

The

# Journal



EMPIRE STATE  
SUPERVISORS  
AND  
ADMINISTRATORS  
ASSOCIATION

**WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH KIDS TODAY? Pg. 3**

**EDUCATION WEEK Pg. 7**

**EAST RAMAPO AND SPACKENKILL  
JOIN THE ESSAA FAMILY Pg. 8**

**"MY SPACE" AND OTHER TRAIN WRECKS  
WAITING TO HAPPEN Pg. 10**

**U.K. ADMINISTRATORS  
HAVE THEIR PROBLEMS, TOO Pg. 11**

**AROUND NEW YORK Pg. 13**

Carmela: City Hall Park

# President's Message

## "Testing Is Not Teaching"



Dear Colleagues,

"We're fed up and aren't going to take it anymore" should be the mantra for school districts across New York State as we sift through another avalanche of unfunded mandates and standardized testing. The loss of instructional time as a result of "testing proliferation" is alarming, and is only exceeded, perhaps, by the time away from the classroom needed to train teachers to correct tests that are multiplying faster than jackrabbits.

A great deal of time and energy is being expended in measuring student achievement, but little is being spent on measuring the actual dollar cost of all these assessments; but because of the belief nationwide that more time on task will result in increased measurable learning, there is also pressure on school districts across the country to increase the number of instructional days in the school year.

It is paradoxical that the reduction in instructional time to accommodate more testing and teacher training is mentioned in the same breath by the very same proponents who want to increase the number of instructional days in a school year to improve learning! I have three questions for our membership:

- \*Are we increasing the number of days in a school year for the purpose of instruction, or for testing?
- \* If more "time on task" really will result in higher academic achievement, why are we reducing instructional time and redirecting our energies toward measuring the product rather than delivering it?
- \* If we are as broke as we have been led to believe, how can we really afford additional "marathon testing?"

Let's do the math. If a school district increases its school year by 3 days and removes teachers from the classroom for 10-20 days for test training and correction, and if those teachers spend 5 days preparing for the test and administering it, has that school district increased or decreased the quality and quantity of instruction? The numbers don't add up, unless the testing proponents can explain how less instructional time increases student learning.

### What's wrong with this picture they are painting for us?

I'm sure that "the spin doctors" will try to justify testing mania by singing the old songs about "more accountability" and "holding those damn educators' feet to the fire"; but we all know differently. Regardless of the "spin" the testing proponents put on it, the bottom line is that what may have started out as a good idea, has quickly turned bad, and on top of everything else, it's expensive.

The Commissioner and the Legislature should start listening to the people who deliver their educational services. Figures don't lie: **less instructional days mean less instruction.** It's time to rethink ... and regroup.

Very truly yours,

John F. Sullivan

### Inside this Issue

President's Message . . . . .	2	"MySpace.com" and other train wrecks . . . . .	10
What's the Matter With Kids Today . . . . .	3,4	UK Admins Having Troubles Too. . . . .	11,12
Interim Administrators Decision Making Grid . .	5	Around New York . . . . .	13
Commentary: Do Parents Mean What They Say? . .	6	Legal Clips . . . . .	14,15
EdWeek.Org Report Roundup. . . . .	7	ESSAA Retirees offered Long	
E.S.S.A.A. Welcomes Spackenkill		Term Insurance . . . . .	16
& East Ramapo . . . . .	8,9		

# WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH KIDS TODAY?

Article by Bob Liftig

The January issue of *The Journal* reported on what is being called "Generation Rx" – the almost 40% of American youth aged 12 to 17 who claim to have used illicit drugs and alcohol during 2004.

*Newsweek's* January 30, 2006 issue carried a related story, "The Boy Crisis: At Every Level of Education, They're Falling Behind. What to do?" According to *Newsweek*, the academic world for today's young males is in many ways an Alice In Wonderland reverse image of the world their school administrators experienced when they were their students' ages.

To begin with, the number of male undergraduates on college campuses is now 44% - almost the opposite of the 58% male-dominated universities many of their administrators attended 30 or 40 years ago.

Boys start off today in elementary school with lower literacy skills than girls – and the gap widens in the following grades. Boys ages 5 to 12 are 60% more likely than girls to have repeated at least one grade. First to fifth grade boys are 47% more likely than girls to have disabilities such as emotional disturbances, learning problems, or speech impediments. Fourth grade boys score 12% lower on writing tests than girls.

Thirty years ago, it was the girls who underperformed the boys, which was in part responsible for the 1972 federal law "Title IX", that required schools to provide equal opportunities for both sexes, both in the classroom and on the athletic field.

*Newsweek* says: "With millions of parents wringing their hands, educators are searching for new tools to help tackle the problem" – not the least of which is *Newsweek's* recommending books such as Michael Thompson's best seller, 'Raising Cain,' and Harvard psychologist William Pollack's "Real Boys." *Newsweek* also credits Michael Gurian of "The Gurian Institute," who has enrolled 15,000 teachers in its seminars to help educators assist underperforming boys.

The *Newsweek* article then broadcasts the gloomy news that, by Middle School, the achievement discrepancies seen at the elementary level become even greater, which leads, it says, to boys "fall(ing) victim to drugs and violence."

**Eighth grade middle school girls score 21 points higher than boys on writing tests and 11% higher on reading tests. The boys' behavior also declines – and risk of injury increases. Boys between the ages of 5 and 14 are 200% more likely to commit suicide than girls; ninth grade boys are 78% more likely to be injured in a fight; and boys between the ages of 5 and 14 are 36% more likely to die than their female counterparts.**

**The differences become even more evident in high school. Boys are 33% more likely than girls to drop out of high school. Twelfth grade girls score 16 points higher than boys on standardized tests. High school boys are 30% more likely to use cocaine than high school girls. Twelfth grade girls score 24 points higher than boys on standardized writing tests. High school girls are 36% more likely to take AP or honors biology courses than high school boys; and the boys are 22% less likely to go to college than the girls.**

*Newsweek* suggests possible causes: middle school boys use their brains less efficiently; they are more likely to be raised without a father figure; they are more likely to feel the sting of lower self esteem – especially when their performances are surpassed by the girls. Perhaps earlier and more frequent drug use also feeds the furnace. Even the rise of Feminism might be blamed for declines in their self image, *Newsweek* speculates.

The causes are to up for debate, but one thing *Newsweek* and other commentators seem to agree on is that – guess who? – can help solve the problem. That's right: the same public schools they suggest are failing the youth of America.

What do *Newsweek* and others in the contemporary media think we can do about it?

## **SELF-DISCIPLINE TRAINING MAY BE ONE ANSWER.**

The Washington Post reports (Jan. 17, 2006) that students who opt for delayed rather than instant gratification, are more successful in school "on every academic performance variable, including report card grades, standardized achievement test scores, admission to a competitive high school, and attendance."

Researchers Angela Duckworth and Martin Seligman reported their findings in the journal *Psychological Science*. Their study examined one group of 149 eighth graders and another group of 164 eighth graders in a "sociologically and ethnically diverse magnet school in a Northeast city."

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Duckworth and Seligman offered groups of 19 students one dollar immediately, or two dollars the following week, and then tabulated the responses and researched the academic record of each student. Students with greater “self-discipline” (meaning those who held out for the two dollars) demonstrated greater success. In other words self-discipline was an even better predictor of academic achievement than IQ!

These conclusions could help put the plight of failing students, and the schools that supposedly are failing them, in a more balanced perspective, Duckworth and Seligman suggest:

**“Underachievement among American youth is often blamed on inadequate teachers, boring textbooks, and large class sizes. We suggest another reason for students falling short of their intellectual potential: their failure to exercise self-discipline”.**

*The Post*, however, hardly paused a moment to think about the wider implications of Duckworth and Seligman’s study before it turned its guns around and pointed them again at the administrators and teachers who are charged with educating whomever American parents drop off at the schoolhouse steps.

“Some educators,” *The Post* eagerly offers, “said schools can teach self-discipline”; and it points to the advice of Martha McCarthy, an education professor at Indiana University, who suggests that discipline habits could be taught in the early grades by “giving students time to visit with their friends if they have been attentive during a lesson.”

Gerald W. Bracey, an educational psychologist, cites the “power of self-discipline in sports” – hardly a revelation to school administrators and teachers.

Finally, *The Post* hails a Los Angeles teacher, Rafe Esquith, who claims that his own study agrees with Duckworth and Seligman’s; Esquith found that hungry 4 year olds who are willing to wait for two marshmallows, were “more successful years later than those who gobbled up one marshmallow immediately!”

**These astonishing results make *The Journal* wonder whether what passes here as “educational research” isn’t also an ideal way to teach the definition of an oxymoron.**

It’s frightening to think how this recent “research” might be translated into the nation’s classrooms. Will schools try again (as they did in the 60’s) to reward self-disciplined students with crisp five dollar bills, or will they now try to spice up the reinforcement with bags and bags of marshmallows?

If parents get excited enough about teaching self-discipline, administrators might want to suggest that self-discipline may be learned where students spend most of their formative years – at home, presumably under the supervision of their parents.

### **TOUGHLOVE IS RETURNING**

By the time this issue of *The Journal* goes to press, the Toughlove programs of the late 70’s and 80’s will be the subject again of a nationwide publicity campaign. Originally the brainchild of Phyllis and David York, two Pennsylvania parents who were wrestling with what to do with their out of control teenage daughter in the raucous 1970’s, the Toughlove program abandoned traditional strategies, such as psychotherapy, judo, and self esteem building sessions, in favor of parents drawing ‘bottom lines’ of what they would and would not put up with.

Toughlove was developed as a nonprofit, international self-help program that charged a one time only membership fee of \$30, and a \$5 fee for materials, and hosted parent support groups in which every family promised to adhere to a “Parent Bill of Rights.”

Here is a sample of one offered by the State of California:

### **A Parents’ Bill of Rights —**

We have a:

- *Right to feel angry*
- *Right to keep trying*
- *Right to set limits*
- *Right to be annoyed*
- *Right to another opinion*
- *Right to stop trying*
- *Right to parent*
- *Right to take time off*
- *Right to privacy*
- *Right to be the expert-in-charge*
- *Right to be unenthusiastic*
- *Right to dignity*

Like most innovations, the Program flourished and then faded, with local attendance dwindling to just a few parents meeting with chronic regularity in church basements. By the mid-1990’s, many parents associated Toughlove with the ‘bootcamp’ movement – something the Program was never meant to be.

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**ENTER – DR. RON ZODKEVITCH**

Dr. Ron Zodkevitch and his partner Igal Feibush at first seem like the most unlikely of sorts to offer CPR to the near-moribund Toughlove program, but after the kickoff to their movement this spring, parents all across America will begin responding or not responding to the media blitz.

Dr. Ron is a 47 year old “psychiatrist to the troubled children of entertainment executives,” who moved from Long Island to Beverly Hills years ago to pursue his fortunes – both medical and financial. Feibush is the “money” behind the operation, and, at 37, this billionaire Manhattan rental broker was simply interested in something big to invest in. Both Dr. Ron and Igal Feibush are single; Feibush is the divorced father of a four year old girl. Dr. Ron is a bachelor. Even so, both feel they have the means, motivation, and knowledge to revivify the Toughlove concept.

“If you really think about it,” Dr. Ron says in an interview with David Amsden in New York Magazine, “there’s nothing out there for parents of teens. It’s going to be big business.”

The psychiatrist is set to publish a book which he hopes will inspire his campaign for a Weight-Watcher style network of for-profit support groups that will coach parents to become “benevolent dictators” who can stave off a “threatening culture” of adolescence which is “set on destroying our happy homes.”

Dr. Ron believes that America’s parents no longer know what it means to be parents because their authority has been neutralized over the last generation by a society which operated on the false assumption that children will respond best if parents will only treat them as equals. The approach has failed, say Dr. Ron and Igal Feibush, the time is right for the return of the Toughlove movement.

## INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR DECISION MAKING GRID

In response to the shortage of school administrators across the country, the Interim Administrator is making his and her mark. What they might have lost in youthful good looks, they more than make up for with the wisdom of their experiences. ESSAA member Charles Mitchell (who has lost neither) provides us with his own secret to success as the Interim Principal of the Cato-Meridien district.

	I CAN DO	I CAN NOT DO
I SHOULD DO		
I SHOULD NOT DO		

## Commentary:



### **Do Parents Mean What They Say?**

Are teenagers today – especially boys – running amok? And can parents successfully reassert their authority? These are questions which are being asked and answered under the national spotlight as this issue of *The Journal* goes to press.

The anecdotal evidence is pouring in from all over the country: teens – many of them boys – are acting out in self-destructive ways, either because of the fallout from a generation of success in the Women’s Rights movement, or from a host of other possible causes. At the same time, parents are calling on the schools to take the lead in helping them reassert parental authority

Administrators should have questions for these parents if we really are going to lead the movement, or at least help parents take back the authority they lost over their children.

#### **1. Will parents allow us to do what is necessary to accomplish the job?**

Just as parents a generation ago issued a national plea to administrators and school systems to abandon autocratic management and fall in behind the self-esteem movement, we are told that another generation is calling on administrators and school systems to help them assert the imagined iron clad authority exercised by the schools and parents of 40 years ago.

School administrators should brace themselves for the expected onslaught; but before they fall in lockstep, here is another question – one that you should ask yourself at this early juncture:

#### **2. Is it the school’s responsibility to advocate for or assist parents in changing the balance of parental authority?**

Parents have asked schools to toughen up on their children many times before. In the past, most of us have quietly held that, if parents were as tough on their own kids as they want us to be on their childrens’ classmates, there would be no need for us to toughen up on any of them.

If past experience is any indication, however, school administrators – in an effort to be helpful and to reach out to our communities – will agree that it is our responsibility in some degree to lead the charge, or at least to help parents reassert their authority.

Yet if parents are going to ask administrators to help them assert parental authority, administrators should know that lawsuits against institutional authority have never been more prevalent.

The results are advertised everywhere. Just this January, a New Jersey student who had been expelled from Fairfield University in Connecticut (a private Jesuit institution) successfully won \$200,000 in damages – calculated on the salary he WOULD have earned had he NOT been expelled and prevented from graduating with his class.

The student, described by many of his classmates as a “social deviant,” had been reprimanded numerous times by the University, and Fairfield believed it was fully within its rights in telling him to leave.

As we all know, the record is much worse in public institutions.

It may be the height of irony that the Toughlove movement is returning to life at the same time administrators and teachers have been noting a spike in “us and them” behavior by parents against the exercise of authority by the public schools.

Perhaps administrators should ask themselves a third question:

#### **3. Are parents today becoming TOO involved in their childrens’ education.**

A middle school teacher I know recently had the following experience:

Parents in her system have been emailing teachers in record numbers and teachers must respond in 24 hours. And homework assignments are now required to be posted online.

**From the Parent: I had trouble with Peter’s assignment last night because there were grammar mistakes on the homework posting. Who proofreads your assignments before you post them?**

**From the teacher: I am sorry you had difficulty doing Peter's assignment.**

**Have a nice day.**

Instant messaging and cell phones have also provided students with immediate parental contact. Recently, a teacher "lost it" with a student who just wouldn't listen, and began yelling at him. The student immediately dialed his mother and said, "My teacher is yelling at me. Listen to him."

Student advocates are also proliferating across the country. Retired school administrators, counselors, and teachers, are cashing in on the demand – especially in highly pressured suburban districts. Big fees are charged; advocate presence at important student disciplinary and special education hearings is becoming more and more accepted.

Experienced educators acting as advocates may only want to help provide confused parents with an interpretation of school dynamics, or they may be part of a self-destructive movement in which educators eat their own. On the other hand, though parents who hire advocates might be accused of coming into a failing situation with too little, too late, they certainly cannot be charged with non-involvement.

So many parents attempt to mediate and negotiate student discipline in some districts on their own these days, that a parent who gives his or her child's school carte blanche on discipline may actually be perceived by the faculty, administrators, and staff as uninvolved and uncaring!

Imagine now, the administrator – you, for example - who embraces what is supposed to be the new Toughlove movement, applying discipline evenhandedly, vowing never to bow to parental pressure.

As Dylan says, appropriately, but in another context:

*"It doesn't take a weather man to know which way the wind blows."*

Caveat Emptor!

**EDWEEK.ORG**

## Report Roundup

Sunday, February 19, 2006

### **FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN SEEN AS BETTER THAN HALF-DAY PROGRAMS**

Children in full-day kindergarten programs make more progress in literacy and mathematics than those in half-day programs, concludes a study. (February 17, 2006)

### **SCHOOL 'SEGREGATION' EXAMINED IN MICHIGAN**

More than 60 percent of Michigan's African-American K-12 students attend schools in which more than 80 percent of the students are black, concludes a report from the Education Policy Center at Michigan State University. (February 17, 2006)

### **NCLB NEGOTIATIONS WEAKEN EDUCATION LAW, REPORT SAYS**

Negotiations between the U.S. Department of Education and individual states are weakening the accountability standards of the No Child Left Behind Act, concludes a study by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. (February 16, 2006)

### **ATTENTION TO TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES, CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING URGED**

Because of the intense focus of the federal No Child Left Behind Act on reading and mathematics, some schools around the country have reduced the number of foreign-language courses offered or stopped teaching foreign languages altogether, says a report by the Washington-based Committee for Economic Development, a nonpartisan policy-research group made up of business and education leaders. (February 15, 2006)

# East Ramapo and Spackenkill Join The ESSAA Family

The officers and directors of ESSAA are pleased to announce the addition of East Ramapo and Spackenkill administrators to our long list of units which have joined the move to ESSAA in recent years.

The 40 member East Ramapo group in Rockland County, and the 8 administrators of Spackenkill in Dutchess voted to join us in January.

East Ramapo has five primary and five intermediate; each primary is paired with an intermediate school. Two middle schools at Chestnut Ridge and Pomona, and two high schools, Ramapo and Spring Valley, serve the secondary population. Ninth graders are housed at the Ramapo Freshman Center. The two high schools offer courses in seven different languages, including: Hebrew, Japanese, and Latin. Ramapo and Spring Valley High Schools rank within the top 2% in the nation in the number of AP tests taken.

Tiny but prestigious Spackenkill has a population of 4,700. It's only 3 square miles in area, but 92% of its residents have Bachelor's degrees, and more than a quarter of the population has advanced academic training. Spackenkill boasts a median income of \$77,000 and the many Vassar College professors who live there enjoy their short commute to the Poughkeepsie campus.

With this addition of almost 50 new members, ESSAA once again shows it is taking the lead in representing administrators across the Empire State.

**Welcome, Spackenkill and East Ramapo!**



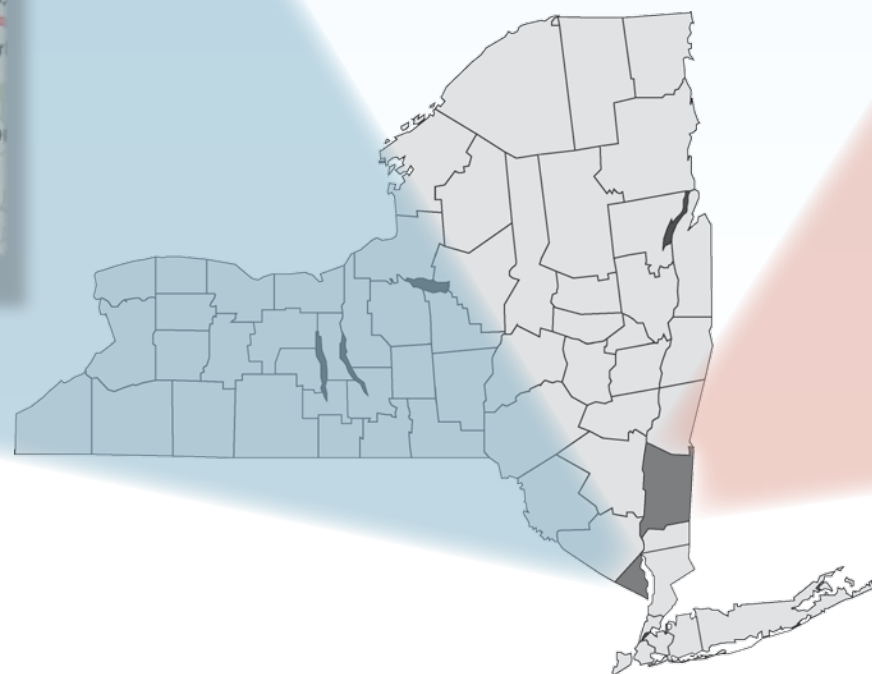
**EAST RAMAPO**

**ROCKLAND COUNTY**



**SPACKENKILL**

**DUTCHESS COUNTY**





## "MYSPACE.COM" AND OTHER TRAIN WRECKS WAITING TO HAPPEN: WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THEM?

*By Charles Mitchell, Interim Principal, Cato-Meridian High School  
ESSAA's Project SAVE Director*

In my forty years in education there has been an evolving shift from a child's putting his or her innermost thoughts in a written diary, to posting private thoughts for the world to see.

Throughout all these changes, parents' roles have remained the same – keeping their children safe and maintaining open lines of communication with them.

When children wrote their thoughts in a diary with a lock and key, privacy was paramount. Then students discovered email, and then chat rooms and Instant Messages. With each step privacy of thoughts became less and less, and the opportunity for mischief became greater.

In today's world, some children utilize My Space or other similar blog sites to post their most innermost thoughts for everyone to see. I had a student at Cato-Meridian High School upset with me because I saw her My Space site. Duh – the entire world can see her My Space site. Why would anyone post anything he or she didn't want the world to see?

Students think nothing of posting where they work, their age, their school, whether they drink/smoke or not, their religion, and their sexual orientation. They also post whether they are "single" or "in a relationship." In some school districts students have posted pictures of their "parties" on Webshots.com, including their sexual activity, drinking, and drug use. Again, what are our kids thinking?

Webshots, My Space, and similar sites are not the irresponsible parties. As parents, we have the responsibility of continuing to monitor our child's use of our, and their, computers. We also have the responsibility of making sure we are comfortable with their use. And we have the responsibility to place "blocks" on those sites we do not approve of. We also need to maintain open communication with our children about safe and unsafe uses of the Internet. These are difficult tasks, but we need to involve ourselves with them if we are responsible parents.

USA Today on 10/31/05, as part of an article on teens and blogs, had the following advice for teens on blog sites:

1. Treat everyone you meet online as if he/she was a stranger, even after you have traded information. Lying online is easy.
2. Leave out identifying information, like your name, where you work or where you go to school.
3. Use e-mail addresses that don't use your name and can't be traced to your other online activity.
4. When possible, protect your information with passwords.
5. Obscure identities in pictures.
6. Post only material you wouldn't mind seeing on a billboard.
7. Team up with a buddy to check each other's sites for problems.
8. Teens under 13 should only blog under constant supervision.

### WEBSITES USED BY TEENS TO SHARE PERSONAL INFORMATION:

My Space	Geocities	Webshots – photos	Facebook	Xanga	Teenchat
Livejournal	Bus-oven	Friendster	Classface	Photobucket	

It is well known that sexual predators search the Internet, chat rooms, and blogs, looking for "victims." Even without a predator situation, student ex-girlfriends and ex-boyfriends have copied intimate information and photos to their extended network of friends, especially when relationships go sour. Rumors are created and spread quickly through emails, chat rooms, IMs, and MySpace blogs. I have seen embarrassing photos from weekend parties "passed around" via Internet with the help of cell phones that take digital pictures.

### WHAT'S A PARENT TO DO?

Parents should maintain open and honest communication with their children about what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior on home computers. They should talk openly about the dangers of sharing personal information on the Internet and monitor their children's activities on a daily basis – they are always our children, even when they are seniors in high school.

# U.K. ADMINISTRATORS HAVE THEIR PROBLEMS, TOO

By Bob Liftig

Most sociologists recognize that fashion and accent in the U.S. are determined somewhere in California and flow East, while trends in education begin somewhere on the East Coast and end up in the West.

This has been traditional in our country. Even back in Colonial and pioneering days, frontier families sent their children East for a good education, while Eastcoasters with money sent their kids back “East” to England – where the educational standards for American education were supposedly set.

*The Journal* reports with horror that, in the January 30, 2006 issue of London’s Daily Mail, there are at least three articles on trends in English education that should make the hairs of every teacher and administrator in the U.S. stand up on their ends.

## “NO HANDS-UP” RULES IN ENGLAND

The first article, by the Daily Mail’s Education Correspondent, Sarah Harris, reports that “No Hands Up” posters are being displayed in every classroom at the Richardson Community School in Dagenham, East London – a school that has banned pupils from raising hands in the classroom in order to improve test results.

The headmaster, Andrew Buck (as in “This Buck stops here.”) says that the ban has improved the attention levels of students because they never know if they might have to answer questions when called on by the teacher. The policy, he says, is designed to increase the attention of students and encourage those who might be afraid to put their hands up to pay closer attention.

Harris says the policy has even helped less reticent students: “Some of the brighter pupils are also reluctant to put their hands up for fear of being labeled a swot.” (*The Journal* will provide a suitable translation for any one who needs it).

“This is about inclusion, not about exclusion,” Graham Bramley, Chairman of the School Governors says in perfect international educationese. “It’s about making sure that all the children are getting something out of the lessons.”

## BRITKIDS AS HEROIN ADDICTS

In other school news from across the Atlantic, an 11 year old heroin addict has been hospitalized after having been found by her teacher slumped over her desk from a heroin overdose. She is the youngest addict now on record in Britain.

According to Gaille McCann, a spokesperson for Mothers Against Drugs (MAD), “There are plenty of children out there experimenting with drugs... I am not surprised at this news...more and more children at younger and younger ages have access to drugs ...”

McCann blames the school – of course - although with a tone of politeness not often heard among critics of schools in the United States: “The school should have maybe noticed some sort of symptoms in this girl - if only a change in personality - but there are so many social problems today, that teachers now have too much to cope with, and the chances are they are too busy to notice.”

A recent British study has shown that one third of 15 year olds have used marijuana, and almost one in eight have tried cocaine, speed, or Ecstasy (these figures are similar to those from American surveys. See January ’06 *Journal*).

In Britain today, pupils as young as six are being taught about the dangers of drugs. Alistair Ramsay of Scotland Against Drugs (SAD) says thousands of teachers have been advised on how to deal with children who may have overdosed.

## ENGLISH SCHOOLS RUNNING IN THE RED

In a third article from the same Daily Mail edition, it was reported that 1,866 English schools have “run up debts of more than 120 million pounds [something like \$400 million dollars], and that headmasters [read: school principals] are being forced to increase class sizes. Students may even have to be sent home early, and parents asked to make contributions to maintain full programs.”

Nursery schools are particularly hard hit, with liabilities totaling 227,000 pounds; primaries are in the hole for 34 million, and secondaries for 86 million. Mick Brookes, a spokesman for the National Association of Head Teachers (the principal’s union) said the that biggest reason for the funding crisis is that schools have been handed extra duties without any extra cash.

## SOUND FAMILIAR?

Profile of the NAHT from its web site:

### History of the National Association of Head Teachers

The National Association of Head Teachers was established on 27th March, 1897, at a conference held at the Clarendon Street Schools, Nottingham. Described by the first Secretary, Mr J Edwards, as being a, "... most representative and influential conference.", it was there that the objects of the NAHT were agreed. These objects, originally adopted for the National Federation of Head Teachers' Associations (which was the name first given to the NAHT), are reflected today in the objects contained within the Association's Constitution:

"The objects of the NAHT shall be:

- to provide a ready means of communication for all members, to ascertain and give expression to their opinions and to take action when necessary on their behalf;
- to render help to all members in cases of professional difficulty;
- to further the cause of Education generally;
- to uphold a high standard of professional conduct among members, including equal opportunities for all;
- to regulate relations between members and their employers."

### The past 100 years

After the first full year of the Association's life there were 12 affiliated local associations and 1,477 members. By the time of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the NAHT, membership had just broken through the 10,000 barrier with 210 affiliated local associations. By the 1980s, the passage of time had seen affiliated local associations rise to well over 350 and membership of serving headteachers exceeded 20,000.

### Admission of Deputy Headteachers

Deputy headteachers were first admitted into membership in 1985 and since that year the numbers joining have increased steadily, as has their participation in the Association's activities.

### Admission of Assistant Headteachers

At the Annual Conference 2000, delegates decided to invite Assistant Headteachers into membership. Members of this leadership group, vital to the effective management of the school, are warmly welcomed. Specific support for them is available and advice documentation is written with their particular interests and responsibilities in mind.

With over a hundred years service to leaders in education, the NAHT now represents in excess of 30,000 school leaders, representing the education continuum 3-19 years.

### Today

At the heart of the National Association of Head Teachers' professional services to members is the dedicated staff working centrally at Headquarters and in the field as Regional Officers, linked to the network of local associations and branches within the NAHT's regional and district structure

<http://www.naht.org.uk/>

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## Around New York\*

### **NYSUT: PATAKI “GIVES UP ON PUBLIC EDUCATION”**

Clarisse Butler Banks reports in the February New York Teacher that Alan Lubin, NYSUT Executive Vice President, has called the \$400 million “education tax credit” Governor Pataki slipped into his budget “the Governor’s back door voucher plan.”

The provision would enable parents who earn less than \$90,000 per year and live in a district with at least one “underperforming school” to receive a tax credit of up to \$500 per child to send their children to private schools.

The plan is supported by Roman Catholic, Jewish, and independent private schools who have organized under the name Teach NYS.

NYSUT’s President Dick Iannuzzi has branded the proposal “a \$400 million Trojan horse” and has accused the Governor of “giving up on public education.” Iannuzzi says that this is underscored by another of the Governor’s proposals: to raise the cap on charter schools.

The Governor’s Plan would:

- Increase the existing cap on the number of charter schools to 250 from 100.
- Add a provision that the New York City Chancellor himself could authorize charter schools in any number, regardless of the cap.
- Grant the Board of Trustees of SUNY power to give not for profit organizations the authority to grant charters.
- Give charter schools access to building aid and financing through the state Dormitory Authority.

### **VOTE/COPE CONTRIBUTIONS INCREASE BY 6%**

Any one who doubts the power of PAC purse strings should take another look at NYSUT’s Vote/ Cope contributions, and the impact they have made on defending the rights of teachers in New York State.

NYSUT reports that contributions in 2005 rose above \$5.6 million, which was the eighth consecutive year of record setting increases and represents a 6% increase over the previous year’s donations.

NYSUT’s Retirees group has increased its contributions more than 40%, and has used it’s increased influence to preserve Social Security for future generations. NYSUT members on Long Island alone contributed more than \$1.5 million. Even traditionally hard to organize professors kicked in \$293,000 through United University Professions at the State University, Professional Staff Congress.

If ESSAA members are not yet convinced of the importance of contributing to our own ESSAA PAC fund, try this Pataki proposal on for size: district taxpayers would not be able to vote again on a school budget that fails the first time!

### **APPEALS COURT UPHOLDS “WEINGARTEN RIGHTS”**

A recent appellate ruling in favor of a New York City Transit Authority worker has affirmed the right to representation in discipline matters – “Weingarten rights” – and declares that representation is implicit within the Taylor Law.

The decision of the Second Department affirmed earlier rulings by an administrative law judge and the state Supreme Court which noted that PERB’s experience and sound judgement in interpreting the Taylor Law should be accepted by the courts unless it is found to be “unreasonable.”

Pauline Kinsella, executive director of NYSUT, stated that this latest ruling will be helpful to public employees not covered by Education or Civil Service Law.

The decision was announced December 27, 2005. The Weingarten case was decided in 1975 by the U.S. Supreme Court; it stated that the National Labor Relations Act requires employers to allow union representation when requested – if interviews with employees may result in disciplinary action.

*\* ESSAA members are encouraged to log onto NYSUT’s website, [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org), for further information about these and other topics.*

## Legal Briefs from NSBA

*Legal Briefs is excerpted from "NSBA Legal Clips," a weekly e-newsletter from the National School Boards Association. Free subscriptions to this e-newsletter are available at [www.nsba.org/legalclips](http://www.nsba.org/legalclips).*

### ARIZONA SCHOOLS OFFERED CASH FOR JUNK FOOD BANS

A year after the Arizona state legislature passed a law banning the sale of sodas and junk food in the state's elementary and middle schools, state legislator Mark Anderson is sponsoring a slimmed-down version that would provide monetary incentives for high schools to adopt their own bans. The first 50 high schools to sign up for the program would receive one-time payments of \$50,000. While the proposed bill has been heard in the state House's K-12 education committee, Mr. Anderson, who is committee chairman, is holding off on submitting it to a vote until he can pick up the votes for passage. Committee member John Allen, who opposes the bill, says he is "appalled" that the state would provide financial incentives to schools to get them to switch snacks. Mr. Allen contends that the decision regarding what food to serve is best left to local school boards. The elementary and middle school ban goes into effect in July 2006. The Arizona Department of Education (AED) recently released nutrition standards for schools that limit portion sizes, calories, fat, and sugar, and that prohibit soft drinks. The legislature abandoned its attempt to include high schools in last year's legislation out fear that the bill would not pass. The Arizona Beverage Association (ABA) opposes the current proposal. ABA representative John Moody says the legislation is unnecessary because his organization has guidelines in place for high school vending machines that include devoting at least 50% of the slots to a mix of nutritious and low-calorie beverages. The proposed voluntary program would cost the state \$2.5 million. Participating schools would have to agree to serve only healthy snacks and beverages for the next four years and could only use the funds for student classroom or extracurricular activities. Arizona schools chief Tom Horne and AED dieticians support the measure.

*By Anne Ryman, Arizona Republic*

### MICHIGAN KIDS SUSPENDED FOR ONLINE DRINKING

About 20 high school students in East Grand Rapids, Michigan, face discipline for drinking alcohol, busted by an unexpected source: their Web pages. East Grand Rapids High School principal Patrick Cwayna reports that his staff began investigating after parents reported seeing photographs of students drinking at parties on online journals and photo bulletin boards. The students face suspensions for two weeks from sports, from a Valentine's Day dance, and from other activities, although no attendance or academic consequences. However, some parents have appealed the suspensions to district superintendent James Morse. "Kids will be kids, and they make mistakes ... [but] they have to be held accountable," he responds. None of the activities occurred on campus, but Mr. Morse says students involved in extra-curricular activities can be disciplined for off-campus activities if administrators learn of rule violations. "We often get reports from the public safety department if there is a party and our kids are involved," he explains. "We bring them down to the office and, in many cases, they 'fess up.'" But, in this case, students were caught after parents discovered photos on blogs and personal Web sites such as Xanga, Myspace, and Facebook that educators warn are becoming wildly popular among young people, who fill the sites with their information. This raises concerns because posts often reveal names, addresses, phone numbers, and other personal information that can make students more vulnerable to online predators. Security Director Bob Goethal of Rockford Public Schools, who has been offering parents presentations on the sites, says security officers monitor known sites of local bloggers and take limited action, usually calling parents if they spot stories about parties or other items of concern. Rockford administrators said they can't punish students unless they are involved in extracurricular activities. Grand Rapids Public Schools Security Director Larry Johnson, on the other hand, does not monitor the sites. "Even if you see a kid holding a beer bottle in a photo, how can we prove there was actually beer in the bottle?" he says. "It probably is beer, but we can't prove it." Nonetheless, at least one area blogger caught wind of the East Grand Rapids suspensions and alerted subscribers to the risk of putting information about out-of-school activities on the Web.

*By Dave Murray and Nate Reens, Grand Rapids Press*

### NCLB OFFERS TUTORS - BUT N.Y.C. HAS FEW TAKERS

According to figures released by the City of New York's Department of Education (NYED), fewer than half of the city's 215,000 public school students who are eligible for tutoring services under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) have sought such services. Even so, the city's rate of participation exceeds the national average. Across the country, only 226,000 of the roughly 2 million students eligible—around 12%—received help, according to data from U.S. Department of Education (ED). In California last year only 95,500 of 800,000 eligible students were tutored this past year, while in Maryland, just over a quarter of those eligible, 5,580 of 19,520, enrolled. And in Louisiana, despite aggressive state marketing, only 5,000 of 50,000 eligible students participated.

*cont'd. next page*

NCLB requires consistently failing schools that serve mostly poor children to offer students a choice if they want it: a transfer to another school or tutoring services paid for with federal money, typically at a cost of more than \$1,800 per student in big cities. Local and state education officials and private tutoring services disagree over the reasons for the low participation rates in the program, known as supplemental education services (SES), and cast blame on each other. State and local officials point to the inadequate federal funding, poor advertisement to parents, too much complicated paperwork for signing up, and the difficulty of fully penetrating neighborhoods where there are high concentrations of poor, failing students. Some tutoring companies believe many school districts are just now embracing the program and still have complicated sign-up procedures. Some educational groups charge that some tutoring companies shy away from serving to students with learning and language difficulties because the companies are judged based in part on the progress their students make. Many in the tutoring industry deny such charges and charge that schools, citing privacy concerns, do not notify them in advance about which students might require special services.

Even for students who are getting tutored, there has yet to be a scientific national study judging whether they are receiving any academic benefit. And there is no consensus on how that progress should be judged. In addition, it is unclear why so many students do not complete tutoring programs once they have enrolled. In New York City, 34,055 schoolchildren did not successfully complete the tutoring last year after signing up. Most seemed to attend a few sessions and then never returned.

Federal officials note that the initiative is still relatively new, and they say participation is growing every year. ED is encouraging states and school districts to use every means of reaching parents to keep the description of programs as simple as possible. Even so, ED assistant deputy secretary Nina Rees acknowledges that "this can be time consuming, and a lot of districts don't have the capacity to administer a program like this while administering all of the other grants they are charged with administering." But to address the tens of thousands of students who are not getting tutors, federal education officials are now allowing some failing districts to tutor their own students. New York was the third city to receive such a waiver in November, after Chicago and Boston. City education officials say they hope this will open access to more students because districts tend to tutor students at a much lower cost per child, and the tutoring groups tend to be larger. The federal government calls the three city efforts pilot programs and says that based on their success they could be replicated in other cities.

*By Susan Saulny, New York Times*

## **OHIO SHUTS DOOR ON INTELLIGENT DESIGN**

The Ohio State Board of Education, which is responsible for setting state curriculum standards, has voted 11 to 4 to eliminate language from the state science standards that critics charge left the door open for teaching intelligent design dealing the intelligent design movement its second serious defeat in two months. The 2002 standard mandated that 10th-grade biology classes include critical analysis of evolution and provided an accompanying model lesson plan. They were the first in the nation to subject evolution to special scrutiny and stated that students should be able to "describe how scientists continue to investigate and critically analyze aspects of evolutionary theory." However, they also included a disclaimer that the teaching of intelligent design was not required in order to satisfy the critical analysis portion of the standards. In light of the federal court decision in the Dover, Pennsylvania, intelligent design case, the Ohio state board decided to pull the language, in large part out of fear it would lead to a lawsuit. According to board member Martha W. Wise, who offered the motion to eliminate the language, "This lesson is bad news, the 'critically analyze' wording is bad news." During debate on the motion, Ms. Wise argued that retaining the language would "mislead [students] about the nature of science." However, John G. West, associate director of the Center for Science and Culture at the Discovery Institute, a proponent of intelligent design, believes the vote will create a backlash among a public that he contends surveys show support criticism of evolution in science classes. "The effort to try to suppress ideas that you dislike, to use the government to suppress ideas you dislike, has a failed history," he says. Eugenie C. Scott, director of the National Center for Science Education, believes the vote is "a significant victory" and will cause school districts and states to rethink any changes to how evolution is taught. Board members who supported keeping the language in the standards see the vote as just another round, but not an ultimate victory, in the ongoing "culture war."

*By Carrie Spencer-Ghose, Chicago Sun-Times*

## **D.C. HEDGES ON SPECIAL ED LAW**

The Washington, D.C. school board has tabled a resolution seeking to change a law, that puts the burden of proof on the school district when its instructional plans for special education students are challenged by parents. In a case closely watched by educators nationwide, the U.S. Supreme Court in November upheld a Maryland law that puts the burden of proof on parents in such disputes, requiring them to show why a school district's plans will not meet their child's needs. As soon as the ruling was issued, D.C. school officials said they would seek to align their law with Maryland's. But since then, the board has twice put off voting on a resolution asking the D.C. Council to change the law, amid signs that board members are divided. Advocates of the change point out that the D.C. school system spends a disproportionately large amount of its budget on special education and argue that shifting the burden onto parents will reduce the number of legal challenges brought against it and save money. But board members who oppose the change believe requiring the school system to demonstrate the adequacy of the IEP is appropriate in light of the school system's track record of failing to deliver special education services. They also argue that school administrators have offered little in the way of evidence that shifting the burden to parents will have a significant financial impact. Board

# ESSAA RETIREES OFFERED LONG TERM INSURANCE

By Herb Dickson, President ESSAA Retirees

## 50+ LONG TERM CARE

One of the benefits available to both active and retired ESSAA members is the ability to purchase Long-Term Care insurances through the Rosol Agency, which also provides our life insurance coverage for active members. Please keep in mind that such insurance is written on an individual basis, since each of us has unique needs, such as what other insurance we have, our financial positions, and our ages. Surprisingly, gender is not a distinguishing item.

## WHY LONG-TERM INSURANCE?

A pretty safe bet is that we do not get healthier as we get older. Fifty percent of women, and a third of men over 65, will spend time in a nursing home. While Medicare pays 100% of long term care for 20 days, and all but \$95 dollars per diem for the next 80 days, it only covers skilled medical care. Almost 95% of nursing home or senior living facility stays are for custodial care – necessary when you cannot maintain the activities of daily living. Neither Medicare nor private health insurance pays for long-term custodial care.

While there are many different levels of coverage, and each of us has different needs, one rule of thumb is that the cheaper the policy, the less likely it will meet your needs. If you are interested in exploring this type of insurance, I strongly urge you to contact Karl Molin or Saul Rosen at the Rosol Agency, Inc. (914-428-6600). I thank these gentlemen for taking the time to provide ESSAA with relevant material and a tutorial on long-term care.

The Retired Empire State Supervisors and Administrators Association devotes 100% of it's time and resources to serving the interests of retired administrators and works to improve the quality of life for all retired educators. Additionally, the benefits of ESSAA membership (excluding our life insurance policy and legal representation) continue to be available. The annual fees are \$15 dollars per calendar year with a \$10 donation to the ESSAA PAC. Now more than ever it is critical to support the work of the PAC and the ESSAA legislative agenda.

### TEAR OFF FORM TO BE SENT TO:

**Retired Empire State Supervisors & Administrators Association  
C/o Herbert Dickson  
2636 Quail Ridge Road  
Endicott, NY 13760**



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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*Would you like more  
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