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NEWSLETTER

Dear Friend,

We hope that the new semester finds your school off to a smooth start. While it can, at times, be hard to stay in high spirits during the winter months, we have much to celebrate including the legislation recently passed by the state Senate and Assembly. We commend the move to stop requiring the use of state test scores in evaluating teachers in New York State and we anticipate Gov. Andrew Cuomo's signature. The use of state standardized tests in teacher ratings will become the subject of collective bargaining in each school district. The rules will apply to state English language arts and math tests in grades 3–8, as well as to social studies and science exams and high school Regents.



The passing of such sensible, teacher-centered legislation did not come about by some twist of fate. Instead, it was the result of thousands of unionized teachers throughout the state working to make it happen. In November's election, teachers worked to get the vote out. That tremendous effort resulted in a state legislature controlled by pro-public education and pro-union lawmakers.

We thank you for your efforts to help shape a fairer New York for teachers, students, and school communities.

In solidarity,

Janella Hinds, Vice President for Academic High Schools
Sterling Roberson, Vice President for Career and Technical Education

Contract at a glance: School-Based Options

School-Based Options allow staff the flexibility to modify contractual language or create positions that best address the particular needs of a school community. The principal or the chapter leader can propose an SBO on behalf of the chapter. However, a principal cannot force the chapter to vote on any SBO, and an SBO cannot be adopted unless at least 55 percent of voting UFT members support it. An SBO remains in effect for only one school year. It must be renewed every year to continue, which requires the vote of the chapter.

Now is the time to start thinking about potential SBOs for your school, as well as communicate your ideas with colleagues and administration. The SBO process provides your chapter with profound power to shape school-wide policies. Please contact your UFT district representative or [consult the following guide](#) if you have any questions about proper procedure.

CTE Award highlights

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Members from John Bowne High School in Queens celebrate after receiving an award from the UFT for excellence in their agriculture program.



UFT Vice President Sterling Roberson, (standing, left), along with District Representative Alice O'Neal, (standing, second from left), join Manhattan-based CTE teachers honored for their many accomplishments.

CTE teachers and educators from around the city celebrated each other's work and success on Feb. 8. It was a packed house at UFT headquarters and everyone enjoyed an evening of fun, food, and awards hosted by UFT Vice President of Career and Technical Education Sterling Roberson and the UFT's Career and Technical Education Division.

Coming home to teach

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landra Cepeda, math teacher and graduate of Gregorio Luperon High School for Science and Mathematics.

This month, we are thrilled to shine the spotlight on landra Cepeda, who decided to teach at her alma mater, Gregorio Luperon High School for Science and Mathematics in Manhattan. When asked why she wanted to be a public school teacher, she responded, “Since I was young, I wanted to do something that, in some way, would impact or help somebody else.” As a math teacher, she is doing just that.

landra is immensely grateful for the education she received when attending Luperon and recognizes that, “This school makes a big impact in the community for Latinos who [are recent immigrants] to this country.” She wanted to “give back to the community and to the kids who, like me, are new to the country. They all have fear, but when they come [to Luperon] everything changes.”

Team High School welcomes landra to the profession and hopes to hear more inspiring stories like hers. If you know of an alumnus who has “come home to teach” please [let us know](#).

Your rights: lesson plans

[Article 8](#) of the teachers’ contract has affirmed that the organization, format, notation and other physical aspects of lesson plans are within a teacher’s discretion. Nevertheless, many supervisors required teachers to include specific components in lesson plans which led the UFT to file a union-initiated grievance. In sustaining the grievance, an arbitrator in 2014 [ruled](#) that “lesson plans are for the personal use of the teacher” and that supervisors may not “mandate specific elements of lesson plans.”

Then-Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña and UFT President Michael Mulgrew issued a [joint letter](#) to clarify lesson plan expectations. The letter made it clear that planning is a professional responsibility. All teachers must have lesson plans for their use. A supervisor may ask to see your lesson plans at any time. However, lesson plans cannot be collected “in a mechanical and/or routinized manner.” Talk to your chapter leader or district representative if you have questions about rules regarding lesson plans.

Scholarship for students pursuing education careers

[PDK Educational Foundation](#) provides financial assistance for undergraduates pursuing a degree in education. Members of Phi Delta Kappa, Educators Rising and Pi Lambda Theta provide the funds because of their commitment to the next generation of K-12 public school educators. The application deadline is April 3.

For information for your students, e-mail NYU PDK President Gene J. Mann at gmann@uft.org.

UFT Pride Committee: Daniel Dromm Scholarship

The UFT Pride Committee will award a \$1,000 scholarship to a high school senior in each of the five boroughs. The scholarship is named for City Councilman Daniel Dromm, the head of the Council’s finance committee and chair of the Council’s LGBTQ caucus. Applicants must be a high school senior and a committed LGBTQ student activist. Applicants must be attending college in the fall 2019 and have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. [View the the scholarship application](#).

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The Council for Economic Education is seeking applications for the 2019 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Teaching Champion Awards. This award promotes economic education at the high school level by recognizing and honoring three outstanding educators from the New York metropolitan area. Applicants must demonstrate how they integrate economics into their teaching. This award is open to high school teachers of all subjects, not just teachers of economics. The application deadline is May 17. [Register online.](#)

OUR DIVISION | OUR UNION



United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals
52 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
(212) 777-7500 • UFT.org

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