of these areas and haven't been invited to contribute your ideas for how the 40% of your evaluation that is not tied to a state exam

should be done, speak to a member of your building SRC who can point you in the direction of the people who are working in your area. The PCT wants the broadest possible participation in this endeavor. **This is your chance to contribute your ideas to the way you will be evaluated.**

## **PCT ATTENDS JOBS FOR JUSTICE BREAKFAST**

**By Joseph Marcal, Past President PCT-Retired**

On December 9, 2010 I had the pleasure to attend a Labor and Faith Prayer Breakfast at the Crest Hollow Country Club representing the PCT. Dick Koubek, a PCT Past President was also present in his role as Consultant to the Long Island Jobs with Justice Organization which is affiliated with the Long Island Federation of Labor. Speakers included a Priest, Reverend, Rabbi, and the Chairman of the Islamic Center of Long Island. The theme that we are all brothers and sisters and are responsible for one another was uniform. Deep heartfelt concern for those less fortunate and for the unemployed and under employed was expressed as an ongoing problem throughout the year.

Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice received a special honor. Many of our local political leaders were present. Also attending among the over two hundred guests was the State of New York's Controller Thomas DiNapoli. The PCT continues to support and is in solidarity with the Long Island Federation of Labor and the Nassau Suffolk Building and Construction Trades Council.

## **LANE CHANGES**

PCT members who will be completing enough credits this semester to change lanes on the salary schedule are reminded to notify Art Jonas in the Personnel Office by February. Notify Personnel now, even if you don't have the transcript yet. That way you guarantee receiving your lane change.

## **INSURANCE DEPT.**

### **AUDIT OF WELFARE FUND**

Our Welfare Fund is treated like it was an insurance company by the State of New York and is thoroughly audited every five years. The auditor looks to see that the finances of the fund are in order and that member claims are handled in a fair and professional way. The State Insurance Department auditor just completed the week long study of the Welfare Fund.

While we do not as yet have the written report, the auditor informed us verbally that everything was in order. She was particularly impressed with the orderliness of our records, making special mention of Julie McCoy's work for the fund as the

best she has seen, something that doesn't come as a surprise to PCT members who have dealt with Julie. The written report will be available for member review when it is available.

## **SAVE MAY 5<sup>th</sup>**

The PCT 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has determined that the gala celebration of our union's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will take place on the evening of May 5, 2011. While the details are being worked out, members are encouraged to start making plans to attend. Watch for an announcement with place, menu and price after the holidays. We are even trying to arrange for members to make their reservations and pay for their tickets online through the PCT Webpage.

In addition to celebrating our past, we will also be honoring those who retired last year and providing a belated welcome to those who replaced them.

We are at work on a multi-media presentation as part of the ceremony. If you have pictures or other memorabilia of union events or activities, please share them with us.

If you can scan them, email them to Morty Rosenfeld at [mrosenfeld@pobct.org](mailto:mrosenfeld@pobct.org). If you want us to scan them, bring them into the office or mail them to us. We promise to return them to you as soon as we copy them.

## **ONE MEDIA SAVVY LOCAL**

While the PCT still prides itself on its face-to-face service of its members, we have been pioneers among teacher unions in the exploration of new media to inform our members and promote our agenda. You can engage us at our website, on Facebook, on Twitter, Youtube and through the numerous email updates we send membership. How many have you tried? Have you read Morty Rosenfeld's new blog, *A Teachable Moment?* Find it at [pobct.org/ATM](http://pobct.org/ATM).

## **CREDITS FOR SALE**

1.5 St. John's University credits for sale. Call Justin Carey 631-697-3223.

## **FOR RENT**

Bayport. 1 bedroom with small office, kitchen and den in updated cottage. Quiet neighborhood. Private entrance and driveway. No pets/smoking. Call Michael 516-810-5474.

## **SEASONS GREETINGS**

*From the Officers and Staff of the PCT*