



United Federation of Teachers - Vice President for Education

The Informed Educator

Welcome!

Special points of interest:

- Educators Unpack Part 154
- Trending for 2019?
- Setting the Rules for Rules
- Be informed about your Contract
- Questions and Answers

I'm delighted to introduce to you the first issue of the United Federation of Teachers' newest newsletter - *The Informed Educator*.

The Informed Educator provides up-to-date information about educational policies and practices that affect your professional life. This online newsletter also gives you, the informed educator out there, an opportunity to weigh in on myriad topics that are current in the world of education, suggest topics for future issues and communicate with your colleagues in the labor movement. I'm sure you'll find the newsletter useful and thought-provoking.

I and my team of informed educators throughout the United Federation of Teachers will include items and provide information that can be of use in your classrooms and work sites. I invite you to share any thoughts about what you read or what you would like to see in this newsletter by contacting me at edejesus@uft.org. Just put "Informed Educator" in the subject line. That way this newsletter will truly merit its title.

I hope you enjoy it!

In Solidarity,

Evelyn DeJesus



Evelyn DeJesus
Vice President for Education
Executive Director Teacher Center

Educators Unpack Part 154

This year educators from all levels and subject areas, members of the UFT's English language learners (ELL) focus group, are once again coming to 52 Broadway after school to discuss the changes to the New York State Part 154 Regulations that govern the education of ELL students.

The Part 154 regulations, which went into effect in September 2015, made changes in terminology, proficiency levels, identification and exit criteria for ELLs as well as the role of parents, program offerings, grade spans and professional development requirements. (A link with more

information about Part 154 is at the UFT website, www.uft.org.)

Members of the focus group have been dealing with these changes and the impact, both positive and negative, that the Part 154 regulations have had on instruction and student learning.

Focus group discussions are often lively and it's not just complaining about what's wrong but how we, as informed educators, can make it right. It's also a great way to share with other educators and dispel misinformation, myths and confusion from "the field."

One of the toughest challenges has been implementation of the integrated co-teaching model. Informed educators know that it cannot happen without planning time for the co-teachers.

They have other concerns about this model as well and, along with the UFT leadership, shared these concerns with members of the New York State Board of Regents and representatives from both New York State and City Departments of Education. Team work requires dedicated planning time that often does not exist in most schools. Imagine an orchestra playing together without ongoing and scheduled rehearsal time or a baseball team playing regular season games without spring training. Focus group members, backed by UFT leadership, are continuing the push to change Part 154 and improve the manner in which the integrated co-teaching model is implemented in our schools and we welcome other informed educators to the fight.

If you're interested in joining the focus group, contact Katie Kurjakovic (KKurjakovic@uft.org.) We meet about once a month--all educators are welcome!

Setting the Rules for Rules



A major concern of most educators is how to create a classroom in which instructional time is maximized and behavioral disruptions are minimized. A basic principle of classroom management, no matter what level or subject, is establishing rules and procedures that promote learning. Here are some rules for how to create classroom rules:

The students create the rules,

whether it's about bathroom breaks or grading policies. They can explain why they are necessary.

Make sure the rules do not conflict with school policies.

State the rules in the positive and post them prominently.

Make sure all students understand the rules and the reasons for them.

Feel free to share your ideas about rules and classroom management in general.

Send your responses to the Vice President at edejesus@uft.org.

Remember to put "Informed Educator" in the subject line.

Be informed about your contract

For over a quarter of a century the UFT has used collective bargaining in order to improve the professional life of educators and to provide them with the voice and the power they deserve. We know many educators often have professional differences about the appropriateness of curricula, textbooks, program offerings and student evaluation. Article 24 of the collective bargaining agreement provides a process to reconcile professional differences. If you have any questions about this powerful contract provision contact your chapter leader. An excerpt from Article 24 is given below. Go to the UFT website for the complete professional conciliation procedure.

ARTICLE TWENTY-FOUR

PROFESSIONAL CONCILIATION

The Board and the Union agree that professional involvement of teachers in educational issues should be encouraged. However, it is recognized that there may be differences in professional judgment.

A. School Level

1. Where differences related to school-based decisions in one of the following areas cannot be resolved, a conciliation process will be available to facilitate the resolution of these differences:

- Curriculum mandates
 - Textbook selection
 - Program offerings and scheduling
 - Student testing procedures and appraisal methodology
 - Pedagogical and instructional strategy, technique and methodology. In order to utilize the conciliation process, the UFT chapter may request, through the Union, the service of (a) person (s) identified as expert in conciliation.
2. Within five school days, the Board Coordinator will contact the appropriate superintendent who will promptly advise the Board Coordinator as to whether he/she will directly address the issue.

3. The Conciliator will initiate the conciliation process within ten days. This stage of the process is expected to be completed within a month unless the participants, including the Conciliator, believe it beneficial to continue the process.

4. At the conclusion of the conciliation:

If a resolution is reached, the Conciliator will prepare an agreement for both parties to confirm and sign. It is expected that both parties will adhere in good faith to the agreement. Where one of the parties believes that a good faith effort is not being made to adhere to the agreement, the party will contact the superintendent and district representative who will ... take actions as necessary to assure implementation of the agreement. If the superintendent and district representative cannot resolve it, the issue will be forwarded to the Chancellor and Union President for resolution.



Trending in 2019!

We predict that :

The use of multiple measures to determine student, teacher and school performance will become the default evaluation procedure.

The immigration debate will continue with an increased focus on social and emotional needs of newly arrived students and how those affect academic performance.

Educators will make more use of on-line learning, integrating

technology into learning for all students. Technology such as laptops, hand-held and mobile devices, and similar technology will replace the traditional spiral notebook.

Professional development will shift from the use and integration of technology to using and integrating skills of critical analysis, synthesis and application when faced with on-line information.

Educators and legislators will look at ways to better align K-12 education with higher education in areas such as budget, accountability and community involvement.

English language learners will become recognized as MLLs (pronounced MELLs) - multi-lingual learners.

What are your predictions? What trends do you see?

Share those thoughts with Vice President DeJesus and other informed educators at edejesus@uft.org. Make sure to put “Informed Educator” in the subject line.



Questions & Answers!

Dear Evelyn,

I noticed English as a Second Language (ESL) is no longer being used. It's ENL, English as a New Language. Why this change? Will it affect my ESL certification? Is this political correctness run amuck?

UFT Member

Dear UFT Member,

Sometimes it takes time for our
acronyms to catch up with

what's happening in our society. The reality is that many students in our schools already speak more than one language. So even though they may not speak English proficiently they may already have a command of two or three other languages. So for these students English is not a second language but a new language--hence the change from ESL to ENL. For example, my wonderful grandchildren speak Spanish, Mandarin and English and are studying French in

school. Guess you could say they are French as a New Language students. The change in terminology acknowledges the reality.

This change will not affect your certification.

As for “political correctness” I think we always have to bear in mind that labels, imposed from above or based on perceptions of the dominant culture can define a group and color our perceptions as informed educators. Most of you, like me, are too young to remember when students were labeled limited English proficient or LEP (with its unfortunate echoes of leprosy).

“Limited!” What a message that sends to educators, parents and most importantly to those students. Words make all the difference.

Questions for Vice President DeJesus can be sent to edejesus@uft.org. Make sure to put “Informed Educator” in the subject line.



Policy Spotlight

The federal law called the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to include “not less than one indicator of school quality or student success that allows for meaningful differentiation in school performance” and that is “valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide” in their accountability system.

New York State includes graduation rates, English language proficiency, chronic absenteeism and college and career readiness as measures of school performance.

What would you include as an indicator?

Send your responses to edejesus@uft.org.

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School Visit Highlights

My team and I have the privilege of visiting many schools over the course of the year. Questions run the gamut, from the implementation of ESSA, to how the UFT can help them get CTLE credits, and to resources for English language learners and students with disabilities. At the beginning of the school year, members may share ideas about how to plan for their initial planning conference (IPC). Others may brainstorm professional learning opportunities they would like provided in their building.



If you would like to schedule a school visit for Vice-President Evelyn DeJesus, speak to your chapter leader.

LearnUFT and Teacher Center

As a state-approved provider of Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) hours, the UFT's LearnUFT program offers low-cost professional learning opportunities specifically designed to meet our members' needs. State regulations now require all teachers who hold professional certificates and paraprofessionals who hold Level III teaching assistant certificates to collect and track 100 professional development hours (known as CTLE hours) by a state-approved provider in five-year cycles. See our offerings! <http://www.uft.org/teaching/learnuft>

The Teacher Center operates throughout the five boroughs of New York City in 105 school-based sites and numerous outreach locations. Drawing on current research and best practices, the Teacher Center's professional development activities for educators are designed to deepen content knowledge and enhance pedagogical skill. Activities range widely and include intensive in-classroom support, after-school study groups, citywide networks, conferences and seminars. <https://registration.ufttc.org>



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