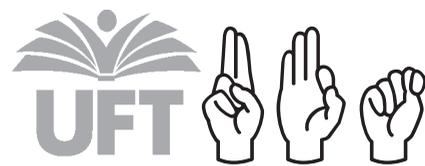


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SPEECH IMPROVEMENT CHAPTER



UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS ¥ A UNION OF PROFESSIONALS ¥ MINDY KARTEN BORNEMANN 212-598-7774

Fall 2009

Message From Mindy

I want to wish all of you, both new and seasoned educators, the best of luck in this school year. There were many new speech teachers hired during the summer. I want you to know that you are not alone. The UFT Speech Chapter is here to assist you and support your work in our schools. Feel free to call our hotline between 4 and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday; the number is (212) 598 -7774. Assistant Chapter Leaders Sandy Robinson and Kathy Lewis and I look forward to speaking to you. You may also contact me by e-mail at mbornemann@uft.org. However, due to the volume of e-mail I receive, a call to our hotline will receive a more speedy response.

The UFT borough offices are also available to help you with questions related to your salary, pension, health and welfare, and certification. The offices are open until 6 p.m. and one night until 7 p.m. Although your phone calls are confidential, we will ask for your name and telephone numbers so we can return calls when needed. Please make sure that you unblock your phone so that we can call you back. Our policy is that we will not call any supervisor or administrator unless you ask us to.

I hope to be able to meet all of you during the school year. If you would like me to visit your school or to invite me to a meeting, send me an e-mail. I am usually available on a Monday or Wednesday. When possible, I can come to a meeting at the end of the school day.

Most of our newsletters and news briefs are sent online due to printing and postage costs. For this reason it is extremely important that the union have your e-mail address. The best way to do that is to sign up on the union's Web site. That way, your updated information goes directly to the Membership Department and you will be sure to receive all chapter communications as well as important general union news. Signing up on the Web site also gives you access to the members-only sections of the site.

Please also make a point of visiting our chapter's Web page at www.uft.org/chapter/speech. Here you will find special chapter information, current and past newsletters, DOE memos and information about important meetings and events.

Fraternally,
— MINDY KARTEN BORNEMANN

FIGHT BACK AGAINST MIDYEAR BUDGET CUTS

As you know, New York City public schools have already endured \$400 million in painful budget cuts this year. Now Governor Paterson is proposing an additional **\$223 million in midyear cuts** to our schools as part of his effort to close a \$3 billion state budget gap. These potential midyear education cuts – which would come to more than \$145,000 per school on average – would be particularly disruptive because schools would have to dismantle existing programs and reorganize classes. Our students should not have to bear the brunt of the state's budget woes.

We need our state legislators to defend our schools and to push back hard against these potentially devastating cuts. Please take a moment to send a letter to your state representatives through the union's Web site. See the Action Alert! on the home page at www.uft.org.

**SIGN UP
ON
UFT.ORG!**

If you have not already, please sign up on the union's Web site, www.uft.org, so you can get the latest chapter and union news. Click the "sign up" button on the Speech Chapter Web page, www.uft.org/chapter/speech. You'll also get access to the members-only sections of the site. It's important to sign up now, because most of our chapter communications are by e-mail only! If we don't have your e-mail, you'll miss out on important news.

SHORTAGE AREA

If you have “unserved” or “underserved” students on your caseload you may apply for shortage area compensation. The DOE’s Shortage Area Compensation form is on the UFT Web site at www.uft.org/member/forms under Salary and Payroll forms. Although you are under no obligation to work your preparation periods, this is an option. Make sure that your supervisor or school administrator approves you before you begin working. Ask for an e-mail confirmation or signed application once you get approved. Every year we receive calls from members who haven’t been paid. In order to follow up with the DOE we must have a copy of your signed application.

These are very difficult economic times and schools are watching every penny. Please let us know if you are having difficulty with shortage area approval. Be sure to submit two schedules, one with preparation periods and one showing the students who would be served during your preparation periods if your shortage area application is approved. Your supervisor is obligated to review your caseload to make sure that it is at maximum, so be prepared to explain why you need shortage area work. The bottom line is that all students are entitled to receive the full mandates on their IEPs. Working your preps allows more students to be seen, and the DOE is obligated to pay you for your time.

SCHOOL COVERAGES

Last year our chapter received some special education complaints about speech teachers/providers doing class coverages. Requiring speech teachers to cancel mandated therapy sessions to cover another teacher’s class deprives students of services and should be reported on a special education complaint. In certain circumstances, it may also be grieved.

According to the teachers’ contract we are to be “treated equitably” when assigned school coverages on a preparation period. “Treated equitably” means that if you are told to cover classes during this period you are paid for the period lost and that the entire staff is in the rotation pool. It does not mean that you alone or you and the SETSS or resource room teacher make up the entire pool. This is a misconception perpetuated by some of our principals. There are at least two chancellor’s memos that address the coverage issue.

According to these memos, related service providers cannot be used for class coverage or other duties during any period in which they are scheduled to provide mandated services, including periods when they are providing additional service in lieu of preparation periods. Nor can related service providers be required to change scheduled service appointments to accommodate coverage needs or other duties in the school building. Since there is no one else in the school that can provide speech therapy, it is important that you let your administrator and school chapter leader know of your rights. If you are still being abused, reach out to your speech supervisor. Call us if the problem is not correctly immediately. Make sure you also file a special education complaint.

SPEECH STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Last spring we requested bargaining on the Department of Education’s Speech Standards of Practice. Assistant Chapter Leader Kathy Lewis, Queens Representative Lisa Arian, Brooklyn District 75 Representative Danita Susi and Chapter Leader Mindy Karten Bornemann met over the summer to review and synthesize the information provided by members

regarding the initial implementation of this initiative. We are in the process of scheduling a date for the first meeting with the DOE. In the meantime, please contact us immediately if you are being asked to use the SSOP with more than two students or you have received new directives from your administrator or supervisor pertaining to the implementation of this initiative.

RETENTION AND EXCESSING RIGHTS

Speech teachers have seniority and excessing rights in their schools. Members cannot be moved from a school unless there is a compelling reason for the excessing situation. If there is more than one speech teacher in the school, the senior teacher in license has the right to remain at the school.

No one should be moved from a high school superintendency or community school district in any borough. We have seniority rights to either an elementary/middle school program or a high school program. No one should be split between a high school and an elementary school.

It has recently been reported that some speech supervisors have violated our district seniority rights by making members cross district boundaries. We have advised members to file a grievance. The DOE's decision to create ISCs, CFNs, LSOs etc. did not change our rights.

It is important to call the hotline number or your UFT borough office if your rights are being violated. Principals do have the right to choose who works for them and if a speech supervisor sends you to a school, a principal may not wish to hire you. If a school is closing, please call us for your specific rights.

“NO EXCUSE” CAMPAIGN TO EXPAND

The UFT's "There is NO EXCUSE" campaign last year was very successful. The campaign is aimed at making sure special education students get the support and services they need and to which they are entitled. The campaign will continue and be expanded this year. Look for information in your schools and in the *New York Teacher*. Last year's we netted over 1,000 complaints in just a few months, many of which concerned issues pertaining to delivery of related services. Chapter members provided information on "unserved and underserved" speech students as well as administrative directives to cancel services to provide class coverage or test prep. The DOE had to hire many more speech providers because of our constant pressure. This is good for students and our chapter. For more on the "NO EXCUSE" campaign, visit the campaign Web page at www.uft.org/chapter/teacher/special/there_is_no_excuse. To file a complaint, use the online form on the campaign's Web page or call the special campaign hotline at 212-701-9499.

Top 10 reasons to file a special education complaint:

- 1.** You do not have copies of your students' IEPs
- 2.** You are forced to change speech therapy mandates for budget, staffing or other reasons unrelated to students' individual needs
- 3.** You are required cancel therapy to cover classes
- 4.** You are not receiving timely notice for triennials and re-evaluations (10 days before the meeting)
- 5.** You are directed to provide test prep instead of speech therapy
- 6.** You are working with students in an unsafe or inappropriate space
- 7.** Your students are not getting the technology/adaptive support on their IEPs
- 8.** Your building administrator is not following the procedures in the SOPM when parents request that their children be evaluated or school staff submit requests to refer students for speech therapy
- 9.** IEPs are being changed without your input or without considering your speech evaluation
- 10.** You have unserved or underserved students on your caseload or in your school or students whose families have been issued RSAs for speech services.

If any of these things are happening in your school, file a complaint immediately. To file a complaint, use the online form on the "There is NO EXCUSE" Web page or call the special campaign hotline at 212-701-9499. As school-based providers, you are in the best position to know if students are getting the support and services on their IEPs. The time to act is now, before the student experiences failure due to lack of special education support.

37½ MINUTE AWARD FOR NON-DISTRICT 75 SPEECH TEACHERS

In late October the UFT Grievance Department updated us on our arbitration case from February 2006. If you recall, we were successful at arbitration in preventing the DOE from mandating that speech providers conduct an extra speech session during the 37½ minutes. The DOE went to court to overturn the arbitrator's decision and to try to prevent those speech teachers who were ordered to provide mandated speech therapy during the 37½ minutes from getting paid for those sessions. I am pleased to let you know that the award can now be implemented **because the DOE has withdrawn its appeal.** The UFT is in the process of setting up a procedure with the DOE so entitled speech teachers can be paid per the arbitrator's award.

If you believe that you are entitled to be paid for additional sessions worked during the 37½ minutes, please contact Chapter Leader Mindy Karten Bornemann by e-mail or phone by November 15, 2009. Please provide the time frame and the number of extra periods that you taught. Mindy has kept the original documentation that was sent in back in 2006 but you may wish to check with our office to make sure that we have all of your paperwork.

For those members in District 75, we will update you on the status of your arbitration shortly. Feel free to check that we have your original documentation in our office. Continue to keep a copy of schedules with the extra time.

We are very pleased that the UFT's case and the Grievance Department was victorious in this long battle with the DOE.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

This summer and during the Fall, Mindy met with the UFT's newly elected President, Michael Mulgrew, as part of the 300-member negotiating committee and the smaller 30-member panel. Our issues were discussed as part of the teacher and functional chapter demands. Our new president has been very responsive to the needs of functional chapters. He has worked hard to help functional chapter leaders identify common concerns and develop bargaining demands to address those concerns. Be assured that we will continue to represent our needs as a chapter during these difficult times.



MEET YOUR 2009-2012 EXECUTIVE BOARD!

Below are the names and phone numbers of your elected chapter leaders. If you have a question, please call our hotline between the hours of 4 and 6 p.m., 212-598-7774. During other times, you can reach out directly to one of the board members, but please be considerate: don't call after 9 p.m. or in the mornings when we are getting ready for work.

Chapter leader

Mindy Karten Bornemann

Assistant chapter leaders

Sandy Robinson212-598-7774, 212-234-27607

Kathy Lewis212-598-7774, 718-379-0836

Manhattan representatives

Lorraine Cade – districts.....718-365-2002

Celeste Norman – high schools610-868-9101

Carole Bonhomme – citywide/District 75.....570-730-5663

Brooklyn representatives

Nikki Newman – districts718-253-4067

Brenda Caquais – districts718-370-2868

Charlene Tuff – Brooklyn/BASIS high schools.....(on leave)

Danita Susi – citywide/District 75718-442-6457

Bronx representatives

Jennifer Knight – districts718-881-5758

Steve Lowenstein – high schools.....718-548-6070

Velma Sifontes – citywide/District 75.....347-365-8116

Queens representatives

Lisa Arian – districts516-569-5063

Mindy Bornemann – high schools212-598-7774

Linda Albert – citywide/District 75516-496-8499

Andrea Starr – citywide/District 75516-295-9285

Staten Island representatives

Debbie Poleshuck – districts718-448-2647

Donna Brown – citywide/District 75.....718-442-1233

