



District 75 News



David Doorga

To my District 75 family,

I am so pleased to share my newsletter with all of you in District 75. The phrase “E Pluribus Unum” is Latin for “Out of Many, One.” In June 2010, when I was the chapter leader of P168 in the Bronx, we created a newsletter with that name as a forum for better communication and crucial support. My goal was to improve our working lives and therefore our students’ learning lives by bringing people together and reminding them that one person may feel helpless in the face of injustice, but once people unite and stick together, they can create positive change and better lives for all. Does this sound familiar?

Our United Federation of Teachers was formed when a group of pioneering educators united and vowed to stand up for what was right for New York City students and those who have devoted their lives to serving them. A free and appropriate public education is one of our most sacred rights as Americans, and it is especially precious to people challenged by disabilities. This is why I am so honored to be your new District 75 representative.

Not only are we all educators, but we all chose to work with students with special needs. We are overworked and often unappreciated, and we seldom hear a “thank you.” Please rest assured that I know how tough your job is because I have been in your shoes. I began as a paraprofessional in 1996 and used the Career Training Program to further my studies. I went on to serve as a special education teacher for 17 years, working with students challenged by every type of disability.

Thank you all for everything you do every single day.

Although Veterans Day falls on a Saturday this year, I wanted to take the opportunity to personally thank every veteran who is currently working in District 75 as well as our active military, and I want to especially thank our District 75 military spouses and parents. We often hear the saying, “Freedom isn’t free.” This is especially poignant for those of us who have stood, as I have, at a military cemetery and thought about husbands and wives, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, who left in the prime of their youth and never returned. I also consider the young people who have come home but are forever changed, sometimes physically, sometimes mentally, but always emotionally. Please keep our veterans in your thoughts.

I look forward to a year of remarkable accomplishments achieved by working together in unity. Stay Strong, Stay United.

We are ONE! E Pluribus Unum

Yours in solidarity,

David Doorga
District 75 Representative

Tenure workshop for District 75 probationary teachers

We at the UFT are eager to support you during your first years of teaching. If you are a probationary teacher, I invite you to join me for a tenure workshop in District 75 on Tuesday, Nov. 28 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the UFT's Bronx borough office at 2500 Halsey St. District 75 Superintendent Ketler Louissaint will join us to discuss the best evidence of teacher practice and the process leading to tenure. [See the flier](#) for more details. Registration is required. Use this [online registration form](#) to RSVP for this workshop.

DOE's new Special Education Operating Procedures Manual

The Department of Education's Special Education Operating Procedures Manual has been updated. Up-to-date information about the DOE's policies and procedures regarding special education is finally available in one place. It is a "living" document that can be updated as needed. Log in to the DOE's Intranet to see the manual. Check out the "new and notable" page at the beginning of the manual to find out about its major changes. Use the table of contents to go to the topics that relate to your work. The DOE is open to working with the UFT to get this document right, both in terms of its usability and its content. While the DOE will not be able to change information or procedures that are required by law or regulations, the UFT will bring your comments and concerns to the DOE's attention. Use this [online form to provide your feedback about the manual](#). DOE Deputy Chancellor for Specialized Instruction Corinne Rello Anselmi will be the special guest at the UFT's Special Education Committee meeting on Thursday, Nov. 9. She will discuss the new manual and bring members of her staff who can answer your questions. Please mark this date in your calendar. Use this [online registration form to RSVP for the meeting](#).

Information about lesson plan formats

Since 1990, Article 8 of the teachers' contract has affirmed that the organization, format, notation and other physical aspects of the lesson plans are within a teacher's discretion. Nevertheless, many supervisors continued to require specific components be included in lesson plans which led the union to file a union-initiated grievance. In sustaining the grievance, the arbitrator ruled that "lesson plans are for the personal use of the teacher" and that supervisors may not "mandate specific elements of lesson plans." The Chancellor and UFT President Michael Mulgrew issued a joint letter to clarify lesson plan expectations. The letter makes it clear that planning is a professional responsibility. All teachers must have lesson plans for their use. As has always been the case, 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. Should you have any questions about lesson plan requirements, contact your school chapter leader or our Queens borough office.

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