



Dear Christopher,

We went from winter in April to summer in April. How do we go from temperatures in the 30s to 92 degrees without getting on a plane? Finally, we are experiencing spring. The flowers burst into bloom all at once as did the trees — they must be as confused as we are. I need a science teacher to explain how the flowers and the birds know what to do.

Field Day Committee Chair Matthew Colacurto [sent these instructions](#) to Pathways to Graduation staff about our exciting May 30 annual field day. Matt and the committee have worked so hard to make field day a success and I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

I want to emphasize the importance of Pathways staff volunteering for this event. This is the first year that most students will participate, which is great, but it also means that we'll have more students than ever in attendance. To ensure a safe, successful event, we need as many volunteers as possible. I am also hoping that supervisors will be flexible in having staff deployed at the park. Volunteer today by signing up on this [Google document](#).

Visit the [UFT website](#) any time and use the tools there, such as [the Frequently Asked Questions page](#) and the [Ask the Union tool](#). You can also find contact information for your [UFT borough office](#), where staff can assist you with issues and questions.

Enjoy the Memorial Day weekend but please remember the service men and women who gave their lives so that we can enjoy the freedoms we have today.

For all the moms out there, please have a great Mother's Day.

Yours in solidarity,

Michael Friedman
Pathways to Graduation UFT Chapter Leader

If you need to reach me:

Home: 718-796-3533

Cell: 917-513-7872

Fax: 718-796-3533

Email: michaeloes@att.net

Scholarship event for high school graduates

Pathways to Graduation and the Bronx UFT High School Committee are sponsoring the second annual awards ceremony for high school graduates. Last year's event was wonderful; the students were so proud of their achievements. Many dressed in formal wear and family members attended. This year's event is June 19 at 4:30 p.m. at the UFT'S Bronx borough office, 2500 Halsey St.

Joan Martinez awarded the UFT Academic Excellence Award



Joan Martinez, second from right, was among the teachers who received UFT awards for excellence on April 20.

Joan Martinez, who teaches at Covenant House, was among the teachers who was honored at the Academic High School Awards Celebration on April 13 at UFT headquarters. Joan received her academic excellence award for her unique ability to reach students. Manhattan Borough Principal Marie Polinsky and I attended the event where Joan received this much-deserved award.

Covenant House has homeless students whose goal is to pass the TASC exam. Joan invited me to be part of a restorative justice class along with Social Worker Casey Lynch. It was amazing to see how well both Casey and Joan worked with students and how open the students were with Casey and Joan. Congratulations, Joan!

Good news for bilingual teachers

On April 13, at the Manhattan Hub, the bilingual curriculum team of Marisol Carmenate, Oswaldo Russi, Elga Lahoz, Noelia Febles, Rosa Rodriguez, Mardonio Figueroa and Luis Diaz, along with Deputy Superintendent Robert Zweig and District 79 Interdisciplinary Coach Karen Sealy, presented the first part of the curriculum in Spanish to bilingual teachers and school administrators.

When I visit sites, bilingual teachers often complain about the amount of time it takes them to translate the school curriculum into Spanish. The April 13 presentation is the first and important step to end this burden. I am grateful for the committee's hard work.

A discouraging vote for the Marcy Campus

The Panel for Educational Policy finally voted in the early hours of April to approve the DOE's bad proposal to redistribute space in the Marcy Campus in Brooklyn. The DOE plans to merge two transfer schools, eliminate a floor of space from the current schools and programs in the building, and take away four classrooms, an office and storage space from Pathways to Graduation. This will allow a middle school charter school to move into the building.

The panel gave its approval despite numerous protests, meetings, city council hearings and passionate speeches from students and staff. This is really an outrageous affront to our program and our students as well as the two transfer schools, which all serve over-age and under-credited students. Our program's hub and referral center also serves students throughout Brooklyn.

A team of hard-working advocates tried to stop this DOE plan. But the DOE and the panel ignored our pleas and dashed our hopes. It's difficult to tell the students that they fought a just battle but lost all the same. We — the Marcy Campus staff, Pathways staff from around the city and UFT members — are proud of all those who took a stand for what's right. I wish the panel had had the same courage our students showed in trying to fight City Hall.

In the face of this setback, rest assured that we will hold the DOE responsible for making sure our students get the education to which they're entitled. Our students need to know that they are as important to us as the charter school initiative appears to be to city officials.

Workplace discrimination and harassment

No one should have to tolerate harassment or discrimination at work. This is why the UFT-Department of Education contracts include protections against a wide range of discriminatory or harassing behaviors, including sexual harassment. Federal, state and city laws also provide protections. Workplace discrimination or harassment can take many forms, and you have various channels for redress. Each channel has its own timeline for reporting the conduct and filing charges. It can be hard to figure out how to respond and what avenues to pursue, which is why it is so important that you contact me for help. For detailed information

about what to do if you are the victim of workplace discrimination or harassment, read the [Know Your Rights column](#) on the UFT website.

NYSUT Representative Assembly report



Janet Jakubowski and John Liponi of Levittown United Teachers at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

I was honored to be a UFT delegate at the New York State United Teachers Representative Assembly on April 26-27 in Buffalo. Delegates at the statewide meeting agreed advocacy for students, member engagement and relentless political action will all remain front and center for the union in the coming year. We approved 27 resolutions and five special orders of business and also referred 14 measures to the NYSUT Board for further action. One failed. [Here's a rundown](#). Go to nysut.org/ra for complete coverage of the RA and the LRCPC, including coverage of the local and retiree council presidents and a [Q&A with Commissioner Elia](#).

Parental leave

The union is still trying to negotiate an agreement with the city that grants parental leave to our members. We will not allow the city to profit from any parental leave agreement at the expense of the members.

[Read the complete story](#) in the May 1, 2018 issue of the *New York Teacher*.

Delegate Assembly

The UFT Delegate Assembly approved a resolution at its April 18 meeting in support of a May Day rally. The May 1 rally in Manhattan's Washington Square Park, which I attended, was supported by a coalition of labor unions, including the UFT, and immigration rights organization. I believe we sent the right message on May Day that we support workers' and immigrants' rights to pursue fair wages and fair treatment in the workplace and in the country.