

CSAANYS



Catholic School Administrators Association
Of New York State
406 Fulton Street, Suite 512, Troy, NY 12180
(518) 273-1205 Fax: (518) 273-1206
Web site: csaanys.org E-mail: nysadm@aol.com
December 2001/ January 2002
Volume 32 – Issue 10

Matters of Principal

By Sister Carol Cimino, Executive Director

Of Shoes and Ships....

"The time has come," the walrus said, "to speak of many things. Of shoes and ships and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings." Lewis Carroll was, of course, a teacher in real life. I thought I'd use this opportunity to speak of many things that have been rolling around in the ozone of my mind.

- ❖ On Sunday, October 28th, we hosted an "Afternoon with Sister Clare Fitzgerald" and invited every Catholic school administrator in the State of New York. The event was co-sponsored by the New York State Council of Catholic School Superintendents. From the surveys we took, the verdict is that the afternoon was "awesome". We had thought, however, that perhaps one-quarter of our principals might show up; after all, this was a one-time gathering for just Catholic school administrators from all over the state. But merely one-eighth or 160 principals showed up. For those that did attend, a great many of them reported that it was their first time in Albany. What will it take to get a real showing of our administrators at a state-wide gathering?
- ❖ The tragedies of September 11th and November 12th affected hundreds, perhaps thousands of school children. But the media focused on public schools and how those children were affected. Judging from the reports of funerals and memorial services held in NYC, most of the deceased were Catholic. We hope that those Catholic schools know of the support and prayers of the Catholic schools in the rest of the state.
- ❖ A recent report from the Council on American Private Education notes that, although private school enrollment is up, Catholic school enrollment is down. Why is that?
- ❖ That same report noted that Catholic schools charge, on average, one-third of what nonsectarian private schools charge. Yet private school enrollment rose by 2.5% while Catholic school enrollment fell by almost 6%. What's with that?
- ❖ Finally, since this has been, in all likelihood, the most difficult fall season in recent history, we hope all our members take a real holiday this Christmas break. Remember, the mail will be there waiting, as will all the paperwork; it won't go away. But you can. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES TO REGENTS APPROVED

Commissioner Mills has approved additional alternatives to the Regents exams. They are: (1) AP Biology as an alternative to the Living Environment examination. (2) AP U.S. History as an alternative to the U.S. History and Government examination. (3) SAT II in Biology as an alternative to the Living Environment examination, provided that, in addition to achieving a score comparable to a 65 on the Regents examination, students are also required to complete 1,200 minutes of hands-on laboratory work with satisfactory reports. (4) SAT II in U.S. History as an alternative to the U.S. History and Government examination, provided that students achieve a score comparable to an 85 on the Regents examination and are also required to complete satisfactorily a multi-source, in-depth research project that demonstrates the ability to use primary and secondary sources. For information – www.emsc.nysed.gov

SEARCH FOR PRINCIPAL

Notre Dame Academy HS, Staten Island is currently searching for a principal. Applicants who possess an advanced graduate degree in educational administration and proven leadership ability in the field should submit a letter of interest and a current resume to: www.notredameacademy.org.

A PRAYER IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

from Pope John Paul II

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. From you come all our blessings; To you goes all our praise.

In these most difficult and challenging times, send us your spirit of peace. Give comfort to those who are suffering pain and loss in the wake of the violence that has befallen us. Give courage to our leaders, and welcome into your holy presence all those who have died.

For those who have served as rescue and emergency workers, medical teams, and all grieving the loss of loved ones, save your choicest blessings.

Lead all nations and peoples into the light of your wisdom, O Lord, so that we may always be drawn to the power of love and never to the love of power. In faith and in peace, we place our lives, our nation, and our future in your hands, this day and forever. Amen.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NYC SCHOOLS

For a complete listing of medical requirements including immunizations for new school entrants for public, private, parochial schools along with day care centers, please call the Tuberculosis Control Program at 212-442-9968/web site: www.nyc.gov/health or call CSAANYS for a copy.

GOVERNMENT ISSUES REPORT ON VOUCHERS

The General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report today on the voucher programs in Cleveland and Milwaukee, saying "more definitive research" is needed to determine the effect of vouchers on student achievement.

The GAO report said that well over two-thirds of the students that received vouchers in the two cities were minority group members, and most were African-American. Students attracted to the voucher programs were more likely to come from lower-income families than the average public school student, and in Milwaukee they were also more likely to have lower levels of academic achievement. (No reliable data on prior academic achievement were available for Cleveland's voucher students.)

The state per-pupil expenditures for voucher students were lower than the per-pupil state aid provided to the public school districts involved. Despite the lower per-pupil cost, some studies of student performance reviewed by the GAO found "little or no difference" in the performance of voucher and public school students, while other studies found "that voucher students did better in some of the subject areas tested." But the GAO concluded that "none of the findings can be considered definitive" and "additional research will be needed to develop findings that are conclusive and generalizable.

The report did not examine data on privately funded voucher programs or on parent satisfaction with voucher and private schools.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL ON EDUCATION

In a Spring, 2001 editorial, The Wall Street Journal observed that the increased spending on education over the last decade has produced few measurable results. One of Education Secretary Rod Paige's favorite props is a chart that contrasts rising outlays over the past ten years with flat reading scores over the same period.

A new study on public education spending by analyst Mike Antonucci of the Education Intelligence Agency suggests that, while we are spending plenty of money on schools, we're still not spending it properly. For example:

- Classroom teachers comprise just 52% of the nation's public-education work force, and 12 states employ more non-teachers than teachers.
- More than 80 cents of every dollar spent on public education ends up in the paycheck or the benefits package of a public education employee.
- The national average for per-pupil spending in 1997 was \$5,578. That year, Newark, NJ spent \$11,578 per pupil. Geography explains some discrepancies as cost-of-living tends to be higher in the Northeast. But it does not explain how Jersey City, NJ, 10 miles away, spent less than \$2,000 per student.

SAFETY NET EXTENDED

The safety net for Students with Disabilities has been extended. It is now available to all students with disabilities entering 9th grade from September 1996 to September 2004. This extends the availability of the local diploma for these students. To earn a Regents diploma, 5 Regents examinations are required. The safety net allows these students to take a Regents Competency Test if the Regents exam is failed. If the RCT is passed, credit will be received toward a local diploma. The RCT's will be available until the student graduates or reaches the age of 21.

The Federal Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) will be up for reauthorization in the next session. Hopefully, it will move more quickly than the reauthorization of the ESEA this year. We are still waiting for the final passage of this act.

STUDENTS TRAVELING ABROAD

Based on conversations with and information from public and private agencies that are concerned with traveling outside the United States, the following guidelines are suggested: continue to plan trips abroad, but establish benchmark dates for reassessing plans based on the most current domestic and international developments with involved parents and students; purchase travel insurance in case plans change; and frequent the web site of the U.S. State Department on a regular basis to review travel warnings, consular information sheets and public announcements (www.state.gov).

We also recommend that all permission slips be duplicated with one set left at school and be notarized.

BUDGET TIME!

The ink is barely dry on the New York State Budget for the current year. The office of Governor George Pataki is in the process of preparing his Executive Budget Proposal for the 2002-2003 fiscal year. The tragic events of the fall have created financial hardships for all. Budget decisions will be difficult but as our needs as a state and nation are prioritized, education is near the top of the list. It is most important this year that we clearly let our elected officials know our needs and remind them that parents have the right to choose schools for their children. Write to the Governor and your legislators and encourage them to provide:

1. Tuition tax credits
2. Academic intervention Services so that we can meet the standards set by the New York State Education leaders. The need in Private Schools is over \$10 million. In the past two years the Governor has allocated only \$1 million for all private schools.
3. Aid to expand computer hardware.
4. Aid to provide transportation for children up to 25 miles and allow parents the option to pay for the cost beyond the 25 miles.

Let your legislators know we appreciate the assistance we now receive for textbooks, mandated services, library and software aid. But remind them of our rights of parental choice, and a share in the taxes, which we pay. Write the Governor now and your legislators when the new session begins in the Spring.



SAVE THE DATE!

The Nonpublic School Administrators 18th Annual Conference will again take place in Albany on October 28th and 29th, 2002.

The Nonpublic school Office will be taking suggestions for this event such as theme/speaker/workshop topics, etc. There is a February 1, 2002 deadline for any suggestions you might have. Please e-mail Mr. Thomas Hogan, at the Nonpublic School Office THOGAN@MAIL.NYSED.GOV with any suggestions you may have.

A tip of the CSAANYC Coif.....

Religious Sister of Mercy Rhea Bean, Bronx, NY, has been elected to a five-year term on the Wadhams Hall Board of Trustees.

Sister Rhea is president of Mercy Secondary Education Administration at the Regional Community of NY Sisters of Mercy