



PCT PLEDGE

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WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

By PCT President Morty Rosenfeld

Readers of my columns in the *Pledge*, *Teacher Talk* or my latest vehicle *A Teachable Moment* will know that I have been extremely critical of President Obama and his administration. I've lamented their economic timidity, their foolhardy lust for bi-partisanship with a Republican party that has as its number one priority the president's electoral defeat, their failure to demand a public health insurance option, their cozying up to Wall Street, the incredibly short-sighted Race to the Top program - I've criticized them for all this and more. But get ready for me to keep reminding you that we have no choice to not only vote for Obama, but we must work our asses off to see that he is re-elected.

Have you been watching the Republican wannabees? Has your stomach turned yet? This morning I read that Rick Perry and family used to lease a hunting property called "Niggerhead," a name painted on a rock at the entrance until not long ago. At one of their debates, we saw a gay soldier stationed in Iraq ask a question about the candidates' view of gays in the military, only to be met with booing from the audience which was not addressed by any of the would be presidents. At a previous debate, the audience cheered the number of prisoners Rick Perry had put to death. At the same debate, Ron Paul opined as to how if a young person was gravely ill and had no health insurance, it wasn't our government's job to rescue. Again the audience cheered!

So you say that's why maybe Chris Christie is a better alternative. Did you hear or read his speech at the Reagan library? Seeing to ingratiate himself with the Reagan worshipers assembled, Christie began by telling his favorite Reagan story. What is Christie's favorite remembrance of Ronald Reagan? Here are his words. "Everybody in this room and in countless other rooms across this great country has his or her favorite Reagan story. "For me, that story happened thirty years ago, in August 1981. The air traffic controllers, in violation of their contracts, went on strike. Reagan ordered them back to work, making clear that those who refused would be fired. In

the end, thousands refused, and thousands were fired." Hearing Christie, you could believe that he longs for an opportunity for such greatness.

Brothers and sisters, we need to quickly get ourselves organized to do whatever is necessary to re-elect Barack Obama. To do otherwise would be simply suicidal.

NEGOTIATIONS

The PCT is entering the second school month without a new contract. Recognizing the unusual times, our Negotiating Committee has chosen to pursue an agenda of reasonable expectations and flexibility. To date, however, the position of the Board of Education has been one that they had to know would not be acceptable to us - financing raises by taking increment money away from those of us who make the least.

On October 6, both sides will meet again for the first time since the summer. Unforeseen exigencies on both sides caused a previous session to have to be postponed.

The purpose of this session will be to clarify the current position of the parties and to explore ways to move the negotiations forward. The PCT will additionally be presenting the demands of the newly organized occupational and physical therapists.

During the last round of negotiations, the PCT drew strong criticism from many quarters for its demonstrations of support for our negotiating committee. While we have chosen for the time being to try to avoid the vitriol of the last round of negotiations, for that approach to work demands the cooperation of the Board of Education to find common ground with our union.

PCT Members are advised to watch their email for a negotiations update following the next session. Members who have not been receiving regular emails from the PCT should send the union their email address to pobctorg@pobct.org.

APPR

For over a year, the PCT and the District have been negotiating the 60 point performance rubric mandated by the state as part of the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR). These negotiations were unusual for our district in that both labor and management came to the table seeking to find a fair and equitable way to implement the new regulations. In the end,

a rubric was developed that both side felt met their respective needs. They even additionally agreed that the rubric would be understood to be a work in progress that would be tweaked as necessary in ensuing years.

One of the problems in negotiating the rubric and other parts of the APPR is that State Ed keeps changing the rules. This summer they approved a number of rubrics submitted to them by various parties, including NYSUT, and decided that those wishing to use other ones have to apply to the department for a variance.

We have worked cooperatively with the district to develop our variance application. That said, neither side has very high expectations that our application will be approved. State Ed appears to be determined to shove their unwieldy rubrics, one of the 52 pages long, down the throats of the state's districts. To get a sense of the absurdity of their position, try to imagine the principal of your school wading through 52 pages of check lists to do your end of year evaluation.

To prepare for the possibility that we will have to go to one of the approved rubrics, PCT President Morty Rosenfeld has asked the Negotiating Committee to study them carefully to determine which one we should support.

SUPERINTENDENT TO RETIRE

At the last meeting of the Board of Education in September, Superintendent Gerard Dempsey announced to the public that he would be leaving at the end of his contract in June. He further announced that the Board of Education would hire a consultant to help them with a search for a new superintendent.

At the meeting of the PCT Officers and Central Administration following the superintendent's announcement, the PCT enquired as to what the District's plan was for involving the PCT in the search process. We were informed that their plans haven't gotten that far as yet.

Newer members of the PCT may not know that historically the PCT has been very active in the process of selecting new superintendents. The officers of our union believe that their participation is probably more important now than ever before as this district faces just what its aspirations are. Does it wish to be a lifeless, test-prep mill, or does it wish to return to its roots and find ways to return to being the comprehensive, sterling academic district that it once was? Who is selected to be the next superintendent will probably play a huge role in determining the answer to that question.

PCT PARTY

October 20! That's the date of this year's PCT party in honor of those who retired from our ranks last June and of those who have come to replace them. It's also a time for us to get together in the relaxed atmosphere of the Four Restaurant in Melville to talk a little, dance a little, eat good food and drink good wine from 4 to 7 P.M.

The cost to members is only \$25 in that the PCT subsidizes the cost of the party. Checks should be made payable to PCT and given either to an SRC Rep or sent directly to the PCT Office via inter-office mail.

RALLY AGAINST NASSAU LAYOFFS

Yet another Republican wants to attack collective bargaining. This time it's Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano who is looking to layoff more than 1000 county workers and get legislation that would permit him to abrogate the labor contracts the county has with its unions.

On Monday, October 17, 2011, the CSEA, the union representing many of these workers, will hold a demonstration from 11:30 A. M. To 2:30 P.M. at the Executive and Legislative Building, 1550 Franklin Avenue, in Mineola.

While active PCT members will clearly not be able to attend, members of our Retiree Unit are encouraged to demonstrate PCT solidarity with the members of the CSEA.

MARCH ON WASHINGTON

On October 15, 2011, NYSUT in conjunction with the AFT and the National Action Network will be participating in this historic rally and march aimed at demanding JOBS, JUSTICE and SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION. This event will be part of the series of week long activities associated with the dedication of the Martin Luther King Memorial on October 16, 2011.

Buses will leave NYSUT's Woodbury office at 5:15 A.M. sharp. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Buses for the return trip will leave Washington at 6:00 P.M. Members wishing to attend this historic demonstration are asked to send or call their names into the PCT Office by the morning of October 12 to reserve a place.

POST CREDITS WINNER

Congratulations to Karen Isaacs, the winner of 3 C. W. Post Graduate Credits.