

VC ECHOES

Volume 10, Issue 4

Valley Central Teachers' Association

February, 2008

Hillary Clinton: The Education Candidate





Volume 10, Issue 4
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*VC Echoes is
a NYSUT
and AFT
Award-winning
Publication!*

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*Article contributions or Letters to the Editor
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The VC Echoes is the official publication of the Valley Central Teachers' Association—Local 3076—and is published regularly throughout the school year.

Any articles submitted to the VC Echoes will also be posted on the VCTA web site.

We're on the web at: www.vcta.net

AFT and NYSUT Endorse Hillary Clinton in 2008

United States Senator Hillary Clinton received her largest endorsement to date when the American Federation of Teachers backed her in the Democratic presidential primary last fall. In choosing the New York senator, the AFT, with the full support of NYSUT, cited Clinton's long history of unwavering support for the issues that matter most to union members. "Sen. Clinton has been with NYSUT members and New Yorkers on all of our major issues in education, health care and labor," said NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi. "She's been particularly strong in her support of our positions on early childhood education, private school vouchers and tuition tax credits. And she is a recognized leader in championing health care reform."

On Tuesday, February 5th, Hillary Clinton won New York's delegates in the primary with the support of NYSUT members. Hillary currently leads nationally, although the race is very close and the final outcome undecided. What is most pleasing with regard to the democratic primary is that neither Hillary or her opponent have engaged in negative campaigning despite the media's repeated attempts to bait them in that direction; not one attack ad has been released from either camp. Congratulations to both.

New York State Education is #1

On January 14, Christopher B. Swanson, *Education Week's* Director of Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, appeared on CNN's *Lou Dobbs Tonight*.

The topic of discussion was new research entitled *Failing Grades* that highlights the successes and failures of education in the United States. The most successful states have the following two criteria in their favor:

1. strong performance of public schools; and
2. an active education policy.

The study accounted for current levels of educational performance, improvements over time, and poverty gaps or equity. Although no single state finished at the top of the list on all of the categories assessed, New York State finished first, ahead of all other 49 states, with an overall score of 84.9. To see a list of all states and their rankings visit: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2008/18src.h27.html>. The following is a list of individual categories assessed along with scores received by New York State:

1. Chance-for-Success, 82.6;
2. K-12 Achievement, 71.9;
3. Standards, Assessments & Accountability, 94;
4. Transitions and Alignment, 92.9;

5. The Teaching Profession, 79.2;
6. School Finance, 88.7.

Swanson said that many people automatically think of New York City when New York is mentioned. The truth is that although New York City brings New York State's scores down, the state as a whole does very well and is very active with education policies. New York City's dilemmas are more complex, as are the problems associated with urbanization in general.

In the meantime, we should all be proud of New York's top standing; nevertheless, there is room for improvement. Although New York State finished first overall, it did not finish first in any single category. The nation as a whole only received a grade of "C" and no state received an overall grade of "A." *Swanson said the thing that drives the economy and keeps America in a strong place throughout the world is a strong education system. We must have well educated workers that can adapt to the needs of the 21st century. Complacency is not an option; New York State will continue to improve and will remain a beacon of excellence for our nation. Congratulations to all of you who have been and/or will continue to be a part of this success story.*

–Tim Brown, HS

Ending the Gap: The road to improvement may be data-driven

Standardized tests may not be popular, but one expert in educational finance says the data they generate can help focus efforts on solutions to the achievement gap.

Allan Odden, a professor of educational leadership and policy analysis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, says schools that have successfully improved performance share some common traits. One of those traits is the use of test results to deploy the right resources and staff to the classrooms – and children – who need them most.

"Everybody has got to get their fingers dirty analyzing the data," Odden said in a session on educational equity at NYSUT's recent symposium on

ending the gap.

While few favor the proliferation in testing brought about, in part, by No Child Left Behind, Odden said testing does provide information on what is working and what is not. Linking resources to decisions driven by hard data, school districts can raise achievement and make dramatic gains toward ending the gap.

Using data to target instruction and resources "makes teachers more efficient and more effective in what they teach," Odden said. The data should be used to identify the areas of greatest need and the most effective ways to address them. Then districts can create funding models that (*cont'd pg 7*)

Changes in Special Education

As a result of the reauthorization of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) a number of changes have been made in special education law that may impact implementation of special education services. Highlighted below are some of the most significant changes that impact how professional staff have input regarding the identification of and planning for special education students.

Excusal of CSE members

This change in the law allows for CSE members to be excused from meetings. This change may have been put forth as a means to allow flexibility in scheduling, yet could have significant implications. If a CSE member's area of curriculum or related service is not being modified or discussed and the parent and the district agree in writing, that member can be excused from the meeting. Even in the case when the member's area of curriculum or related service is to be discussed or modified, that person can be excused from the meeting if there is consent in writing. The parent would need to be informed ahead of time of the request to excuse this member and be provided with written input from that CSE member before the meeting. Given the fact that decisions about a student's placement or program may be reached as a result of the discussion and exchange of information at a CSE meeting it is important to have the professionals that have direct contact with the student available to participate in this interactive process.

Revision of IEP's after an Annual Review

This change allows for a modification to be made in a student's IEP after an annual review without holding a CSE meeting if the district and parent are in agreement. The parent should be provided with a written proposal of the changes and be informed of their right to consult with teachers or related service personnel regarding the proposed change. In addition the IEP team is supposed to be informed of the changes made and the parent should be provided with the amended IEP without needing to request it.

It is unclear what timelines need to be followed with the proposal for change or with regard to notifying the CSE members of any changes made. It is important to note that if a teacher is not in agreement with this change their voice might only be heard after the fact, rather than as a part of the decision-making.

Reevaluation Decision

The district and parent can agree not to conduct a reevaluation. This agreement needs to be in writing, but there is no requirement for criteria to make this decision, or required participation of CSE members in this decision making. Again, the professionals that have direct contact with the student can be excluded from decision making. While many may view the reevaluation process as a heavy paperwork burden, it is a process to periodically review the student's progress including standardized testing results and progress reports from teachers over a three-year period.

Initial Referrals

This change in the law limits who is allowed to make an initial referral to CSE. The parent or the district can make a referral to the CSE. Professional staff members are allowed to request that the school district make a referral.

Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention or RTI refers to a process that now can be used (and eventually has to be used) to identify students with a learning disability. The change in law requires that local school districts identify their RTI criteria and process or levels of intervention and progress monitoring. Parents are to be notified when their children are identified as needing an intervention beyond that provided to all general education students, and should be notified of the right to make a special education referral. RTI typically uses three tiers of increasing levels of intervention, where the instruction is provided based on student's needs and their progress is monitored. At Valley Central the RTI process has not yet been clearly defined.

–Dr. Christine Mello, HS,
Building Rep.

In the News...

This issue's column focuses on current developments that affect teachers throughout New York State. In this installment of *In the News...*, VCTA President Tim Brown summarizes and comments on issues discussed in the January 17th edition of *New York Teacher*, January's *NEA Today*, and *NYSUT Leader*, December 7, 2007.

Health & PE (*NYT*, 1/17, p. 3): Governor Spitzer “urged legislators to pass the Healthy Schools Act, which targets junk food in schools as one way to reduce the rates of childhood obesity.” Unfortunately, the federal mandate requiring school lunch programs to be self-sufficient continues to hamper the practicality of this initiative. The governor must also be willing to increase state aid to food service programs if this proposal is to have any practical financial merit. Spitzer also called for enforcement of New York State’s “strongly written but often ignored physical education requirements.” Is it possible that state-of-the-art facilities such as the undersized and, therefore, overcrowded Valley Central gymnasiums impact physical education instruction and childhood obesity?

Contract for Excellence Funding (*NYT*, 1/17, p. 20-21): “The spirit of the law requires districts to use the new funds to enhance services in high-need areas, not to direct funds to existing programs or to offset taxes.” In the final analysis, this should translate into “new funding for supplementing—not supplanting—existing school programs.” There were districts throughout the state where union leaders were invited to the table in the first year of this program to discuss how this new money would be spent. Teacher union input is required in the second year.

College Costs Rising (*NEA Today*, 1/08, p. 9, 29-30): “In 2002, more than 400,000 qualified students were unable to attend a four-year school because they couldn’t afford it.” Students who attend and graduate from a four year institution today have double the loan debt they did just ten years ago. This is primarily a result of tuition increases—42% in 5 years. This increase outpaced both inflation and teacher salaries and directly impacts the number of qualified teachers that are available to fill vacancies. Furthermore, how does this financial burden impact our annual data? How many more high school graduates would there be enrolled in college if they could sim-



Brown Tackles
the Issues

ply afford it? Should this financial burden and its subsequent impact on post-secondary education be taken into account before State Report Cards and NCLB data are misused to create the appearance of failure for anti-education camps?

Principals (*NEA Today*, 1/08, p. 14): Across the nation, less than 5% of new principals come from the classroom. Instead, they emerge from central offices or leadership programs. Here in New York State, we are fortunate that we are the exception to this rule. Principals generally have multiple years of classroom experience which ensures some measure of understanding and empathy with regard to the needs of those who are primarily responsible for educating students—teachers. Let’s hope that NY remains atypical with respect to principal training. Other states should look to New York if they wish to improve.

Reporting Child Abuse (*NYSUT Leader*, 12/7/07, p. 1): There is further clarification regarding child abuse reporting; mandated reporters of child abuse must now directly report to the State their suspicions. Mandated reporters in school settings include “teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, school nurses, administrators and other school personnel required to hold a teaching or administrative license or certificate.” This new mandate helps to prevent mistakes or assumptions with regard to who has or will report suspected abuse in settings such as schools that have historically had independent internal reporting procedures. This new law’s aim is to put children’s safety center by eliminating the inherent flaws in these independent internal procedures. **BOTTOM LINE—MAKE THE CALL YOURSELF.** This is the only way to ensure that the child receives the help s/he needs and it is also the only sure way to protect your job, which could be in jeopardy if proper reporting procedures are not followed. Follow up with your administrator and/or designated building reporting agent to ensure that everything possible is being done within the school setting (see page 10 for more information).

—Tim Brown, HS

Decoding Your W-2

After opening my W2 form and checking out the figures, a question immediately arose. Line 1 was the amount I have to report to the IRS. Lines 3 and 5 are the amounts subject to social security and Medicare assessments. The difference in these figures matched the amount in line 12a, my contribution to my TSA (Tax Sheltered Annuity). That the amount on line 1 was less than the amounts on lines 3 and 5 by the exact total of my TSA proved to me that it was indeed pre-tax, and I would not have to pay the IRS for my TSA contribution. But where was my contribution to my Cafeteria 125 plan and the amount being taken to pay my portion of health insurance?

I had been assured that both the Cafeteria 125 and the health insurance payments were of a FLEX nature, meaning they were pre-tax and would not be reported to the IRS. Why didn't my W2 show that amount so I could be certain it was not being taxed?

I called the appropriate office at Central Office and was told that it did not appear on my W2 form because the district was not required to show that amount on the form. This did not satisfy my need to know how I could verify that my FLEX contributions were indeed pre-tax. I went to my union leaders and presented them with my question. They understood what I was trying to verify and they called Central Office to seek the answer. The person they spoke to was unable to tell them why the FLEX deductions were not on the W2 forms and would have to get back to them.

In the meantime I was able to speak to a friend who does tax preparations for a living. She gave me an explanation but wanted to check IRS regulations and requirements so as to be certain. Within an hour she had a perfectly logical explanation as to why my FLEX deductions were not on the W2. The FLEX law states that not only is the FLEX deduction not subject to taxes, it is also not subject to Social Secu-

*W-2 Woes? Don't despair,
the answer is probably
pretty simple!*



riety and Medicare assessments. Therefore, it would not be reflected in the difference between line 1 and lines 3 and 5 on the W2.

My friend said to check my final pay stub for the year 2007 and confirm that my final gross salary was not what appeared on lines 3 and 5. I did that and discovered my final gross salary was higher by the exact amount of my Cafeteria 125 and health insurance payment. Therefore, both of these FLEX deductions were indeed pre-tax and I was truly getting the tax break I was entitled to. This explanation was verified by someone else at Central Office who has a whole storehouse of knowledge and the ability to share it clearly and concisely. All was well with the world.

A suggestion for the future might be to use the W2 line 14 entitled "Other". It seems logical to use it to show people what their FLEX contributions were for the year as well as proving it was not subject to any taxes or charges. It would seem to be a simple remedy to help avoid confusion which would not require a great deal of additional work.



—Sandy Strauss, MS
Building Rep.

New Member News

As I write this article, the first half of the 2007-2008 school year is rapidly coming to a close. This is my fifteenth year of teaching and I am still blown away at how the school year seems to pass in the blink of an eye. I remember as a child, my mother always said, "Don't wish your life away". The nature of teaching however, causes us to plan our year away. Breaking the year down into lessons, units, quarters, semesters, etc. makes the year pass so very quickly.

As a new teacher, the speed at which the year is moving must be overwhelming to say the least. Since you have completed your first semester, take a few minutes and congratulate yourself. After you read this article, take the time to revisit the first semester. Take note of your successes and your failures. As teachers we are very critical of ourselves. Learn from the failures, but don't dwell on them.

Some of you may be having difficulty celebrating your successes or possibly even identifying them. Think back to a lesson that you thought went exactly as planned or one that went completely wrong but you were able to adapt resulting in "that mess" evolving into a perfect lesson. These are your

successes. The first time you called a parent and conveyed your concerns or discussed their concerns is one of your successes. Think back to those "ah ha" moments, where you could figuratively see the light bulbs pop on over your students heads. These are your successes. Think back to when you were able to diffuse a situation before it had a chance to escalate. This is one of your successes. Think back to that child who you finally got to smile. This too is one of your successes.

Each and every one of you had many successes over the last few months. Acknowledge them. Don't be afraid of sharing those moments with your colleagues and friends. When one of us is successful, the rest of us are better able to see our own successes. Take the time and be proud of who you are and of what you have accomplished.

Please remember that if you have any questions or concerns please talk to your New Member Liaison/Buddy. If I can be of any assistance, my cell phone is (845) 863-5141.

–Rich Steger, VP

Ending the Gap: (cont'd from page 3)

direct resources to elementary, middle and high schools, depending on the areas of need.

Early impact

For example, Odden noted, research shows class-size reductions have the greatest effect in grades K-3. So the resources required to alleviate crowding could best be targeted to those elementary classrooms.

Other resources, such as technology in classrooms, might be most effectively used for older students.

In addition to data-based decision-making, he encouraged struggling school districts to:

- set higher goals;
- consider new curricula;
- invite outside expertise;
- provide ongoing professional development; and

- establish a culture that accepts teachers as leaders within the school.

Teacher training is most effective when there is collaboration and when it is accompanied by follow-up coaching, according to Odden.

"Training with coaching leads to professional change," he explained. "Teacher leaders can be instructional coaches working with other teachers toward data-based decision-making and using data to change instructional practice."

In the best school districts, he said, "There is a superintendent leading at the top, a principal leading at each school and there are teacher leaders who lead and serve as instructional coaches."

– Carl Korn

New York Teacher, 23 January 2008

TRS Update: The Phases of a Retiring Teacher's Attitude

The chart below illustrates the phases of a first-year teacher's attitude toward teaching. It's probably safe to say it illustrates any member's attitude toward school during a year! It probably also describes the retiring members attitude as well. As we head into Spring, the retiring teacher rejuvenates knowing that there are only a few months left. Soon there will be all the "lasts"...the last time you have to teach a unit, give a test, complete a duty, fill out report card. After years of service, the retiring teacher looks forward to a brand new phase in his/her life—a phase that will afford them the one thing they probably missed the most while they were active...time.

While there are many technical and practical things to think about when considering retirement such as benefits, pop-up options and the cost of living, there are many emotional things to consider as well. A member needs to know that they are ready to retire, to begin the next phase of their life. Many of our colleagues attended the VCSD Retirement meeting on Jan. 31. This meeting is really meant for those retiring this year, but it is also beneficial for members to attend this meeting if they are a few years from retirement so they are aware of what they will need to do. The NYSTRS website is an invaluable tool for all members. Every member can create an account to keep track of their benefit profile. It provides much support for those considering retirement beginning with the Pre-Retirement Seminar. The schedule of these meetings are on the website; they are intended for anyone within 10 years of retirement. There is also the "Countdown to Re-

irement" Video which takes you month by month through your last year of active service.

If you are within your last three years of service, you should schedule a one-on-one consultation with the NYSTRS.

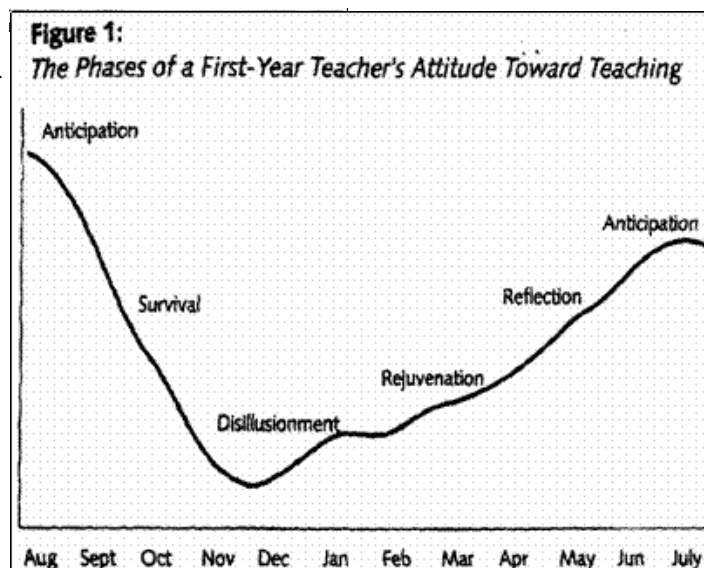
For those members who have decided to retire at the end of this year, please note the dates on the next page. **REMEMBER: *you must not only resign your position with the District but also make a separate application to the Retirement system.*** These are the two steps you take to becoming officially retired.

When you received your benefit profile, you will probably noted that the amount that has been estimated as your benefit is lower than you expected. That's because it is only an estimate—the District will report your earnings this year after June 30. The benefits you receive at first are an based on your estimated earnings. Once the actual earnings are reported your benefit is adjusted. However, you may wait up to a year for that adjustment to take place (according to NYSTRS).

If you have questions regarding retirement, your best source is to deal with NYSTRS directly. If you encounter any problems or difficulties at any

point, please contact me so I may assist you. Remember to continue to the next page for important retirement dates.

—Patti Lunden,
NYSTRS delegate



Target Dates to Remember for Retirement

March 1st

- Submit your letter to the District. This ensures you receive your contractual benefits.
 - **Payment for banked sick days: \$40 per day for up to 300 days**
 - **Step Increment: an amount equal to your last increment adjustment—becomes part of normal pay within two pay cycles of March 1**

Form letter for this is available on the VCTA website: www.vcta.net.

April 1st

- The filing period for a July 1 retirement begins April 2. You can file your application up to 90 days prior to your effective date of retirement, or as late as the date of retirement. Waiting until your retirement date nears will allow you more time to make decisions and track pending legislation that could affect your final benefit. To ensure you receive your first benefit payment on the last business day in July, file your retirement application with NYSTRS by June 14.

Whenever you decide to file, we urge you to submit your application by registered or certified mail. Doing so will give you proof of mailing and ensures we consider your application received on the date it was postmarked. If your application is sent any other way, it is considered received the day it arrives at NYSTRS' headquarters in Albany. If you have questions or wish to receive an application contact the NYSTRS via the web: www.nystrs.org or 800-348-7298 x 6250 for help.

June 1st

- This is the deadline to get back into health insurance if you have been receiving the buy-out. Include this request in your retirement letter to the District.

June 15th

- This is the date that you must pay the district if you are keeping dependents on insurance coverage. You pay ½ the difference between single and family coverage, however you no longer have to make any contribution to your own health insurance premium.

NOTE: June 30th is the effective date that you retire from the District as indicated in your retirement letter. July 1st is the date you are retired and the date indicated on your retirement application to NYSTRS (New York State Teachers Retirement System).

Benefit Profiles were mailed in January.
If you did not receive one, contact NYSTRS immediately.

Not receiving a profile could indicate a problem with your account.

Mac's Musings (from the Retiree Side)...

—2008! I can't believe how old I am—

And relatively speechless. What a break for you, patient readers who have turned to the back pages. A large contingent of retirees have again become snow birds, seeking out Florida, Carolina, Georgia, Arizona, etc. (warmth). Thus I don't have "Life after VC" nuggets to share.

—Today is January 22nd—

Again I'm late with these few words. Credit Union annual is this coming Saturday. Numbers are down at this point. Where are all those dancing feet of yesterday? Maybe there will be a rush for late sign-up. Thanks to Stan and the Credit Union crew for their work in making all the arrangements.

—Condolences

Word reached Tony Gesso of the death of Dr. Elizabeth Gennarino, wife of Dr. Ralph Gennarino whom the old timers will remember fondly as a Maybrook administrator. Elizabeth was also a long-time educator in Orange and other areas. Our condolences to Ralph.

—Excel Bond

I was happy to see that the Excel bond went through. Teachers, administrators, and staff are to be commended for their support. This issue was definitely win-win, since a large amount is picked up by the state.

—Negotiations

Here's hoping that negotiations go well this year and that the budget will continue to put kids center.

—Forgotten Mommies

Also hoping that the "Forgotten Mommies" receive justice at the hands of the state legislature whom they will visit on January 23rd. You (retirees and active teachers) can help by bombarding Speaker Sheldon Silver with phone calls in support of A9524, the reinstatement bill for the forgotten mommies. His number is (518) 455-3791. His fax number is (518) 455-5499. Thanks.

—Amen

I told you I'd be brief. I hope this year will be good to all of you for good you are. Until next time, keep pushing back the barriers of ignorance in whatever venue life finds you. Peace.



—Kevin McFadden
Retiree Representative

Just for Fun!

I received the following joke in an e-mail last week and I thought of all the jokes Mac has endured with a smile at Executive Council meetings. To all those who have lovingly teased, this will remind you that your turn is coming!

My name is Alice Smith and I was sitting in the waiting room for my first appointment with a new dentist. I noticed his DDS diploma, which bore his full name. Suddenly, I remembered a tall, handsome, dark-haired boy with the same name had been in my high school class some 40-odd years ago. Could he be the same guy that I had a secret crush on, way back then?

Upon seeing him, however, I quickly discarded any such thought. This balding, gray-haired man with the deeply lined face was way too old to have been my classmate.

After he examined my teeth, I asked him if he had attended Morgan Park High School. "Yes, I did." He gleamed with pride.

"When did you graduate?" I asked. He answered, "In 1958. Why do you ask?"

"You were in my class!", I exclaimed.

He looked at me closely. Then, that ugly, old, bald, wrinkled, fat, gray-haired, decrepit SOB asked, "What did you teach?"

Advertising Section

These ads will be seen by over 900 members of the VC Educational Community and their households. If you would like to advertise in the next issue of the VC ECHOES, contact Meghan Rilley, 457-5899 for rates.



Are You Using The MAP?

Approximately 2,000 NYSUT members have joined MAP, the Member Assistance Program through NYSUT Member Benefits Trust. Each week, more members sign up as they hear about the benefits.

MAP is a quick, painless, unobtrusive e-mail program that provides reminders about the more than 40 endorsed insurance, financial, legal and discount plans available to you as a NYSUT member.

MAP e-mails are sent every three weeks or so. You can open them at your convenience and no trees are killed in the process! You have the option of reading the brief text message or viewing it in html format in your browser, complete with eye-pleasing colors and graphics.

Very often, "MAP Alerts" include the opportunity to win valuable prizes donated by providers of endorsed programs. MAPers have received such prizes as a Bose Wave[®] Music System, tickets to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, OfficeMax gift cards and 100 free gallons of heating oil.

In addition, new MAP enrollees and existing MAPers are automatically entered into quarterly raffles; prizes to date have included digital cameras and an iPod nano.

What kind of information do you receive? The message may be an advance notice of a change in an existing plan, a new endorsement or simply a reminder about a program. Sometimes you will be asked your

opinions on programs under consideration for future endorsement, including which features are most important to you.

Most MAP messages are sent from Member Benefits. Occasionally a provider of an endorsed program will send one. Member Benefits oversees the content and frequency of messages. Your e-mail address will not be shared with outside parties other than endorsed program providers and then only under controlled circumstances. Once a program provider receives approval to send you an offer or information, the vendor is required to destroy the e-mail listing after sending the MAP Alert.

If you haven't yet joined, simply complete a brief sign-up form on the Member Benefits Web site, www.memberbenefits.nysut.org, and within three weeks, you'll start to receive MAP Alerts.

For information about this program or about contractual expense reimbursement/endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please call NYSUT Member Benefits Trust at (800) 626-8101, e-mail benefits@nysutmail.org, visit www.memberbenefits.nysut.org, or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed programs.




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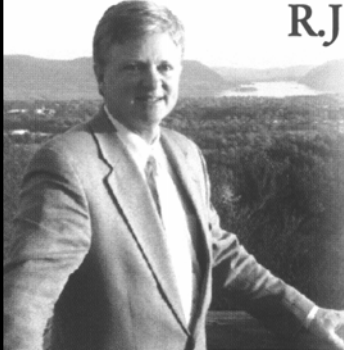
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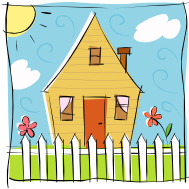
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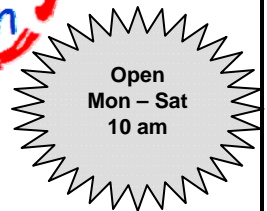
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NYSUT CSE Workshop Well-Attended

On December 11, 2007, David Rothfuss of NYSUT (pictured below) presented a CSE workshop to outline the changes made to Special Education Law. The presentation began at 4 pm and continued until about 6 pm. Over 50 VCTA members from across the district attended. Mr. Rothfuss prepared a PowerPoint presentation that clearly explained the changes in IDEA and spoke at length about each one. He answered questions from the floor throughout the evening. Mr. Rothfuss also distributed several fact sheets produced by NYSUT to workshop participants. No matter what subject or grade level participants taught, this seminar had something for everyone.

If you have any questions regarding the IDEA reauthorization and its changes, please contact Christine Mello (HS), Patti Lunden (HS), or Rich Steger (W) for more information. For a wonderfully informative summary, please see Dr. Mello's article on page 4 in this edition of the VC ECHOES.

—Meghan Riley, HS

