

United Federation of Teachers

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING TEACHER
DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION

UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AFL-



50 years

United Federation of Teachers 1960-2010

50 years

This brief history inevitably speaks of presidents and a handful of individuals, but union leaders can speak with authority only when the employer knows they speak for their members.

It's the rank-and-file members who waged the struggles, suffered the pain and scored the victories related here. This book is, therefore, dedicated to the amazing members of the United Federation of Teachers, past and present, who over 50 years have made this organization what it is and will shape its evolution into the future.

50

years

After 50 years, Our History Continues



Giants built this union.

In the first 25 years, Presidents Charlie Cogen and Al Shanker, along with pioneers such as Dave Selden, led the titanic struggle to create the UFT, won us the right to collective bargaining and established the United Federation of Teachers as a political and educational force. They and a few thousand founding members – courageous all – repeatedly defied a law that could have cost them their jobs and pensions. They spoke with a single voice for teachers, parents and children as champions of quality public education, and along the way saved New York City from bankruptcy.

In the second 25 years, Presidents Sandy Feldman and Randi Weingarten sustained that fight. But they also emphasized a dimension present since female teachers first struggled for their rights in 1900: UFT members demanded dignity and a professional role in their classrooms.

Sandy gained faculty a contractual say in educational decision-making and bolstered the union's research and experience-based training. She vastly increased professional development opportunities through the Teacher Center, which Al Shanker had secured in state law in 1980. And she expanded outreach to students and parents via the Dial-A-Teacher program, another 1980 innovation.

Randi navigated the union into a position of great political and educational influence at a time when unions nationally were losing power and membership. "Respect" was the watchword of her presidency. She forged broad and deep relationships with community and parent organizations around a simple idea: children deserve a quality education.

Our union has never stopped growing. We now represent the spectrum of educators in traditional and charter public schools; registered nurses in hospitals and agencies; staff in nonprofit organizations like United Cerebral Palsy; and most recently 28,000 family child-care providers.

With child-care providers – just as with paraprofessionals in the turbulent 1960s – the UFT showed who we are: An inclusive union devoted to raising people from poverty and equipping them to improve not only themselves, but also our city. Great things will come from our newest members, who swelled membership to more than 200,000.

As I see it, our challenge in the next 25 years is to break a crippling cycle that runs through history: The union sees how to improve education and society. We convince school and political leaders to try it. It works. But politicians savage the budget, undercutting our achievement. New school and political leaders arrive, glibly talking about

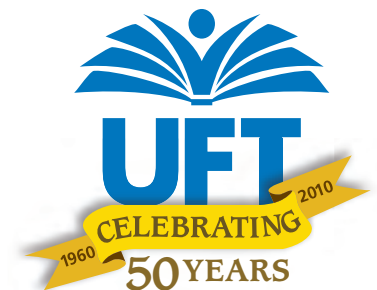
"reform." They stamp the schools in their own image, whether it makes educational sense or not. And then we are forced to start over again.

Many students would not be struggling today if the school system and City Hall had listened to Henry Linville and John Dewey in 1912; if they had preserved the UFT's More Effective Schools program of the 1960s; if they had kept the UFT-negotiated Chancellor's District of 1998 – if they had, in short, sustained funding for small classes, proven programs, well-trained and well-supported staffs and the books, supplies and resources that children need to learn, along with clean, well-maintained and uncrowded buildings.

I am humbled to lead our union as the United Federation of Teachers celebrates its 50th anniversary. Every day is about strengthening our schools and our communities, and improving the education of our students and clients.

If, working together, we can convince school and political leaders to heed the lessons of history outlined in this book, my hope is that 25 years from now, some future historian will write of all of us who belong to the UFT today: They, too, were giants.

— Michael Mulgrew, President



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Foreword

Oct. 17, 1912. Fifteen thousand handbills had flooded the public schools, and now Horace Mann Auditorium at Columbia Teachers' College was overflowing. The topic: Should teachers have a voice in the schools and their professional lives?

Arguing "yes" was firebrand Henry R. Linville, Harvard Ph.D., Jamaica High School biology teacher, founder of *The American Teacher* magazine. He had seen principals set salaries at whim. He had seen teachers fired for criticizing administrators. And in 1905 he had confronted Superintendent William Maxwell: "Do you think that there are no conditions which might justify a teacher in complaining of his superior?" The head of the city school system replied: "Absolutely none."

Arguing "no" were two district superintendents. One warned against starting "another organization," for there were scores of informal groups, none allowed to bargain a contract. The other urged teachers "not to besmirch yourselves with concern about wages, or ventilation, or hours of work." The "administration of the schools was the business of superintendents and other officials ... Teachers should confine their activities to their immediate classroom tasks."

The Teachers League – the UFT's earliest ancestor – was born that night. Teachers proved more than willing to stand up for themselves in a struggle for their rights, benefits and, perhaps most important, dignity.

At the organizational meeting on Feb. 28, 1913, Columbia professor John Dewey – the leading philosopher of pragmatism, who in 1916 would claim American Federation of Teachers' membership card number 1 – provided the intellectual framework. If education is to prepare children to forge the nation's future, he argued, teachers must be the



Henry R. Linville

driving force.

"The chief motive to the development of professional spirit is lacking," Dewey told the crowd, "when teachers have ... little to do... with intellectual responsibility for the conduct of the schools, when the teachers ... have nothing whatsoever to say ... about the formation of the courses of study ... when they have nothing save ways of informal discussion ... to say about methods of

teaching and discipline; when they have no means for making their experience actually count in practice."

It would be nearly 50 years before New York City teachers would bargain their first contract. Yet over the decades an irrepressible core of teachers battled in the courts and the corridors of City Hall and Albany for decent working conditions, job protection and professional status – along with the books, materials and authority needed to properly educate their students.

For decades these champions were few in number but deftly used political jujitsu to score victories when they could. They sometimes split over ideology – tragically so in the 1930s through 1950s – but they consistently spoke up for what was right.

As the Teachers League became the Teachers Union, then the Teachers Guild and finally the United Federation of Teachers, New York City's teachers built unrivaled strength as a force for improving public education. Every advance took a fight, for very little came easily; reason and evidence alone seldom swayed politicians and school authorities. But today, UFT members have protections, salaries, benefits and a say in their workplaces that early 20th-century teachers could only have dreamt of.

Fifty years since the UFT's founding, almost 100 years since Henry Linville took the stage, the United Federation of Teachers embraces many workers beyond the classroom. If the still-unfolding epic that began in that auditorium has one overarching philosophy – one that with the appropriate substitutions applies to all UFT members in their various careers and workplaces – it is in the page 1 editorial in the first *American Teacher* magazine of January 1912:

The editors "desire to work with their official superiors in a public way, on the basis of mutual interest in the ultimate welfare of the children ... [A] large portion of the constructive ideas ... should come from the teachers themselves ... [for] teachers come in direct contact with the facts of teaching."

The New York Times October 19, 1910

"EQUAL PAY."

Mayor GAYNOR's Commission reporting upon the salary schedules of teachers in the public schools was not appointed to determine whether equal pay should be given for equal work. Nobody ever denied the justice of this self-justifying demand. But the commission has reported that the position, not the sex of the teacher, should determine the salary. It adds that the change is "one of nomenclature, not

The New York Times October 6, 1911

PASSES EQUAL PAY BILL.

Assembly Approves Granting Same Pay to Male and Female Teachers.
Special to The New York Times.

ALBANY, Oct. 5.—The Assembly tonight, by a vote of 87 to 4, passed Senator Grady's bill amending the New York City Charter to provide for equal pay for school teachers. Assemblyman Shlivel of the Thirty-first District of New York County opposed the measure on the ground that it would be unjust to the male teachers. Assemblyman A. E.

The New York Times May 12, 1914

EDUCATION NOTES.

The Brooklyn Heads of Department Association will hold a meeting at 4 P. M. to-day at the Brooklyn Training School for Teachers, Park Place, near Nostrand Avenue.
Sixty charts illustrating "the relation of Latin to practical life" will be exhibited in the Hunter College High School annex this afternoon and to-morrow afternoon.
An exhibition of paintings by the teachers of drawing in the elementary schools is being held in the municipal art gallery of the Washington Irving High School. It will be continued until May 31.
The alumni of the South Brooklyn Training High School will hold a meeting at 8 P. M. on Thursday.
The Vocational Guidance Association of New York will hold its annual meeting at 4 P. M. on Thursday in the Washington Irving High School auditorium.
The Teachers' League of New York City has elected the following officers: President—Henry R. Linville; Vice President—Isabel F. Davenport; Secretary—Adrienne V. de Mere; Treasurer—J. Edward Mayman.

1900-1920

THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN TEACHERS

Two months after its organizational meeting, the newborn Teachers League put the “status of married women teachers” at the top of its ambitious agenda, along with “professional improvement, ratings, promotions and salaries ... retirement and compensation for disability ... course of study, textbooks and supplies ... school organization and management.”

By then, New York’s women teachers had been fighting for more than a decade against a paternalistic school system. Their struggle coincided with the suffragists’ campaign for voting rights, which culminated in ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

These twin fights by increasingly independent women reflected a broader societal upheaval. Women teachers – so many and so visible – were particularly under the gun.

“This vast horde of female teachers in the United States tends to subvert both the schools and the family,” railed Columbia professor James McKeen Cattell in a typical comment from 1909. Marriage (and male dominance) was in trouble “when spinsters can support themselves with more physical comfort and larger leisure than they would as wives; when married women may prefer the money they earn and excitement they find in outside employment to bearing and rearing children, when they can conveniently leave their husbands should it suit their fancy.”

By then, the city’s female teachers had scored two victories.

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK. Two years after the consolidation of New York City, the Davis Law of 1900 merged its school districts into a single Board of Education and imposed a discriminatory pay scheme.

Pay under New York State Davis Law of 1900			
Gender	Starting pay in 1900	Maximum pay elementary	Pay high school
Women	\$600 a year (2008= \$15,329)	\$1,240 after 16 years	\$1,100-\$2,500
Men	\$900 (2008= \$22,994)	\$2,160 after 10 years	\$1,300-\$3,000

“How many of you have signed the payroll and seen upon it the name of a man who was doing the same work as you are, but who is receiving almost double your salary?” suffragist Augusta Beck asked at a 1905 meeting of the Class Teachers Association. “Haven’t you felt humiliated?”

By 1907, Grace Strachan, a rare female superintendent in Brooklyn, had built the Interborough Association of Women Teachers into a 14,000-member force that besieged Albany for equal pay. In response, men formed the Association of Men Teachers and Principals, which contended that “women did not require the same standard of living as men; that women did not deserve equal pay, since they were intellectually inferior to men; and that equal pay would result in more women avoiding marriage in favor of work,” wrote historian Patricia Carter.

When Mayor George B. McClellan vetoed an equal pay bill, as mayors then could do with state laws affecting the city, Strachan’s organization helped elect George B. Gaynor as mayor in 1909. He set up a commission which favored raising women’s pay by 93% and men’s by 7%, a plan which the Legislature adopted in 1911.

WORK AFTER MARRIAGE. Cloaked in morality, people who favored keeping women in their place (the home) said women teachers threatened society. Impressionable children should not know they had married, because marriage implied sex – and sex should not even be contemplated. (As late as the 1930s, an elementary principal complained to teacher Alice Marsh – later a UFT legislative representative — “I don’t see how you can stand in front of a class after you’ve slept with a man the night before.”)

The board passed a bylaw: “Should a female principal, head of department, or teacher marry, her place shall thereupon become vacant.”



Grace Strachan

Kate N. Murphy’s pay stopped after she married in 1902. She sued for uneven application of the rule, since many married women taught. The Court of Appeals, the state’s highest court, agreed in 1904, saying women couldn’t be fired for marrying, only for a cause specified in the city charter (insubordination, gross conduct, neglect of duty or general inefficiency).

The board adopted a new bylaw: No married woman could be appointed to any teaching or supervising position in the day public schools unless her husband was “incapacitated from physical or mental disease to earn a livelihood, or has continuously abandoned her for not less than three years.”

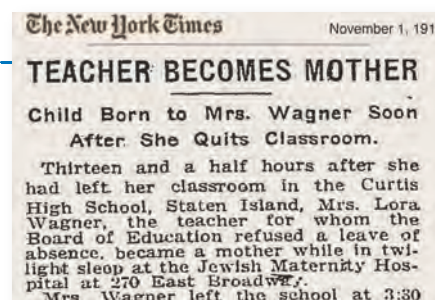
“Why,” asked Teachers League member Henrietta Rodman, is “a woman whose husband is ill or has deserted her better fitted to teach children than a woman whose husband hasn’t deserted or isn’t ill?”

For many, marriages stayed secret – until pregnancy became apparent. That led to the third battle, which women won with the Teachers League’s support.

MATERNITY LEAVE. Bridget C. Peixotto, the teacher in charge of the Throgs Neck Public School, was fired in 1913 after giving birth. After 18 years of teaching, she was two years away from eligibility for a pension, but that was gone, too.

Justice Samuel Seabury ruled in her favor: “If she cannot be removed because of her marriage, she cannot be removed because of an act which is a natural incident of her marriage.” But the Court of Appeals overturned him on procedural grounds.

Peixotto turned to state Education Commissioner John H. Finley, who in 1915 upheld her and 16 other suspended teacher-mothers: “If ... married women teachers should ipso facto end their service upon maternity, this policy (which I cannot believe sound in principle or wholesome in practice) can be made possible only through legislation.”



This was a victory, but the board exacted revenge. Pregnant women could take leaves – but only mandatory two-year leaves without pay. That was policy until 1937, after which women had to tell principals as soon as they became “aware” they were pregnant; since that meant taking an immediate leave, into the 1960s teachers hid pregnancies for as long as they could. (“You stayed until you showed,” recalled Phyllis Wallach, who wore loose jackets during her 1962 pregnancy; she later served as an elected trustee to the Teachers’ Retirement System.)

1912-1920

TEACHERS LEAGUE STARTS FIGHTING

The Progressive Era (1890s-1920s) was in full swing, issuing in seismic social, political, economic and social reforms following the buccaneering excesses of the Gilded Age. Muckraking journalists exposed child and sweatshop labor, governmental corruption, lynching and cutthroat business practices. The 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in Greenwich Village, in which 148 mostly female garment workers died, led to the first comprehensive safety and workers’ compensation laws.

Congress regulated railroads and the food and drug industries; tightened antitrust laws; regulated child labor and improved working conditions; enacted conservation laws and established federal control over banks. Four constitutional amendments provided for an income tax, direct election of

senators, women’s right to vote and the prohibition of alcoholic beverages.

It was a time of polyglot political passion that is hard to comprehend in today’s United States. Mass movements flourished, including suffrage, unionization and all stripes of politics, from anarchism to populism. A tidal wave of immigrants brought economic and intellectual vitality, along with what some in the power structure saw as dangerous ideas.

Into this ferment marched the Teachers League and its progressive agenda for improving schools. They demanded to share power with the principal – an idea that was still radical when UFT President Sandra Feldman negotiated school-based management/shared decision-making into the teachers’ contract in the 1990s.

In 1913 the League called for “a self-directing body of teachers with a deep sense of responsibility for the solution of all educational problems.” A teacher-elected committee should administer schools, with the principal as chair. A majority vote by teachers should set school policy: “Teachers to-day have no responsibility: they have only burdens, imposed ... [by] the petty requirements of bosses.”

The New York City Board of Education would have none of this. It wanted silent, obedient teachers, and it battled with the Teachers League over the free-speech rights of activist Henrietta Rodman. She had satirized the board in a letter to a newspaper about the teacher-mother issue, saying board members had engaged in “mother-baiting ... the object of the game was to kick the mothers out of their positions in the public schools.”

The board charged her with insubordination and gross misconduct and suspended her without pay. She countered: “It was no act of insubordination to criticize the Board of Education.” State Education Commissioner Finley upheld the

board’s right to suspend her, but said censure would have been more appropriate. As Rodman saw it, “she had not sworn away her right of free speech when she became a teacher,” according to a *New York Times* account.

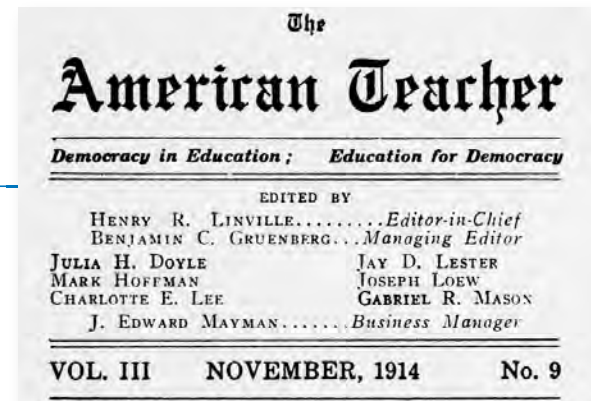
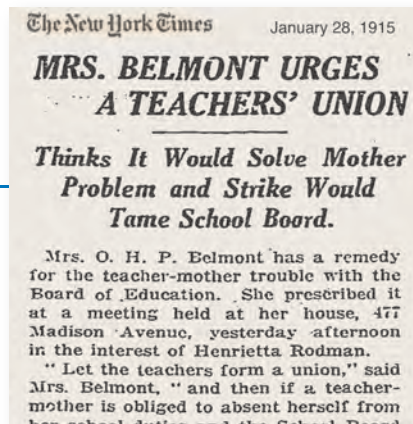
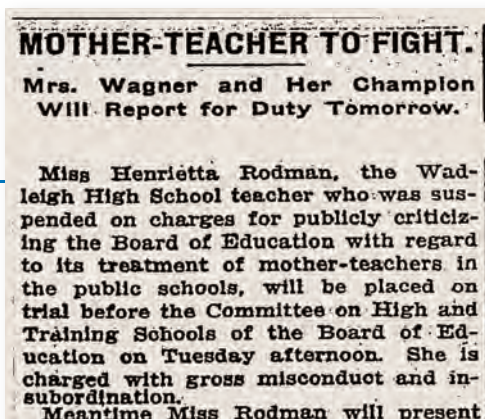
EDUCATIONAL TURMOIL. The teacher pension fund collapsed during a financial crisis in the summer of 1915. The cash-strapped city hacked money from schools.

City Controller William A. Prendergast called extra pay for summer or night school teaching “vicious ... Its tendency is in the direction of graft.” The city called for volunteers to teach summer school; only 147 stepped forward. The Teachers League drafted a brief against uncompensated teaching.

Prendergast also sought to freeze school budgets; reduce the teaching force by 10 percent; lengthen the school day and year; cut elementary school from eight to seven years; and change teacher promotion so “merit alone shall control.”

The conservative *New York Times* editorialized: “More money for the public schools! An old and an appealing, always a strong cry. But does money mean better education? Is there any ground for the impression, rather prevalent, that the New York public schools are run in too large part for the benefit of the teachers?”

Prendergast and Mayor James Purroy Mitchel sought to save money on school operations and construction by adopting the utopian reorganization plan of Gary, Indiana, Superintendent William Wirt. Under the Gary Plan, one student platoon attended class in the morning and went to shops, laboratories and gym in the afternoon; a second platoon did the reverse. Facilities were fully used, so Gary needed fewer schools. Children cooked and built furniture for the school in shop. Gary’s schools became social centers, with recreation and adult education classes.





Henrietta Rodman

Mitchel hired Wirt to design a pilot program in 1914 and soon sought citywide implementation, but on the cheap, without the costly social and educational supports that made Gary's system work.

Meanwhile, Mitchel sought to wrench control of salaries from the Legislature, complaining particularly about equalized teacher pay.

The Federation of Teachers Associations – an umbrella group that without doubt included the League – derailed a bill for a referendum on giving the city power to set teacher salaries.

“If anything, the open animosity of Mitchel and Prendergast ... spurred the activities of the Teachers League,” Diane Ravitch wrote in her classic history of the New York City public school system, “The Great School Wars.”

As the Great War raged in Europe in 1915, politicians like Mitchel cranked up fear of immigrants. Teachers became targets; even if they were born here, they taught immigrants or the children of immigrants – and they were more likely to be intellectuals and, thus, suspect. Mitchel demanded that teachers sign a loyalty oath. “The time is approaching when the people of America will be divided into two parties – Americans and traitors,” he warned. This was the first skirmish in a loyalty-oath battle that would last decades.

As the 1917 election neared, Democratic candidate John F. Hylan gained ground by turning Mitchel's jingoistic rhetoric against him. German voters detested the mayor's anti-German stance. Irish voters scorned his calls to save Britain. Pacifism – or at least reluctance to enter the war in Europe – was widespread.

In October 1917, 10 days of protests ripped through New

York City's 32 Gary Plan schools. Then high school students called a citywide strike to protest a new state law mandating military training and the Gary Plan's longer school day, which interfered with after-school jobs. The board quickly changed school closing from 4 back to 3.

Who started the riots? School officials blamed Socialist agitators. Linville reported more complaints from non-Socialists, even principals. Mitchel blamed the Democrats. But clearly, many voters disliked the Gary Plan.

The mayor and Prendergast lost the election. Mayor-elect Hylan pledged to scrap the Gary Plan and end overcrowding by building new schools.

BIRTH OF THE TEACHERS UNION. In 1916 Samuel Gompers, who had founded the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886, traveled to New York City especially to meet 100 teachers whom Linville gathered at DeWitt Clinton High School. Gompers “strongly urged the formation of a union for, he said, ‘You teachers owe a duty to yourselves as well as to the children you teach.’” *The Times* reported.

FILL IN BOTH BLANKS—TO BE DETACHED BY REPRESENTATIVE

School..... *H.P.S.*

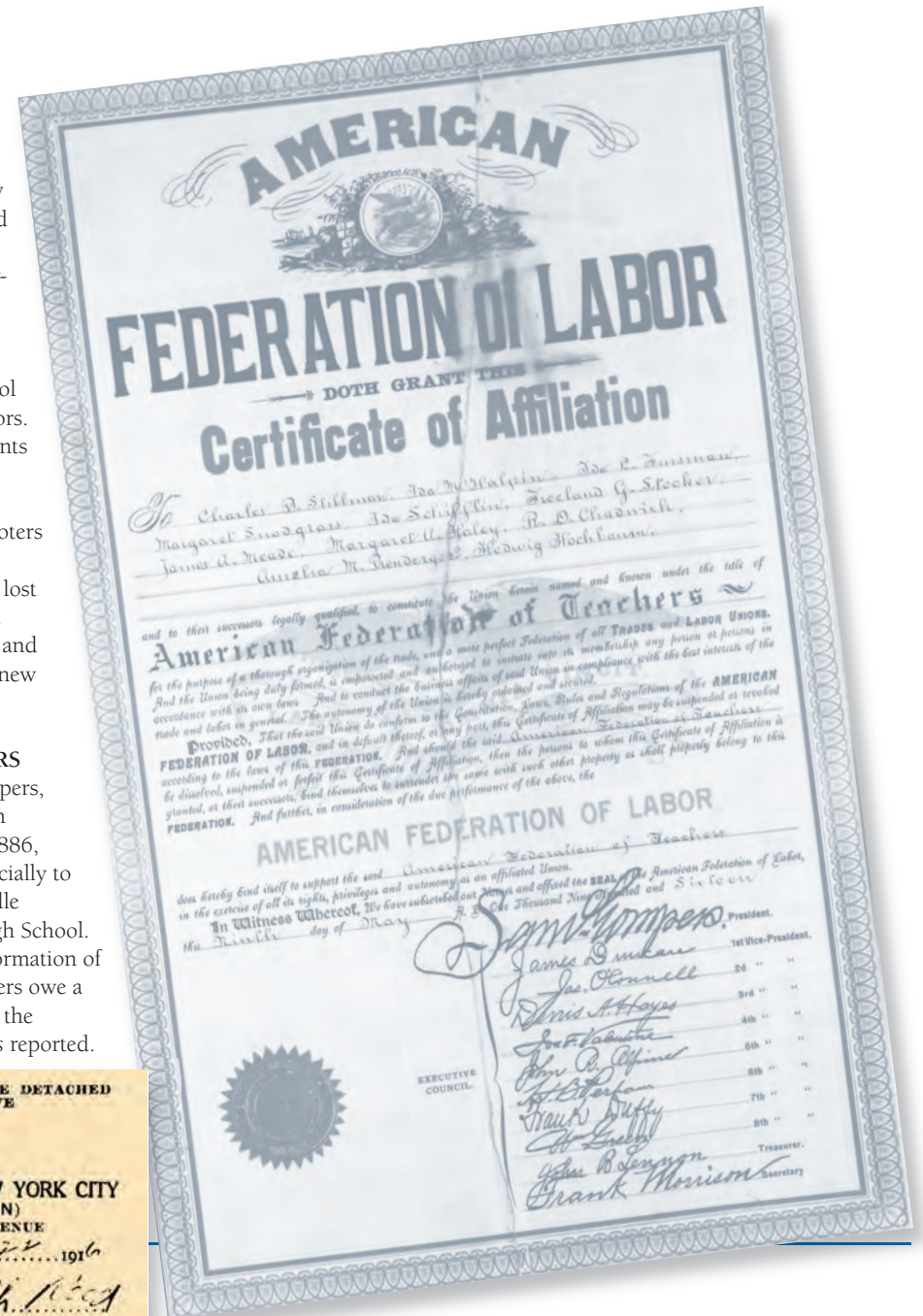
TEACHERS LEAGUE OF NEW YORK CITY
(TEACHERS' UNION)
SEVENTY FIFTH AVENUE
..... *47th St* 191*6*

Received from.....
Elizabeth M. May

One Dollar (\$1.00) for initiation fee, and Fifty Cents, first instalment, for membership fee.

J. EDWARD MAYMAN, Treasurer.

..... *(initials)* Representative.



“He said the national organization had consistently fought for and won increased pay, workingmen’s compensation commissions, child labor laws, and other improvements ... He discussed the statement that teachers in their professional capacity might feel that they are above the laboring classes, and therefore would have nothing in common with the other unions represented in the federation,” *The Times* said.

Four days later, the League asked AFL organizer Hugh Frayne to address 1,200 teachers at Washington Irving High School. “Since they won’t give sufficient wages on the decent principle that you are worth it, have your union and make them give it to you,” he said.

Leonora O’Reilly, organizer of the Women’s Trade Union League, “said the teachers should stop thinking that they were better than ordinary workers and should join a real trade union,” *The Times* recounted.

Linville told the crowd: “We must throw off the unjust domination of superiors and acquire a self-respecting independence by organizing. It is the only way we can ever be free of the drag of teaching subjects that never have made, and never will make, children fitted for life.” Referring to the Gary Plan debacle, he said, “It is time that we should be through with silly experiments.” He mentioned pay cuts and “oppressive measures taken by principals and superintendents in enforcing their own orders,” *The Times* reported.

The Times editorial page sneered: A teachers union is “an impudent plan to increase the cost and diminish the value of the public schools, to hamper or destroy municipal control ... They are public servants. It is intolerable that they should combine for the injury of the public. Any teacher who is dissatisfied is free to get out.”

But unionize they did – some of them, anyway. The Teachers Union started with 1,000 to 1,200 members and eventually grew to 7,000, but it never enrolled a majority of the city’s teachers. Nevertheless, it waged fierce and important battles.

In April 1916, the union ratified its constitution and in May joined with seven other locals from around the country to form the American Federation of Teachers; there were three

Linville told the crowd: “We must throw off the unjust domination of superiors and acquire a self-respecting independence by organizing. It is the only way we can ever be free of the drag of teaching subjects that never have made, and never will make, children fitted for life.”

locals from Chicago and one each from Gary, Oklahoma City, Scranton and Washington, D.C. Linville’s *The American Teacher* became the AFT’s magazine.

LOYALTY WAR. As World War I approached, opposition and pacifism were widespread in the United States.

When former presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan addressed the growing National Education Association in Madison Square Garden in 1916, he said: “Just now an effort is being made to substitute military training for the games of the playground. I hope the teachers in our public schools will not yield to the clamor for militarism.”

On New Year’s Eve, Dec. 31, 1916, demonstrators packed Washington Square for a peace rally, with Teachers Union firebrand Henrietta Rodman among the organizers; a huge anti-war demonstration followed in the nation’s capital in February.

At Stuyvesant High School on Feb. 10, a week after President Wilson broke diplomatic ties with Germany, Rodman spoke at a mass anti-war meeting for women at Stuyvesant High School on “Military Training as Women Teachers See It.” Other speakers held forth on “The Revolt of Future Mothers,” “The Working Woman and the War,” “Moral Resistance and the War” and “Not Force but Affections.”

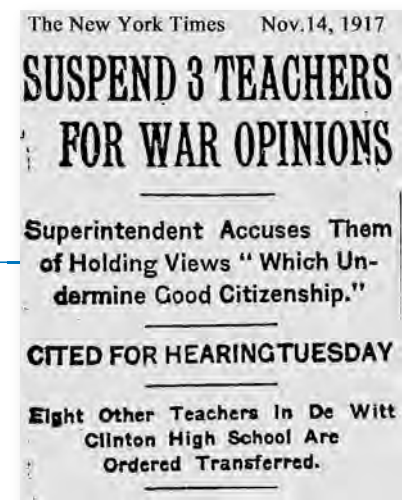
But free speech was suspect before and after Congress overwhelmingly declared war in April 1917. For example, Chicago fired 68 teachers that spring, including 40 union members, in what one of them, Frances E. Harden, told a Manhattan audience was “a movement spreading throughout the country to curtail the free speech of teachers and force them into a condition of servility to political bodies,” *The New York Times* reported.

During the year, the New York State Legislature approved the dismissal of teachers for the “utterance of any treasonable or seditious word” or act.

In November – weeks after Lenin’s Bolsheviks seized Russia – New York City Associate Superintendent John L. Tildsley suspended three DeWitt Clinton teachers for “holding views that were subversive of discipline in the schools and which undermine good citizenship”; he transferred six others.

Tildsley said he asked each teacher some 100 questions, but denied that he had posed the one that all the teachers recounted: “What is your opinion of the Bolsheviks?”

English teacher Thomas Mufson was “charged with thinking it proper to be neutral in class” during a discussion on the merits of anarchism. English teacher Samuel Schmalhausen “does not consider it to be his duty to develop in the students ... instinctive respect for the president, the



governor and other federal, state and municipal officers." Math teacher Henry Schneer allegedly said patriotism should not be discussed in school and that "persons wearing the soldier's uniform" should not address an assembly.

The three suspended teachers denied disloyalty and demanded a fair hearing. Schneer and Schmalhausen objected to Mitchel's loyalty oath as "humiliating interference" with constitutional rights.

The Teachers Union executive board voted financial aid and legal counsel. The Central Federated Union (like today's Central Labor Council) offered support after a plea by transferred teacher Abraham Lefkowitz, a Teachers Union founder.

The witch hunt widened.

Tildsley directed the 24 high school principals to send him the names of teachers who were not sufficiently pro-American. Disloyalty needed to be eradicated, he contended, particularly since 40,000 of the 66,000 high school students were foreign-born or had foreign-born parents.

The board authorized an inquisition of the 20,000 elementary school teachers.

Board President William G. Willcox addressed a rally at DeWitt Clinton staged by the American Defense Society. "The beginning of an active campaign to eradicate disloyalty from the schools of New York drew 2,000 teachers," *The Times* reported.

Cleveland Moffett, chair of the group's Committee on Alien Enemies and Traitors, stated there were 1,000 teachers "whose loyalty is not 100 percent pure." Referring to the unarmed British passenger liner that was torpedoed by a German submarine in May 1915, killing 1,198 of the 1,959 people aboard, Moffett said that a teacher "boasted to a man I can name that when he heard the Lusitania had been sunk, he went out and got drunk to celebrate the German victory." He cited an unnamed school where 27 teachers heard the principal make disloyal statements.

"I tell you that before we get through with these disloyal teachers there is going to be use of a very special, well lighted and well ventilated concentration

camp," asserted Mr. Moffatt,"*The Times* said.

In a letter that was read aloud, former President Theodore Roosevelt endorsed firing teachers who would not sign a loyalty oath.

Another speaker, William Temple Hornaday, said, "The ideas [sic] of alien Socialism instilled into the mind of an impressionable boy or girl ... is worse for the child than being bitten by a rattlesnake." He then attacked Linville, saying he had sent the Board of Education a document signed by 86 teachers in which they declined to sign a loyalty pledge.

Linville and Lefkowitz then wrote to President Wilson, asking him to phrase a loyalty pledge that teachers could sign "without violating their consciences."

After a trial by its High School Committee, the board fired the three suspended teachers for "holding views subversive of good discipline and of undermining good citizenship in the schools."

Linville said the charges culminated "a long history of official oppression ... It is the most cruel of all similar acts, as well as the most dangerous." He cited "a shocking lack of understanding as to the purpose of the schools."

Furthermore: *In 1918, Mary McDowell, a Quaker teacher with 18 years of service, was fired for "conduct unbecoming a teacher" for opposing U.S. entry into the war ...*

1920-1959

World War I ended on Nov. 11, 1918, but the Red Scare continued.

In 1919 City Superintendent William Ettinger directed teachers "to call to the principal's attention" any student papers revealing "an especially intimate knowledge" of Bolshevism. Associate Superintendent Tildsley assured principals and teachers that there "is no belief" that teachers were teaching "the principles underlying Bolshevism." No pupil would be penalized for knowledge, but knowing too much could lead to "such instruction as may be necessary."

Nonetheless, Tildsley persecuted more teachers in the next years. In at least one instance, students were compelled to testify against their teacher, whom a Teachers Union attorney defended.

In April 1919, the board barred the Teachers Union from meeting in schools following a session at PS 27 in Manhattan. A board inspector related that teachers had called the board members tyrants and oppressors and had criticized a syllabus on the World War for distorting the facts. It would be a long time before teachers again met in schools.

With Henrietta Rodman, Linville valiantly fought the state's Lusk Laws, which made teachers apply to the state education commissioner for certification of their loyalty and character. And he spoke for increasing salaries, which rose to entice men returning from the war to enter teaching; the board decided to give preference to males in hiring.

John Dewey wrote, "Dr. Linville has been outspoken for the rights of teachers; more than any other individual he helped to bring about the repeal of the Lusk Laws [in 1923]; he has aroused within the teaching ranks a determination to stand for academic freedom and intellectual integrity; he has given many faltering teachers the courage to stand by the dictates of their own conscience."

The New York Times January 26, 1922

Mrs. Grace Strachan Forsythe Is Elected First Woman Associate School Superintendent

Mrs. Grace Strachan Forsythe was elected Associate Superintendent of Schools yesterday, succeeding Dr. Andrew W. Edson, who, having reached the age limit, will be retired early next month. This is the first time in the history of New York City's schools that a woman has been chosen for this office. The position carries a salary of \$8,500 a year.

When the Board of Education took up the matter, M. Samuel Stern moved that the by-laws requiring notice of an election be suspended. This was carried by a vote of 6 to 1, Arthur S. Somers vot-

Forsythe would not add to the dignity of the Board of Superintendents. She had recently, he said, been away from her duties as District Superintendent. She may have been ill, he said, but her conduct did not seem to comport well with the work of the District Superintendents. He regretted that he had to express disapproval of her nomination, but it would be a neglect of duty if he did not do so. Dr. Ferguson said a doctor's certificate showed that Mrs. Forsythe had been ill.

The vote was by ballot. Four votes were necessary to elect, as all the seven

Furthermore: *In 1925, Linville was instrumental in having the American Civil Liberties Union take on the defense of Tennessee biology teacher John Scopes for teaching evolution ... In 1928 the Legislature set three increasingly higher salary schedules for elementary, junior high and high school teachers. Its rationale: high school is the most difficult work and only high school teachers need have master's degrees ...*

COMMUNIST SUBVERSION. Most teachers at the time who belonged to or sympathized with the Communist Party – along with many workers, actors, writers and intellectuals – were well-intentioned and passionate about ending injustice in America and the world. They fell for Leninist propaganda, which depicted the early Soviet Union as an egalitarian Utopia. (Consider the “The Coops,” the 1925 working-class housing development on Allerton Avenue in the Bronx, where hammers and sickles still adorn buildings.) Early on, most rank-and-filers did not know about the very real, Soviet-directed, communist infiltration of the U.S. labor movement.

Si Beagle, later a UFT founder, traveled to Russia in 1932. “Like George Bernard Shaw, John Dewey, Sidney Hook and countless others, he’d missed the grim privation, police state terror and mass murder while carefully chaperoned by his Soviet hosts,” wrote UFT historian Jack Schierenbeck. “I went with rose-colored glasses,” Beagle told the UFT Oral History Project. “I wanted Russia to be successful, hoping it would lead us into a wonderful world, et cetera.”

When the Great Depression arrived, the communists used high unemployment, sudden poverty and social dislocation to spread their influence in the labor movement.

The Teachers Union was no exception. Its meetings



dissolved in acrimony. Rebecca Simonson, later a Teachers Guild president, recalled: “The fights were wild, absolutely wild ... If you rose against their position, [the communists] literally took you by the coat and pushed you down in your seat.”

Charles Cogen, the UFT’s first president, said this was “calculated disruption, designed to paralyze the union and make the leadership appear ineffectual.”

Things changed in 1928 when the Soviets’ Communist International, or Comintern, denounced liberals and democratic socialists like Linville as enemies of the people.

In 1945, AFL secretary-treasurer George Meany mocked the notion of finding common cause with communists who followed the Stalinist line: “What could we talk about? The latest innovations being used by the secret police to ensnare those who think in opposition to the group in power? Or, perhaps, bigger and better concentration camps for political prisoners?”

From the ’20s through the ’40s, Linville and his allies made progress in lobbying Albany for pension improvements, tenure laws and professional standards. But younger militants, including some non-communists, demanded mass rallies for more jobs and higher salaries. Beagle recalled “a generational gap. Most of the dissidents were young. The older leaders were timid. They were not ready yet psychologically to take action against the bosses.”

In that era, a strike “would have been suicide,” Cogen said. Massachusetts Gov. Calvin Coolidge had become a national hero in 1919 by firing striking Boston police officers.

Linville, UFT historian Schierenbeck noted, couldn’t win. “Once too radical for the conservatives, he was now too conservative for the radicals.”

One opponent was Sam Wallach, brother of Oscar-winning actor Eli Wallach. He became a substitute teacher in 1932, when a hot issue was whether to let subs join the union; Wallach told the UFT Oral History Project that Linville refused, seeing subs as apprentices. But the city was not appointing teachers and many qualified people were stuck as subs.

Looking back, Wallach told the UFT Oral History Project: “The ultra-political (actions) frightened large chunks of teachers, especially the obvious red positions. We should have steered clear of controversial issues and concentrated on the practical, day-to-day concerns that all teachers have.” He cited as an example the union’s popular pension primer. “I’m so smart now,” he added.

BIRTH OF THE TEACHERS GUILD. By 1935, the disruptive tactics of the small number of communists had paralyzed the Teachers Union, which an online history of the Teachers Union (www.dreamersandfighters.com) says had 2,200 members. Linville and about 500 to 800 teachers quit (accounts vary) and founded the Teachers Guild. Among them were other leaders, Abraham Lefkowitz, Albert Smallheiser, Rebecca Simonson and George Counts.

In 1941 a membership vote by the American Federation of Teachers revoked the Teacher Union’s charter and granted it to the Teachers Guild, which became AFT Local 2. (Communist activity also led AFT members that year to revoke the charters of Local 537, the College Teachers Federation of New York City, and of Local 192 in Philadelphia; the AFT expelled two more locals in 1948, Local 430 in San Francisco and Local 401 at the University of Washington. Meanwhile, in 1941 and 1942 the AFT organized 40 new locals.)

The end of World War II unleashed an unparalleled economic explosion that, with ups, downs and the Korean War, ran for decades. The unprecedented Baby Boom required more teachers and classrooms. Between 1946 and 1950, schools ran double and even triple sessions, with teachers assigned to work during lunch and administrators requiring a



“Hundreds of my youngsters fought in World War II and I know their understanding of the need to fight for their country was inspired by my teaching and the Bill of Rights ... From that teaching our youngsters got the feeling that we are living in a country where nobody has a right to ask what are your beliefs, how you worship God, what you read.”

—Sam Wallach

doctor’s note, even for a single day’s absence.

But teacher salaries had never been lower, relatively speaking. The tiny Guild used persuasion to press for better working conditions and wages. In 1947, the Legislature ended the 25 percent differential that had been paid to regular high school teachers and boosted the salaries of elementary teachers; high school pay rose minimally.

Guild leaders backed this move – they had always said the value of all teachers’ work was equal – but they knew that it could cost them. Many high school teachers scorned elementary education as easier work and prided themselves on the master’s degrees that they, alone, were required to have. Hundreds of Guild teachers quit to join the High School Teachers Association (HSTA), previously little more than a letterhead organization.

The invigorated HSTA became more confrontational. Demanding \$600 a year more for after-school work, in 1950 they shut down extracurricular programs citywide in what turned out to be a 15-month boycott.

The Guild played only a peripheral role in the boycott,

making it appear even weaker. The HSTA won a \$450 annual raise for extracurricular work in an overall salary settlement. Simonson, who became Guild president after Linville died in a car crash at age 75, told *The Times*, “In the interest of unity among all teachers and in the interest of peace in the schools in September, we have agreed to accept this proposal, which will set a maximum of \$6,500 for all teachers ... not later than 1954.” (In 2008 dollars, that would have been about \$57,500.)

It may have been the Guild’s lowest point. Assistant legislative rep Rubin Maloff recalled, “We were treated with a certain degree of derision and contempt by political leaders.” When he went to see William O’Dwyer in 1950, the mayor “was filing his nails and had his feet up on the desk. He hardly said hello. He said, ‘What can I do for you? Tell me in a minute or two.’”

Officials thought they had little to fear from municipal unions because of the state’s 1947 Condon-Wadlin Act. It outlawed strikes by government workers, required firing strikers immediately, froze the pay of rehired strikers for three years and put them on probation without tenure for five years.

Rose Schuyler, a member since 1946, believed the Guild did what it could, given the times. “Really, it’s very easy to criticize the leadership as too timid, but it’s unfair.”

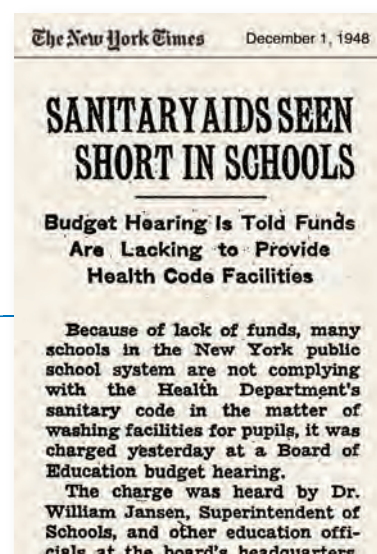
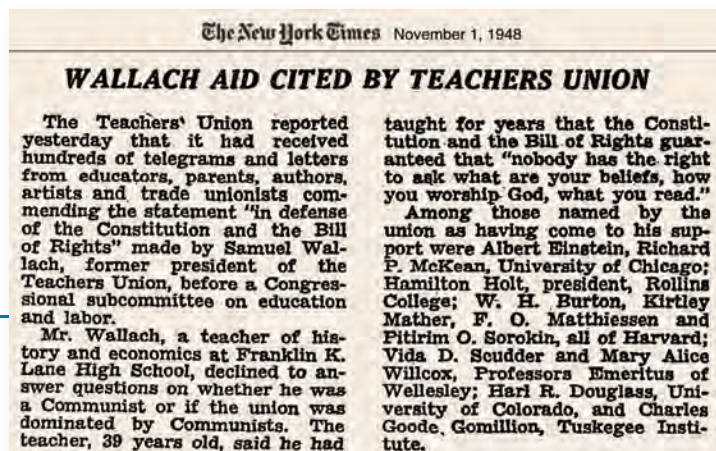
But a new wave of teachers was coming on the scene, young men and women who wanted to grab a bigger part of the expanding post-war economy and have a say in their professional lives, much like the one that Linville had outlined decades before.

“We were ready for the revolution of teachers,” recalled George Altomare, who began teaching in the early 1950s. “The [old guard] were not action-oriented people. They excelled at writing a beautiful criticism of the present pension plan or how the supervisory system rated teachers. They believed that someone is going to read your tract and they are going to join ... They were fighters for justice, for salaries, for academic freedom. They believed in the labor movement. But they did not have a vision of a militant union of professionals that would use the techniques of strike, collective bargaining, mass demonstrations and so on.”

That soon would change.

Furthermore: *Linville served as AFT president 1930-1933 ... The 1935 National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) guaranteed most workers the right to unionize, but not teachers ... In 1937, Guild President Albert Smallheiser challenged the Board of Examiners, the board’s licensing arm, for disqualifying candidates for capricious reasons, like having a foreign accent ... A 1939 state law required the Board of Regents to compile list of subversive organizations, with membership constituting grounds for dismissal or not hiring ...*

DEATH OF THE TEACHERS UNION. After Linville’s group departed, Wallach and 800 other substitutes joined the Teachers Union. Hard-line Stalinists took over. “Nobody else could get the floor,” recalled Wallach. In 1939, the TU endorsed the Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact, the deal that secured Germany’s eastern front and freed it to wage war against Western Europe. The TU became anathema to other teacher unionists, particularly Jewish ones. More TU members quit, with many drifting to the Guild. Wallach, who became



TU president in the late 1940s, later told the UFT Oral History Project: "Stalin and his gang betrayed my dream, a wonderful dream."

State Senate hearings into "subversive" teachers between 1940 and 1942 cost more than 50 public school and college teachers their jobs.

In 1948, Wallach, who taught history and economics at Franklin K. Lane High School, refused to answer questions posed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. A reporter asked, "Don't you know that you placed your job in jeopardy?" Wallach responded with a nod to the Capitol: "Those guys in there place the Constitution in jeopardy. That worries me a lot more."

Wallach told the panel: "Hundreds of my youngsters fought in World War II and I know their understanding of the need to fight for their country was inspired by my teaching and the Bill of Rights ... From that teaching our youngsters got the feeling that we are living in a country where nobody has a right to ask what are your beliefs, how you worship God, what you read."

Schools Superintendent William Jansen opened a probe. In 1948, Minnie Gutride, of PS 21, Staten Island, committed suicide after Jansen's aides questioned her at school. Before turning on the gas in her apartment, she wrote to the superintendent, decrying the "terrifying atmosphere" of the interrogation: "It is highly unfair and improper to call a teacher out of class (1A in this instance) and subject her to this type of questioning without any warning or prior notice or opportunity to consult with anyone for advice as to her legal rights."

The state Feinberg Law of 1949 specified that current membership in a subversive organization was cause for dismissal, while

past membership was presumptive proof of current membership, unless a full break was proven. It required teachers to confess and renounce past communist affiliation and inform on other teachers. Jansen stepped up his efforts.

In 1950 all teachers were smeared with the brush of what became to be called McCarthyism. The Teachers Guild drew a bright line when the Delegate Assembly passed a resolution in favor of barring communists from the classroom.

"The biggest problem facing the union was shaking its image as a red organization," Marjorie Murphy wrote of the AFT in her book, "Blackboard Unions." "Members were still pinned with the image of the red schoolteacher."

At about this time, when a young Albert Shanker joined the Teachers Guild, Schierenbeck wrote, he "was assured that the Guild Bulletin, the monthly newspaper, would be mailed to his home 'in an unmarked envelope.'"

In 1952, Teachers Union member Irving Adler was fired for citing his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. He lost a suit to overturn the Feinberg Law in a 6-3 Supreme Court decision. Adler, who quit the Communist Party after the Soviets invaded Hungary in 1956, went on to write 56 books, mostly about math and science.

By the time the red inquisition ended, some 400 New York City teachers had lost their jobs.

In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court declared Feinberg and two related New York laws unconstitutional in a 5-4 vote. Justice William J. Brennan wrote: "Our nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, which is of transcendent value to all of us and not merely the teachers concerned ... The First Amendment ... does not tolerate laws that cast a pall of orthodoxy over the classroom."

A year later courts voided a City Charter provision that was used to dismiss teachers who refused to incriminate themselves.

In 1976 the city reinstated 33 teachers and a year later 10

more. Neither Wallach nor Adler was among them, although the city did restore Adler's pension.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Teachers Union members remained activists, most visibly through their Harlem Committee, seeking to improve school conditions, focusing on black history and fighting discrimination at the dawn of the civil rights era.

When the Guild's successor, the newborn United Federation of Teachers, in 1960 called for a strike to win collective bargaining rights, the Teachers Union urged teachers to cross any picket lines. A year later, the Teachers Union ran vigorously in a three-way representation election, vainly hoping to deny the UFT a clear majority.

The Teachers Union disbanded on Jan. 17, 1964, saying in an editorial farewell that its "struggles against false economy [in the school system] and against suppression of freedom have invariably been intertwined" and hoping that "the entry of our Union members into the United Federation of Teachers, the collective bargaining agent, would have a wholesome effect on that organization."

The New York Times December 7, 1950

HIGH SCHOOL STAFFS FIGHT PAY EQUALITY

Single Salary Schedule for All Teachers a 'Colossal Fraud,' They Tell Fact-Finders

TRADE INSTRUCTORS AGREE

But Alliance Group and Junior High Representatives Support New Remuneration Set-up

The president of the High School Teachers Association charged yesterday that the present single salary schedule, providing equal pay for instructors regardless of the level on which they teach, was the "most colossal fraud ever imposed on the educational world." Appearing at the second public

NEW YORK POST May 5, 1950

Few More Teachers Suspected as Red; Jansen Says He's Not on Witch-Hunt

Superintendent of Schools Jansen said today that possibly four more teachers were under investigation on suspicion of Communist ties and promised that the right already under suspension could be asserted hearings with the right to counsel and appeal.

Jansen told 600 members of the City Federation of Women's Clubs at Babel, Adair that his police than for under the state's anti-Communist Feinberg Law involved only an "indiscriminate sweep" of the city's 30,000 teachers.

As for new investigation, Jansen said:

"Perhaps there may be one two or three, or perhaps four but it's no great number. Until we have definite information that they are or are not Communists, I don't see them in the question."

From this 120 because of a "suspect" were "indicated" and "suspect" designation. She said the right refused to an inspection. "I am sure about the immediate, since fact in their own Jansen's quarters school. Communist Party are irrelevant, since yesterday when queried by Jansen. "There is no question here, I am permitted to have some" inquiries.

With Mrs. Rose F. Russell, the ally's "suspect" designation, she said the right refused to an inspection. "I am sure about the immediate, since fact in their own Jansen's quarters school. Communist Party are irrelevant, since yesterday when queried by Jansen. "There is no question here, I am permitted to have some" inquiries.

They have returned here," the right an Abraham Lerner, a reporter, revealed. "No I am sure, Teachers Union president, Mrs. Orla Levin Green, teacher at the City School, said: "This is no justice," replied Lerner. Mrs. Friedman, Lerner, said more during a press conference. "It is a great sin," said David L. Friedman, Albany, Communist Party membership. "There is no question here, I am permitted to have some" inquiries.

Mrs. Russell charged that the inquiry was pervaded on the job, a teacher, a reporter asked.

"I am not saying that anything is wrong," she said. "I am not saying that anything is wrong," she said. "I am not saying that anything is wrong," she said.

State Won't Fire Teachers Who Refuse to Inform

By WILLIAM H. RUDY Staff Writer
A school teacher may not be fired for refusing to be an informer, State Education Commissioner James E. Allen Jr. ruled today.

"This type of inquisition has no place in the school system," the commissioner told in a ruling on appeals brought by four New York City teachers and a school principal.

Allen said: "There is never occasion on the part of the teachers to report the state that individuals are of this type of investigation. It is the duty of the state to protect the public from the danger of suspicion and to maintain the schools and colleges."

"That, which is necessary to keep morale at a high level, is undermined. No one knows when the danger of suspicion may be pointed at him."

"It is necessary that part of the Communist philosophy be maintained as a standard to an end. The allegation by a teacher or former member of the organization smearing other teachers, but which may have caused will be unnecessary, yet it leads a deadly suspicion which is most difficult to dispense."

"A school system should not be a teacher against another. It is the duty of the state to identify the name of the teacher who has committed the crime, but which may have caused the strength and order which needs to be order to build character into the student body."

The ruling applied to Mrs. Adler, a shop teacher at Samuel J. Tilden High School, and Mrs. B. B. Brown, a teacher at PS 105, Manhattan, and Samuel S. Cohen, principal of PS 105, Manhattan.

UFT in the 1960s



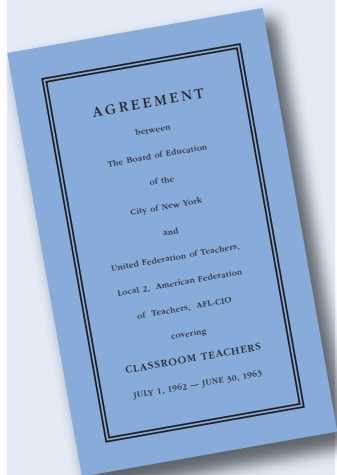
1960: The Teachers Guild merges with high school teachers to form the United Federation of Teachers.



1961: President Charles Cogen leads teachers out on strike demanding a bargaining election.



1962: First comprehensive teacher contract in the nation is achieved, a one-year agreement.



1963: First two-year contract places the first limits ever on class size. Implementation of a school experiment the union devised — More Effective Schools, which reduces class size to 22 (15 in pre-K).



1964: Al Shanker elected president after Charles Cogen leaves to become AFT president.



1965: UFT and AFT leaders go to Selma, Alabama to support Dr. King's civil rights battle. A year earlier Dr. King had accepted the UFT's coveted John Dewey Award.

1966: UFT Welfare Fund provides supplementary benefits such as free prescription drugs, eyeglasses, a dental plan and many others.



1967: Threatening mass resignations, the UFT strikes for the third time.

Al Shanker, convicted of civil contempt, is sentenced to 15 days in jail.



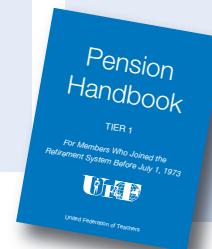
SCHOOL STRIKE CHIEF GETS JAIL

1968: Decentralization and Ocean Hill-Brownsville. Teachers strike again, following the local board's refusal to reinstate fired teachers.



1969: UFT contract shrinks time to top salary, offers pay to cover teacher absences, creates UFT College Scholarship Fund.

City agrees to seek pension-improvement law (later called Tier I).



1970s

"We have no choice but to go out ... A strike is going to be illegal next year and every year. If we're going to allow that to stop us, then forget about the union. We're finished."

—Albert Shanker



1970: Paraprofessionals join the union.



1975: Facing massive layoffs, UFT votes to strike. Teachers' Retirement System trustees buy MAC bonds, narrowly averting city bankruptcy.

1976: With 17,000 school staff laid off, the union's COPE political action fund convinces the Legislature to override Gov. Carey's veto of the Stavisky-Goodman Law, which blocks unfair school cuts.



1977: The Emergency Financial Control Board blocks the contract as too costly. UFT sues; later agrees to stretch out step raises, longevities.



1971: UFT awards its first college scholarships.

1973: COPE, the Committee on Political Education, is established. UFT endorses its first mayoral candidate, Abe Beame.



Mayor Abe Beame with UFT Asst. Treasurer Ponsie Hillman

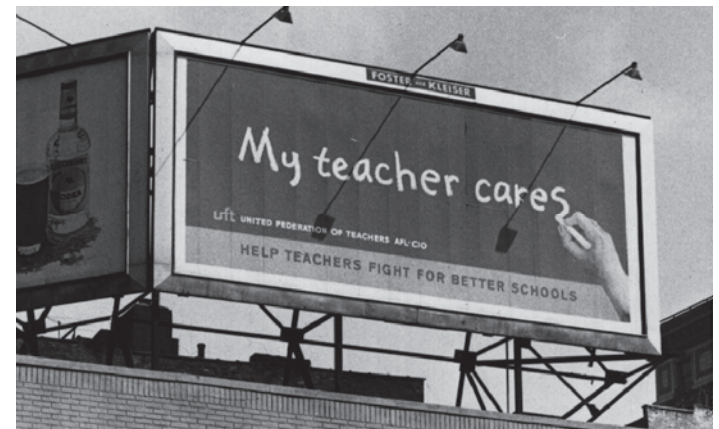
1972: The AFT state affiliate, the United Teachers of New York (UTNY), and the NEA state affiliate, the New York State Teachers Association (NYSTA), merge.



1974: Al Shanker, while remaining UFT president, is elected president of the AFT. He holds the dual posts until 1986.



1978: UFT joins municipal bargaining coalition, which changes law, preventing Financial Control Board from rejecting contract awards by arbitrators.



1979: UFT secures law creating Teacher Center Consortium for teacher-led professional development; this starts 1980.

Lutheran Medical Center RNs join UFT.

The UFT launches a public relations and advertising campaign in behalf of public education.

1980s

"We have made it patently clear that we care about our students and we care about our schools, and now it is up to the government to show that it cares,"

— Sandra Feldman



1980: New contract brings raises, despite budget trouble. UFT pilots Dial-A-Teacher homework hotline.

Visiting Nurse Service RNs join union.



1983: UFT Secretary Sandra Feldman is the first female Labor Day Parade grand marshal (with Gov. Cuomo).



1986: UFT Executive Board elects Feldman president.

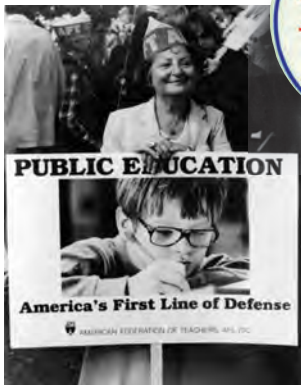
A whirlwind year of achievement on professional, building conditions, other issues.



1987: Peer Intervention Program starts to help struggling tenured colleagues. Contract strengthens teacher professionalism. Union urges parents to visit schools.



1988: UFT launches campaign to train teachers how to spot and report signs of child abuse.



1981: Tens of thousands of UFT members travel to Washington, D.C. to participate in AFL-CIO's Solidarity Day to protest President Reagan's policies.



1982: With increasing numbers of children with special needs in the classroom, special education teachers are the fastest-growing segment of the faculty.



1984: UFT members protest apartheid with the AFT in Washington, D.C.



1989: UFT endorses David Dinkins in mayoral race.

Membership reaches 100,000.



1985: Al Shanker announces his year-end retirement as UFT president to concentrate on leading AFT.

Hot topic: Should pupils with AIDS be admitted to class?



Charlie Cogen, David Selden, Sandra Feldman and Al Shanker

1990s



1990: UFT wins 100 contractual improvements to working conditions, professionalism, helps topple Board of Examiners, ending duplicative tests for new teachers.

New York City schools reach one million school children.



1993: Asbestos crisis delays the opening of schools.



1996: Retirements leave many teachers facing crowded classes.

Union media campaign assails GOP presidential nominee Bob Dole.



1991: All UFTers vote to defer percentage of salaries to avoid 3,500 para layoffs.

Union ends midyear layoffs of HS teachers.

1994: Fed up with poor conditions, the UFT sues to force city compliance with the Building Code. SIUH south site RNs join union.



1997: As Mayor Giuliani favors parochial schools, UFT stands up for public ones.

Jewish Home and Hospital RNs join UFT.

Albert Shanker dies.

1992: Classes, 50% over state average, meet in hallways.

Lead-paint crisis in schools.

Union stands up for gay rights.



1995: The UFT wages a radio campaign criticizing budget cuts, urging members and parents to rally at City Hall.



1998: First UFT Parent Conference.

Union organizes New York Restaurant School staff.

Feldman resigns to lead AFT. Randi Weingarten becomes president.



1999: With Giuliani seeking vouchers, UFT fosters broad-based campaign for quality education, including Fair Share for Working Families rally; creates own core curriculum.

Weingarten wins first full term.

2000s

“Every school should be a place where teachers want to work and where parents want to send their kids.”

— Randi Weingarten



2000: UFT forms Class Size Coalition, wins biggest pension improvements in 30 years, per session victory, but contract talks stall.



2003: UFT fights budget cuts, sues over para layoffs, seeks smaller classes via City Charter change, wins contracts at Amber Charter School and United Cerebral Palsy, and moves into their new headquarters.



2006: Early contract boosts salaries. DA adopts school safety campaign proposed by CTE VP Michael Mulgrew, who succeeded Frank Carucci (left) in 2005.

2007: Union wins whistleblower protection for school members, wins right to organize 28,000 family child care providers, backs Hillary Clinton (below) in presidential primary, then Barack Obama.



2001: Two Special Ed Paras save their students as the World Trade Center is destroyed in terrorist attack.



2004: Tom Hobart retires from NYSUT.

Outside the Republican National Convention in New York, 50,000 members of numerous unions denounce Bush policies.



2008: Economy falters. Urging officials to “keep the promises,” union restores operating, building aid.

Day care providers rally.



2002: Contract victory after UFT plays role in Legislature giving Mayor Bloomberg control of schools.

UFT pays tribute to longtime leader Tom Pappas at Teacher Union Day.

Big push for smaller classes.



2005: Contract victory. State OK for UFT to open a charter school in East New York.

AFT president Sandra Feldman dies.



2009: Union wins first contract for family child care providers.

Michael Mulgrew becomes UFT president when Weingarten leaves for AFT presidency.



2010...

CITY SCHOOLS DISRUPTED BY STRIKE OF TEACHERS; 4,600 SUSPENDED BY BOARD

SCOPE IS DISPUTED

15,000 Join Walkout,
Union Head Says
—No Talks Set

By LEO EGAN

Between 65,000,000 and 70,000,000 voters are expected to go to polling places throughout the country today to choose a new President of the United States.

If the total vote reaches the expected minimum of 65,000,000 it will be the largest in the nation's history. The previous high was 62,037,000 in 1956; the 1962 vote was 61,500,000.

The polls in New York City will be open from 6 A. M. to 9 P. M.

Clear weather has been forecast for most of the East, but rain, snow and cold are expected in the Great Lakes area and some other regions.

In a special Election Day forecast, the United States Weather Bureau said that showers or snow showers were likely over

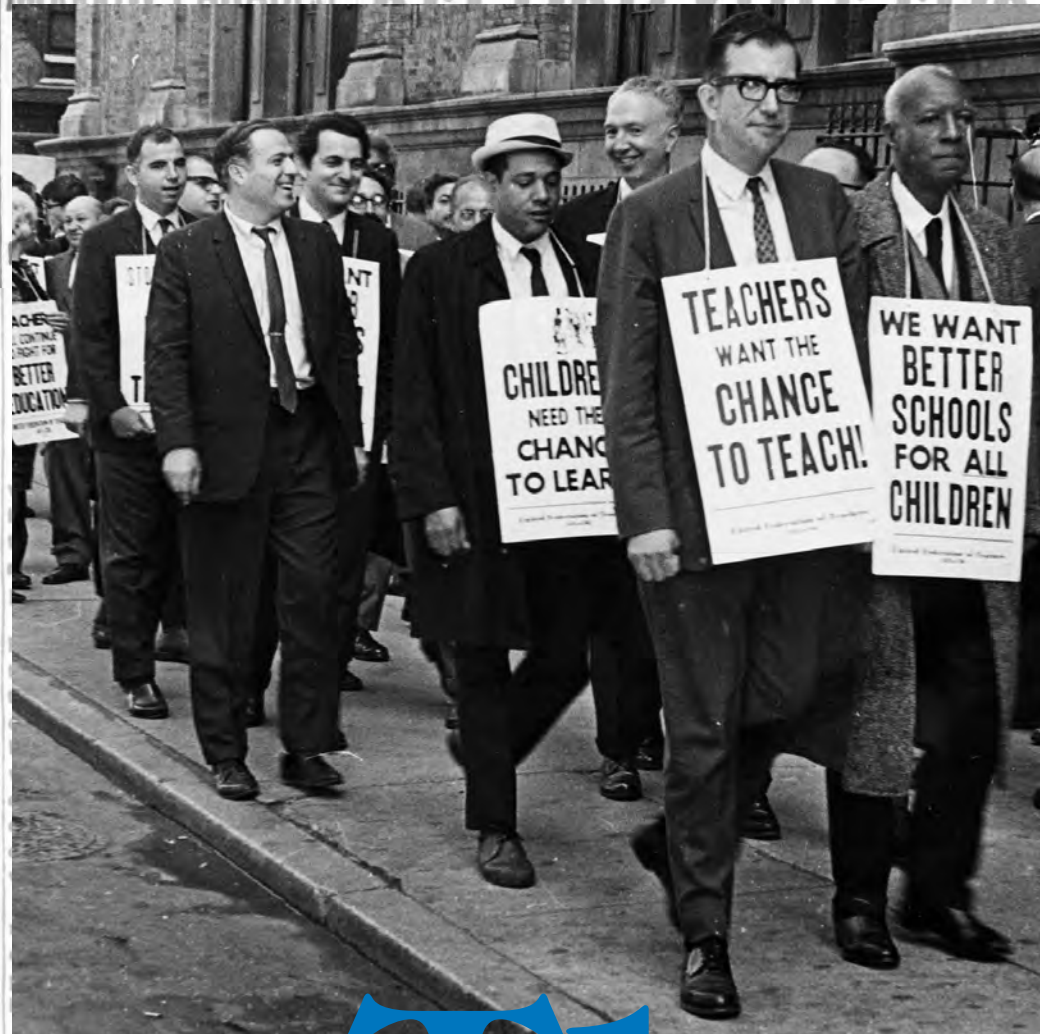


ON PICKET LINE: Mrs. Ethel Lewensohn ties sign on Mrs. Ethel Lewensohn at Seward Park High School in Manhattan.

600 POLICE PRESS

U.N. Delays Debate
On Congo for Day:

MOSCOW PARADES RECORD VOTE FOR



The place of honor at the parade was given to the chief of state of Communist China, Liu Shao-chi, who stood beside Premier Khrushchev atop the red granite tomb containing the bodies of Lenin and Stalin. It stands in the center of the square beside the Kremlin wall. Mr. Liu had joined the Chinese Communist party chief,

The

Nixon, in Final Plea, Asks
What Ball's Fi

UNION BIDS TEACHERS HALT STRIKE; COMPLIES WITH INJUNCTION ORDER AFTER WALKOUT CRIPPLES SCHOOLS

The United Federation of Teachers had many beginnings, but perhaps the best places to start are Albert Shanker's living room and George Altomare's kitchen table.

Young teachers at JHS 126 in Astoria in 1953 – Shanker taught mathematics and Altomare social studies – they chafed at low pay, low status and autocratic administrators, like the assistant principal who spied on their classrooms with binoculars.

At the time, the city had at least 106 separate teacher groups, split by subject, district, gender, religion, ethnicity and more. None could negotiate a contract, but they'd plead with the Board of Education for raises – call it "collective begging." The only group affiliated with organized labor was the Teachers Guild, a tiny group with 1,200 to 1,500 members in a 45,000-teacher system with about 5,000 other educators.

Shanker, Altomare and colleague Dan Sanders joined the Guild. They would become known as the Young Turks. Like their namesakes who transformed the decrepit Ottoman Empire into modern Turkey, they teamed up with wily AFT organizer David Selden to maneuver the Guild's old guard toward action and success.



1960s



Penalize Any Who
Go Back Today

Texts of board's resolution
and statements Page 32.

By LEONARD BUDEB

Leaders of the United Federation of Teachers called on its members early today to return to work.

In his living room, Shanker served whiskey sours on Friday evenings as Altomare strummed his folk guitar. Teachers who hadn't joined the chapter for ideology came for the party. JHS 126 soon was a Guild school.

In 1959, evening high school teachers were sick of teaching four hours for \$12.50. About 1,200, including some High School Teachers Association members, staged wildcat strikes and resigned en masse.

The Guild's old guard feared that success would strengthen the rival HSTA. But the young Ely Trachtenberg convinced the executive board that "it was the struggle that was important, not the organization," Selden recalled in his UFT Oral History Project interview.

So the Guild walked the Evening School's picket lines, delivering coffee and donuts. When evening high school teachers rallied at City Hall, the Guild produced the crowd. After several weeks, the board agreed to \$24 a night.

The influx of youthful vitality, feeding off the high school triumph, would soon produce New York City's first teachers' contract and transform the Teachers Guild into the nation's strongest teachers union.

1960

In the wake of the evening high school success, Selden proposed a one-day "demonstration work stoppage" in April 1959 timed to city budget deliberations. He carried the day when the Board of Education reneged on a promised raise. Incredibly, HSTA urged its members to cross picket lines. Guild President Charles Cogen nevertheless appeared on TV the night before the strike, urging members to "stick to their guns."

Watching the TV in frustration were Selden, Schools Superintendent John J. Theobald and New York City Central Labor Council President Harry Van Arsdale. Sitting in Theobald's office, they had been trying to reach Cogen for hours, but the only two phone lines at Guild headquarters were busy with last-minute strike preparations. As Selden told the story, Van Arsdale grumbled with frustration: "Two phones for 40,000 workers."

Van Arsdale phoned the TV station and soon someone handed a message to Cogen, who was still on camera. A reporter asked what it said. "Dr. Theobald would like to see you in his office as soon as possible. Take a taxi," Cogen read.

Teachers got a \$300 annual raise without a strike (about \$2,160 in 2008 dollars).

Cogen, Selden wrote, was "on his way to becoming a folk hero."

Not long after, the Guild's Young Turks met secretly with the HSTA radicals in Altomare's kitchen to plot merger. The old friction over pay remained, with high school teachers wanting more for what they believed was their more intellectually challenging job and the master's degrees they, alone, needed to have. Altomare and HSTA's John Bailey's elegant solution: the same base salary for all, but anyone with a master's, including elementary school teachers, would get what today's contract calls the "promotional differential."

Even with this sweetener, they couldn't sell merger to all Guild leaders, some of whom were outraged at the secret machinations, or to a resistant HSTA clinging to its own, superior, identity.

Back in the kitchen, Altomare, Selden and Bailey cooked up a pro-merger committee called the Committee for Action Through Unity (CATU). They bought newspaper ads on the *World Telegram & Sun's* school page, which invited pro-merger high school teachers to join the new organization.

Suddenly CATU had 1,500 members. Though annoyed, Cogen seized the chance to unite teachers across the grade levels. The Guild's Delegate Assembly voted for the merger and created the United Federation of

Teachers, AFT Local 2, on March 16, 1960.

The newborn union quickly sent demands to the Board of Education. Collective bargaining topped the list, along with raises, pay for a master's degree, duty-free lunches for elementary teachers, sick days for full-time subs and dues checkoff, so dues could be collected via payroll deductions, rather than by hand.

When the board stalled, the UFT set a strike date for the board's traditional Teacher Recognition Day, May 17, 1960. Superintendent Theobald pledged to invoke the state Condon-Wadlin Law. It outlawed strikes by public employees and automatically fired strikers; any rehired strikers would forego raises for three years and be on probation for five without tenure.

Mayor Robert F. Wagner, Jr., averted the May 17 strike with a series of promises, most prominently a collective bargaining election with exclusive recognition to the winning organization and a substantial raise with the promotional differential for any teacher with a master's degree or equivalent. But he failed to deliver and the union set a strike date for Nov. 7, the high-profile day before Election Day, when John Kennedy would square off against Richard Nixon for president.

It wasn't an easy decision, but the Young Turks convinced the leadership that they had little choice. Shanker recalled telling the executive



Board, “We have no choice but to go out ... A strike is going to be illegal next year and every year. If we’re going to allow that to stop us, then forget about the union. We’re finished.”

Backing him were Altomare, who chaired the organizing and strike network; organizing director Selden; and veterans like Si Beagle, who later would build the UFT’s continuing education program for retirees, and David Wittes, an architect of the Teachers’ Retirement System. Once the decision was made, Guild President Cogen appeared fearless as he led the strike.

On Nov. 7, the *Chicago Tribune* phoned early, asking what was happening in New York City’s schools. Young teacher Mel Aaronson [later a teacher member of the Teachers’ Retirement System board] said he was “proud to report that at this moment every one of New York’s public schools is shut down.” It was 6 a.m.

Soon after, teachers Jeanette and John DiLorenzo saw the results of a year of organizing at JHS 142 in Red Hook, Brooklyn. Eighty teachers walked the picket line as parents handed out refreshments, joined by longshoremen and merchant seamen from the nearby piers. But the couple, who formerly organized city agencies for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, found a different and far commoner story as they toured 30 other schools in South Brooklyn. “It was pitiful passing by all the elementary

schools and not seeing a soul coming out,” she told the UFT’s Oral History project. (She later became the borough representative for Staten Island and then Manhattan before becoming UFT treasurer.)

The risks for the UFT were high, for the tiny union represented just a fraction of the city’s teachers. Most school employees crossed the picket lines. At best 5,600 teachers, secretaries, guidance counselors and social workers struck; another 2,000 called in sick.

As TV announced that all strikers would be fired, the Guild’s gamble appeared headed for disaster. But David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), mediated a deal with the mayor. The UFT ended the strike. Wagner would not pursue Condon-Wadlin penalties and named a face-saving fact-finding panel consisting of Dubinsky, Van Arsdale and Jacob Potofsky, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. There was little doubt what facts the trio of labor heavyweights would find.

The union’s gutsy, one-day strike was just what the UFT needed. “We had more chutzpah than brains,” said Altomare. “But we had no choice. The strategy of the old-timers in the Guild of waiting to grow before acting wasn’t working. We knew that we had to act in order to grow.”

Furthermore: *Soon after the UFT formed, it sent Alice Marsh to Albany as its legislative representative. With her hat and white gloves, she had gotten her start lobbying for the Guild – picked as much for her savvy as for being retired and having the time (she started teaching in 1929). She participated in the secret meetings that led to the UFT’s formation and was a leader of the first strike. During her 16 years as Albany lobbyist, she worked to improve conditions and benefits for members. Her greatest achievement was helping to win legislative approval for modernization of the pension system; the plan was largely engineered by Teachers’ Retirement System trustee and UFT treasurer David Wittes.*

“Charlie Cogen, Dave Selden and I were eager to get a longer agreement, not only because the school system needed stability, but because it was important to demonstrate to the 50 percent of teachers who weren’t yet members that we were not irresponsible and out on the streets all the time.”

— Albert Shanker

1961

Two months later the fact-finders recommended collective bargaining, with a representation election by the end of the school term to pick the bargaining agent.

Superintendent Theobald and the Board of Education resisted, protesting that Mayor Wagner had no right to interfere in the affairs of the independent board. And, they asked, what about most teachers, who had opposed the walkout and belonged to other organizations? Why should the UFT bargain for all of them?

Stalling, the board named its own blue ribbon panel, which some months later recommended polling teachers, with the result to bind all sides. The board rejected that idea, but ultimately succumbed to pressure from Wagner, who wanted labor’s support for re-election. There would be a referendum in which teachers could vote yes or no on one question: “Do you want collective bargaining?”

At that point, the country’s largest teacher organization, the National Education Association, stepped into the fray. At the time, the NEA was dominated by anti-union administrators and was a dozen times larger than the UFT’s national affiliate, the American Federation of Teachers. The NEA formed an alliance with the Elementary School Teachers Associa-



L to R: David Wittes, Charles Cogen, David Selden, Abe Levine, George Altomare, Alice Marsh and Al Shanker



tion and the Secondary School Teachers Association, which was composed of anti-UFT diehards from the HSTA and middle school teachers. Their group, by misdirection known as the Teachers Bargaining Organization (TBO), urged a “no” vote.

The UFT, which alone championed a “yes” vote, whipped its opponents 27,367 to 9,003.

Now that teachers said they wanted collective bargaining, the next step was an election to choose a representative.

External events helped propel the UFT to

victory by underlining how management could abuse their positions. State investigators exposed a school-construction scandal. With the UFT and Wagner urging him on, Governor Nelson Rockefeller summoned the Legislature into special session to throw out the Board of Education. Then it emerged that vocational high school students had built Theobald a 15-foot boat in their shop class.

A new, pro-labor board set the representation election for Dec. 16, 1961. Two organizations that had opposed collective bargaining –

the TBO and the remnants of the Teachers Union – vied against the UFT on the ballot. The NEA dispatched 75 to 100 full-time organizers for the TBO campaign. The Teacher’s Union ran vigorously, despite its diminished stature and resources.

The UFT had no war chest. It issued \$100 collective-bargaining “bonds,” promising to repay the loans to members when it could. Organized labor sent money and staff – \$2,000 from the ILGWU; \$5,000 from the Central Labor Council; \$20,000 which the AFT raised from other small, cash-strapped locals; \$20,000 from the AFL-CIO’s Industrial Union Department, run by Walter Reuther of the United Automobile Workers, which unionized Detroit teachers had helped start in the 1930s; and a \$50,000 loan from the Amalgamated Bank, owned by Potofsky’s clothing workers.

Former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, civil rights leaders A. Philip Randolph and Martin Luther King, Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois and more endorsed the UFT.

The Honest Ballot Association tallied the votes: 20,045 for the UFT; 9,770 for the TBO; 2,575 for the Teachers Union; and 662 for “no union.”

The UFT would bargain for all teachers, although most were not yet members.

1962

Within days, the UFT issued 82 demands, including raises, the master’s increment, cuts in class size and the teaching load, introduction of teacher aides, sick pay for subs, and a duty-free lunch for elementary teachers. The new, sympathetic Board of Education said it couldn’t afford what the UFT sought. There were offers and counter-offers, friction between Wagner and Rockefeller over state aid, and finally UFT members had had enough. They voted to strike again on April 11, 1962.

At the last minute, Selden identified approximately \$14 million in available state funds and convinced Rockefeller to commit it to education. At the same time, Wagner offered another blue-ribbon panel. The UFT negotiating team narrowly agreed to delay action for a week, pending approval by the Delegate Assembly.

But Cogen’s internal opposition staged an ambush, hoping to unseat him at the next union election. They were ready when, at 1:30 in the morning, Cogen made it to the St. Nicholas Arena, a seedy prizefighting venue on Manhattan’s West Side. Delegates had been waiting since 4 p.m., stoked to fury by Cogen’s opponents. As he urged delay to give the fact-finders time to do their job, opposition dele-

FEDERATION WINS IN TEACHER VOTE

Gets Two-Thirds of Ballots
in 3-Way Election to Pick
Bargaining Agent Here

By RALPH KATZ

The United Federation of Teachers last night won the right to represent the city’s 43,500 public school teachers in collective bargaining.

The results of the three-day election gave the union 20,045 of a total of 33,119 votes.

The Teachers Bargaining Organization was second with 9,770 votes, and the Teachers Union was third with 2,575 votes.

There were 662 votes for no union. Sixty-seven ballots were voided.



Al Shanker and Gov. Rockefeller



gates charged him with selling out and carried a motion 9-1 to put a strike vote to the membership.

Later that day, 5,000 members were at the arena, stamping their feet, yelling “strike now.” The vote was 2,544-2,231 to strike, a margin of just 313 votes.

The strike was “an accident,” recalled Sol Jaffe, then the UFT’s secretary and an opposition member. “It was all manipulation that backfired. It was all political.”

Nevertheless, Cogen’s team had spent months preparing for a strike, just in case. At its heart was Altomare’s strike network: five

“People seem to think that teachers live in a special world – they expect teachers to act like angels. But when the Board of Education acts like a factory owner, we have to respond accordingly.”

— Don Morey,
striking Seward Park High School teacher,
in the *World-Telegram & Sun*

borough coordinators and a representative in each of the school system’s 52 administrative districts who maintained connections with rank-and-file members.

More than 20,000 teachers walked out in the UFT’s second strike. Don Morey, a striking Seward Park High School teacher, told the *World-Telegram & Sun*: “People seem to think that teachers live in a special world. They expect teachers to act like angels. But when the Board of Education acts like a factory owner, we have to respond accordingly.”

Board President Max Rubin ordered the strikers fired. The board secured an injunction, which barred the union from taking any action to support a work stoppage. Ten thousand teachers converged on City Hall, where Cogen

climbed on top of a sound truck. “This is the greatest day in the history of education in the City of New York,” he yelled into a microphone.

Rockefeller found more money, financing a one-year package with a \$995 across-the-board annual raise and the master’s increment – not bad considering that most teachers earned less than \$7,000. Other provisions: a duty-free lunch for elementary teachers; rotation of teaching assignments, relief from non-teaching chores and a grievance system capped by binding arbitration.

Wagner offered amnesty from the Condon-Wadlin Law and Rockefeller pledged to improve a law that was too Draconian to be enforced.

This was the first collective bargaining contract in a major city and the most comprehensive of its time. It started a stampede toward unionization. Shanker, Altomare and Sanders traveled to Philadelphia, Detroit, Newark and Chicago to spread the gospel of militancy and share their battle-tested knowledge about organizing to win collective bargaining.

There were wider ramifications as well. In January 1962, President Kennedy signed Executive Order 10988, establishing the right of federal workers to engage in collective bargaining. That, in turn, served as a model for state legislatures considering public-sector bargaining. By the mid-1970s, teaching was one of the most unionized jobs in the country, inspiring other government workers to organize.

First UFT contract signing. Back row: Ralph Katz, Ernie Fleishman, George Altomare, Sidney Harris, Sol Jaffe, David Selden, Marty Loenthal, Abe Levine, Dick Parrish
Front row: Albert Shanker, Board of Education President James B. Donovan, UFT President Charles Cogen



Sandra Feldman marches for civil rights



1963

The Guild, the United Federation of Teachers and their members had long supported African-Americans' struggle for civil rights, which by 1963 was roaring full-throttle.

In 1954, the Guild was the only AFT local to file a brief in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which ended segregated, "separate but equal" schools for blacks. In 1956, the Guild forced the AFT to expel segregated Southern locals. In 1957, the Guild gave its John Dewey Award to Thurgood Marshall, who litigated *Brown* and would become the first black U.S. Supreme Court justice.

New York City Teachers risked their lives as Freedom Riders. In the summer of 1961, Samuel Tilden High School teacher Albert Gordon spent a month in the maximum-security Mississippi State Penitentiary for having used a

"colored" waiting room. Fourth-grade teacher Sandra Feldman of Manhattan's PS 34 was twice arrested for testing whether interstate-bus terminals had desegregated, as they had been ordered to do.

1963 was a pivotal year. It saw lunch counter sit-ins; dogs and fire hoses unleashed on civil rights advocates in Birmingham; four girls killed in a church bombing there; and NAACP official Medgar Evers shot dead outside his Mississippi home.

That summer, UFT Assistant Secretary Richard Parrish, an African-American teacher who joined the Guild in 1947, led three dozen union members to Farmville, Virginia. Rather than desegregate, whites had closed its public schools and used public funds to open white-only private schools. The UFT helped open AFT Freedom Schools for black children. In 1963 the union forced the AFT to switch its annual convention from Miami to New York City so African-American delegates could avoid abuse.

In August, the UFT sent four busloads to march on Washington with Martin Luther King Jr., and thousands more carpooled to the event. The March for Jobs and Freedom was

organized by A. Philip Randolph, the iconic organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first major union for African-American workers, and Randolph's assistant, Bayard Rustin. Both mentored Shanker and Feldman.

And in 1963 the UFT put its commitment to civil rights into a plan to transform the quality of education for impoverished, mostly black, students.

Parents white and black were in an uproar over the city's limited attempt to use forced busing to integrate schools that were segregated by housing patterns, not by Jim Crow laws, as in the South. Parents and teachers were further outraged by the board's ham-handed attempts to increase the number of white teachers in schools with a majority of African-Americans, first by offering \$1,000 bonuses that teachers derided as "combat pay" and then through involuntary teacher transfers.

The UFT's More Effective Schools (MES) plan offered a way out. It was devised during a year of study by union educators Beagle, Edward Gottlieb, Louis Hay, Charles Miller, Etta Miller, Richard Parish and Elliott Shapiro. They had two givens: Children needed help to overcome the effects of poverty, and middle-class parents would not send their children to inferior schools.

Their solution: improve education quality in poor neighborhoods with smaller elementary schools, radically smaller classes (maxi-

mum 22 instead of 31 or more), the innovation of prekindergarten, and support services for students, including clusters of expert teachers, psychologists, social workers and community coordinators. Desirable suburban and private schools had these elements. All students and teachers – regardless of race or economic background – would want to come to city schools that had them, too, the UFT reasoned.

The board agreed to try MES in 1964 and launched it in September 1965 in 10 schools; it added 11 more the following year. By then included in the UFT contract, MES would prove hugely successful, albeit about twice as expensive as the typical city school (with federal funds paying part of the cost).

As the union floated its MES proposal, it also worked against a strike deadline. Cogen called for mediators, who helped arrange a two-year deal. The contract for the first time made class-size limits negotiable, brought another raise, broadened the grievance procedure, reduced the junior high teaching load and mandated monthly union-board consultations.

And it had an unusual civil rights provision – that the board open "Teacher-to-Teacher" recruitment centers in Washington, Atlanta and other southern cities to attract a more diverse teaching corps.

The objectives of the United Federation of Teachers shall be:

- a) To cooperate to the fullest extent with the labor movement and to work for a progressive labor philosophy; to awaken in all teachers a labor consciousness and sense of solidarity with labor.
- b) To advance the economic and professional interests of teachers.
- c) To establish the active participation of teachers in the formulation of educational policies.
- d) To work for the fundamental improvement of teaching and supervision.
- e) To protect teachers from oppressive supervision.
- f) To make teachers aware of their responsibilities in the solution of social and economic problems.
- g) To protect the schools against unsound economy and against efforts at domination by political, economic, religious or military groups.
- h) To promote education as a social agency for developing the capacities of the young, for enlightening adults, and for working toward a society controlled by the ideas of service rather than of profit.
- i) To act as representative of the teachers in all dealings with the city and state authorities.

Constitution of the United Federation of Teachers, Art. II P. 1

A HANDBOOK of TEACHERS' RIGHTS

UFT



Charlie Cogen honors Martin Luther King Jr. with the Dewey Award



1964

State Education Commissioner James Allen Jr. sought to promote integration by having four years of elementary, four years of middle and four years of high school (instead of the existing 6-3-3 system). New York City Superintendent Calvin Gross suggested busing 40,000 students, while “pairing” black and white schools in outer-borough “border” areas, with racially mixed classes attending both schools during their elementary years; he started by pairing eight schools and 5,600 students.

Upset, a group of white parents spawned an organization called Parents and Taxpayers (PAT), which soon claimed 300,000 members in 100 chapters. Through boycotts and demonstrations, PAT raised enough of a ruckus to induce both Senator Kenneth Keating and Robert F. Kennedy, who would defeat Keating

for re-election, to denounce PAT’s chief concern, long-distance busing (which was not part of either Allen’s or Gross’ plans).

Meanwhile, discontent spread among African-American organizations and parents, who were unhappy with their schools, PAT and the way the establishment was treating them.

Into this cauldron stepped 35-year-old Albert Shanker, elected president that summer after Charles Cogen left to become AFT president.

Under Shanker’s leadership, the union created an anti-PAT group of white parents who pledged to send their children to integrated schools.

That spring, the UFT gave its John Dewey Award to Martin Luther King Jr, who told UFT members that he favored integration: “There is no comparison between the inconvenience some white children may suffer and the terrible needs Negro children confront as a tragic consequence of 300 years of inequality.”

Meanwhile, the union recruited 36 mem-

bers to teach that summer in temporary Freedom Schools in eight Mississippi cities. Mississippi – which clung to “separate but equal” schools for blacks a decade after the *Brown* decision and where one school board, at least, prohibited teaching African American students about civics, the Civil War and Reconstruction – was the epicenter of a broad Freedom Summer drive organized by leading civil rights organizations; social change and voter registration topped the agenda. Volunteers from across the country staffed 40 Freedom Schools, teaching at least 3,000 African-American students academic skills, leadership development and a curriculum that put race relations in a social, economic and political context.

The union applauded as President Lyndon Johnson pushed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 through Congress. It barred discrimination in voting and banned racial segregation in schools, the workplace and public facilities.

In the fall, the UFT got a 7-month jump on the next contract, issuing demands in November, so the city could budget for them. The MES-rooted goal was to improve education in more schools by using federal funds

from Johnson’s “war on poverty.” Under the UFT proposal, class size would fall to 30, down from 39 in high school and 35 in elementary and junior high schools, with no more than 15 in special education. Teaching loads would shrink, too, as the UFT sought 20,000 additional teachers. There were demands for higher salaries and health, major medical and dental improvements.

The UFT pegged the additional cost at \$300 million to \$400 million – not counting building classrooms for those extra teachers. But the board’s total budget was \$909 million. At year’s end, Superintendent Gross counter-offered raises of \$180 a year, a tenth of what the UFT sought.

Teachers threatened a strike.

Al Shanker and Abe Levine visit a 4th-grade class



Furthermore: Although there was no general strike that year, UFT summer day camp teachers staged a little-noticed three-day strike in July that had big consequences. The union-board agreement that ended the strike, which members approved on August 4, was included in the 1965 contract. It won salary differentials in three steps based on experience solely in vacation day camps, two days paid sick leave and collective bargaining rights. More broadly, it included all per session work – from evening high schools to coaching to tutoring after school – and established seniority rights to per session jobs ... The board, however, did not produce that pay at all promptly. In 1966, 12,000 teachers were still waiting for their retroactive pay for per session work ...

1965

Civil rights remained a priority. Shanker urged then-Comptroller Abe Beame not to invest in Mississippi bonds. Opposing apartheid in South Africa, the UFT Executive Board shifted accounts from a bank that did business in South Africa to another that didn't. Meanwhile, President Johnson's groundbreaking Elementary and Secondary Education Act flooded schools with federal money.

In March, civil rights marchers were beaten while crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, on what came to be known as "Bloody Sunday." The march sparked national attention to the injustices many African Americans faced as they organized for the right to vote. UFT Secretary Jules Kolodny told an irate Delegate Assembly, "It is outrageous that citizens who peacefully assemble ... to register and vote should be brutally beaten."

Shanker met with Andrew Young of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who asked for cars to transport rural African-Americans to register to vote. The union put out a call: "We need contributions from teachers in every school RIGHT NOW." Altomare

sent the word out on the strike network he had developed. A week later, Shanker flew to Selma and gave King the keys to a station wagon – the first of five cars that union members would donate at a cost of \$50,000.

Shanker, Kolodny, Assistant Secretary Sidney Harris, elementary Vice President Abe Levine (elected in 1960, he would become the UFT's longest-serving officer) and executive board member Max Brimberg then joined King's March on Montgomery. King later received \$10,000 more from New York's teachers at a Central Labor Council reception.

The Board of Education again spoke of involuntarily transferring teachers to struggling schools in poor neighborhoods. Shanker labeled this "a false issue designed to hoax the public into believing that inferior education is to be blamed on teachers rather than on large classes, dilapidated buildings, short-time instruction, inadequate textbooks and supplies, and failure to provide adequate services for children."

The board replaced Superintendent Gross with his lieutenant, Bernard E. Donovan. No teacher transfers; no new school pairings. Sixth-graders would

move into junior highs and ninth graders into high schools, but not to further integration. Civil rights groups lost more faith in the board.

The union and Donovan worked out most parts of a two-year contract except salary and benefits. But while Shanker was at the AFL-CIO convention in San Francisco, Donovan called to say the deal was off; the board wasn't backing him. The union reiterated its "no contract, no work" stance. Mayor Wagner named mediators.

Shanker, who had caught chicken pox from his children, participated in the mediation by phone, in isolation. Agreement on a \$68 million package came two weeks later, on the day before school opened. The state and city wouldn't commit to costs beyond the first year,

but a queasy board said it gave in to avoid a strike. It predicted the pact would "improve the morale of our teachers, which will reflect itself in improved teaching of children."

Twelve thousand teachers ratified the contract under the broiling sun at Randall's Island Stadium. The pact included raises; higher pay for experience; smaller classes; more preparation time in "special service" junior highs to induce teachers to work in them; better grievance procedures; elemen-



Top photo: Al Shanker and Goldie Colodny

Left photo: Charlie Cogen on Mediation Panel



President Lyndon B. Johnson receives the Charles A. Stillman award from Charlie Cogen

tary and junior high classes of 33, not 35; high school classes of 36, not 39.

The biggest cheers were for no longer having to bring a doctor's note after illness and getting paid twice a month instead of once.

But perhaps the most significant long-term improvement came with creation of the UFT Welfare Fund, established jointly by the union and the Board of Education, and led by its first Director, Vito DeLeonardis. UFT members gained fully paid hospital and medical insurance, a choice of health care plans, and a union-administered Welfare Fund offering supplementary benefits, like prescription drugs, eyeglasses and a dental plan.

The newly won benefits were unprecedented. What made the Welfare Fund possible was the contractual agreement to shift some money from salaries to pay for the new benefits – an arrangement that continues to this day. This initial annual funding was \$100 per day-school teacher, with an additional \$40 starting in October 1966; the allocation has since risen steadily.

This was regarded as the nation's best teacher's union contract as of that time. "Significant advances have been made in the twin areas of improvement in classroom teaching conditions and the raising of the professional status of teachers through more attractive salary schedules and new welfare and health fringe benefits," Shanker said.

David Selden and Al Shanker lead teachers at the Labor Day Parade



1966

Martin Luther King Jr. insisted on peaceful change, but more militant civil rights leaders had also claimed the stage. The dynamics of the movement and the tone of race relations in New York City changed and the idea of community control of schools began.

The issue reached a flashpoint when the Board of Education tried to open IS 201 on 127th Street, between Madison and Park Avenues, where Harlem met Spanish Harlem. The resulting tumult ended integration efforts in the city.

The school's windowless, red brick façade facing the street was said to be designed to protect against riots (windows did face an interior courtyard). Whether that was true or not, the majority African-American community read the message of its fortresslike exterior as: keep out.

By this time, only about half of the city's students were white. So when the IS 201 community demanded that IS 201 be integrated, the board preposterously pointed to the nearby Triborough Bridge. Whites from Queens and Brooklyn would be drawn by IS 201's superior program and facilities, the board contended.

Community activists also demanded to run the school and hire administrators; they

wanted an African-American male principal to provide a "proper image" for students. The board named Stanley Lisser, white, Jewish and experienced in Harlem; he topped the rank-order, competitive examination list compiled by the independent Board of Examiners, whose tests long predated those for state certification. Lisser picked a staff that was racially diverse, with an African-American assistant principal.

When parents boycotted the school's opening day to demand more African American staffers, Superintendent Donovan appeared to cede them veto power over personnel. Lisser "voluntarily" agreed to transfer. IS 201's UFT chapter, black and white, confronted Donovan at board headquarters, saying they would close the school unless Donovan reinstated Lisser. Donovan threatened to dock their pay.

"Teacher after teacher got up. It was like a religious meeting," Shanker recalled. "They got up and they said, 'We are not going back there.' This is a great principal ... I felt if the union has done nothing else ... [it had given] teachers a feeling that they can stand in front of the superintendent and state their feelings."

Thirty-five Harlem principals opposed Lisser's transfer and Donovan's agreement to let a community council screen prospective staff. The Council of Supervisory Associations, an umbrella group, said it would sue. The board overruled Donovan and scrapped the community council.

IS 201 opened and parents broke the boycott by sending in their children.

Generally favoring parental involvement to improve education, the union had stayed in the background, letting IS 201's teachers call the shots.

The episode divided civil rights advocates. Should policy be color-blind or color-conscious? That split would come into sharper relief very soon.

At the end of 1965, the board had decentralized school administration by creating 52 districts, each run by a superintendent guided by a local advisory board. It hoped to turn headquarters into a service agency. Now activists wanted those local boards to have real power.

A month after the IS 201 fracas, City College psychologist Kenneth Clark pushed for a parent-university board to take control of IS 201 and its feeder schools. Clark was influential; he had just been named to the state Board of Regents and his study of the harsh consequences of segregated schooling had swayed the Supreme Court in *Brown*. Backing him were civil rights groups, state Education Commissioner Allen and the new mayor, John V. Lindsay. The UFT objected, saying a local governing board would violate teachers' rights;

Promoting MES at Spring Conference booth



hostility rose against the union.

The Board of Education said it lacked the legal power to delegate authority as Clark had suggested, but it invited the Ford Foundation to seek ways to improve schools in neighborhoods with the greatest needs.

In December, activists from IS 201 and elsewhere hijacked the board's meeting hall for three days. A self-proclaimed People's Board of Education excoriated schools, making the real board look silly and powerless. The newly united dissidents from across the city formed a common plan – forget integration, seek com-

munity control of schools.

The day after the sit-in ended, critics of the Board of Education got powerful ammunition. Reading scores showed that a fifth of the city's students lagged two years below grade; the worst scores tended to be in high-needs neighborhoods, while the best scores were in wealthier areas.

Critics dismissed explanations by the UFT and others that poverty was the cause and better schools the solution – the ideas behind MES.

Amid this political and educational ferment, the union quietly went about its other business.

The UFT Welfare Fund cut its first check in April. In that first fiscal year, it paid \$956,000 in claims, the equivalent of \$6.53 million in

2008 dollars. (Compare that to 2008, when the Welfare Fund paid out \$250 million.)

The Fund's first trustees were Shanker, Jules Kolodny, Ann Kessler, Sol Levine and Vito DeLeonardis, who was Shanker's director of staff and later became executive director of New York State United Teachers. DeLeonardis spearheaded the effort to get the Welfare Fund operating and later brought in Ray Lizza as administrator.

Over the years the Fund would grow in scope and services, but one of the biggest improvements in the initial year was the addition of a dental plan. Paraprofessionals joined in 1970 and retirees in 1984. A separate Welfare Fund was established for the Federation of Nurses/UFT in 1979.

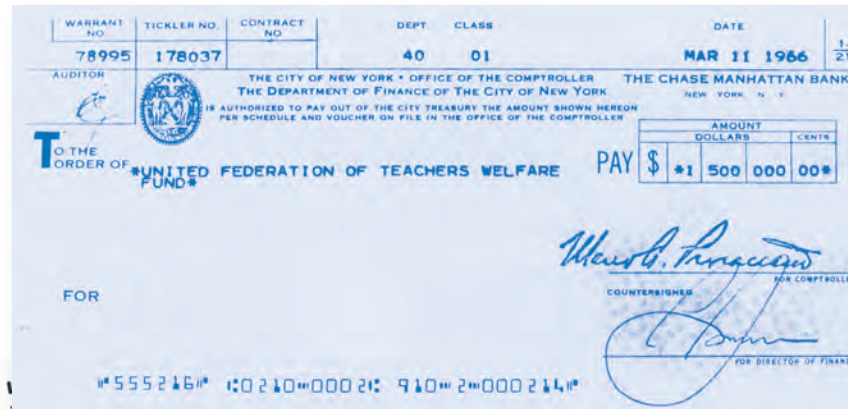
1967

Mayor Lindsay secured a state law that promised more school aid – if he decentralized schools. He turned to Ford Foundation President McGeorge Bundy, and Bundy turned to his aide, Mario Fantini.

Behind the scenes, Fantini smoothed things out between the UFT and IS 201 negotiators. They agreed to jointly run a “demonstration district” to increase parent and community participation, with the ultimate goal of improving student performance. The district consisted of the school and its four feeders, followed the More Effective Schools model and protected job rights.

The deal presaged charter schools, which Shanker would propose in 1988. The IS 201 negotiators gained legitimacy and authority, while teachers gained an equal role in decision-making and the expectation that the board would pay the higher costs of MES schooling.

There was a similar arrangement in the impoverished Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn, where 4,000 African-American chil-



Rally at City Hall



dren were bused to white schools. Pushing for quality education, the UFT offered to back community participation – not control – if all eight schools became MES schools. There was no thought that the district would hire or fire teachers.

In May, the Ford Foundation awarded planning grants for those demonstration districts and another that won UFT approval, Two Bridges, which had five schools on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Two Bridges was racially diverse, with white, Chinese, Puerto Rican and African-American residents.

Since 1966, UFT field representative Sandra Feldman had been working with teachers and parents in Ocean Hill-Brownsville to get a new principal for IS 55, which would replace a dysfunctional junior high while securing more services and reducing overcrowding. In January 1967, IS 55's parents and teachers merged into "the steering committee for IS 55." Be-

cause their cooperation showed what could be done when parents and teachers worked together, IS 55 was chosen to be one of the schools in the demonstration district.

But tensions were rising in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, where increasingly vocal activists demanded community control of the schools. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville demonstration district pulled out of the MES program. Donovan, no friend of the union, didn't object. He said the demonstration's goal was to test the impact of community control; educational change would cloud the experiment.

As the UFT saw it, without MES, the experiment was doomed.

The future became even more clouded when, that summer, Ocean Hill-Brownsville administrator Rhody McCoy said he wanted to hire an all-black teaching staff. He started with five principals, including people who were not on the Board of Examiners' rank-order eligibility list.

Meanwhile, the teachers' contract expired June 30. The UFT sought raises, but its main focus was education: smaller classes, expanding MES beyond the existing 21 schools; giving teachers a greater say in removing disruptive students from class; and, for new teachers, a one-year internship to work with experienced colleagues.

Donovan asked for givebacks, contending that the extra preps in "disadvantaged" elementary and junior high schools hadn't attracted experienced teachers; that without doctor's notes, teachers abused sick time; and that every teacher should spend five years in a disadvantaged school.

In June the Delegate Assembly endorsed mass resignations if there was no agreement. The union mailed out resignation forms to members. Lindsay appointed a mediation panel which essentially worked out salaries, but not the educational component of a new contract.

At the Singer Bowl in Flushing Meadows Park (now Armstrong Stadium), 12,000 members rejected the board's \$125 million offer.

Fifty thousand teachers struck for 14 school

days. The UFT claimed they had resigned, but never turned in the resignation forms because the Board of Education had threatened to turn names over to military draft boards. With the Vietnam War raging, this was a potent threat, because teaching provided deferment from the draft for otherwise eligible men.

The walkout ended when the board committed \$10 million to experimental programs to improve elementary schools. Half was for "intensive" programs, but not specifically MES. A UFT-board-parent panel chaired by an outside educator whom Donovan picked would allocate the funds.

The 26-month contract included \$135.4 million for raises; created a differential for teachers with 30 credits in addition to a master's degree; relieved junior high and high school teachers of some administrative and clerical duties; and introduced a new procedure for handling disruptive pupils. Expanding the UFT's role, it required that the union be consulted on educational policy and created a joint union-board committee to consider "discipline, planning and curriculum."

Shanker termed the package "fantastically good." Members approved it 5 to 1.

Immediately after announcing the settlement, Shanker and Donovan separately walked the three blocks from City Hall to Foley Square in Lower Manhattan. There, Shanker, Altomare and UFT Treasurer David Wittes were on trial



Supporting the mass resignation



Rally held at the Singer Bowl in Flushing

for criminal contempt for disobeying a court order that had banned the strike. The trial had spanned eight days, due to breaks for contract negotiations.

The union vainly sought shelter from the Taylor Law, the new statute that banned strikes and lesser work actions, such as work-to-rule campaigns. The union invoked the U.S. Constitution's 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude. The UFT argued that it trumped the Taylor Law, which in September had replaced the Dracon-

ian and unenforceable Condon-Wadlin Act.

Not so, ruled State Supreme Justice Emilio Nuñez. He convicted Shanker and the union, but acquitted Altomare and Wittes. He sentenced Shanker to 15 days in jail and a \$250 fine and fined the union \$150,000 – \$10,000 for each missed school day plus one weekend. (In January 1968, three months before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. would send a symbolic \$10 check to help Shanker pay his \$250 fine.)

"I expected it," said Shanker, who appealed. "It could have been worse."

"This strike by a powerful union against the public was a rebellion against the gov-

ernment; if permitted to succeed it would eventually destroy government with resultant anarchy and chaos," Nuñez wrote.

As a further penalty, in November, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) – created by the Taylor Law primarily to reconcile contractual disputes involving municipal workers – cancelled the UFT's dues checkoff for a year. Chapter leaders would have to collect dues member by member.

In mid-December, the Appellate Division ruled against Shanker and he dropped his appeal. "I feel that the price I am about to pay is well worth what we have accomplished," Shanker said. "This punishment should have been meted out to the mayor and the Board of Education. But I'll leave what happens up to public opinion."

A prime reason for not taking a further ap-

peal was that Shanker wanted to be out of jail in time to influence consideration of another Ford Foundation plan. It would go beyond the three untested demonstration districts and decentralize the administration of the entire city school system.

At the Dec. 20 Delegate Assembly meeting, after quelling talk of wildcat strikes to protest his incarceration, Shanker was taken into custody as 1,800 delegates sang "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

"This marks the end of the image of the good old dedicated teacher who gets kicked around and, once a year, on Teacher Recognition Day, is handed a flower for his lapel," Shanker said.

Furthermore: The Taylor Law, named for its chief architect, Wharton business school professor George W. Taylor, guaranteed public employees the right to unionize and bargain collectively, a right denied in many states. It established the Public Employment Relations Board to settle disputes via mediation, fact-finding and arbitration. It barred strikes; penalties were two days' pay for each day of strike for individuals and \$10,000 a day and loss of dues checkoff for unions ... The law spurred unionization of small upstate school districts, some of whom went with the National Education Association; by 1970, 90 percent of the state's 1 million public employees belonged to unions.



Al Shanker receiving check from Martin Luther King Jr.



1968

The UFT had staged four strikes: 1960 for recognition as a union, 1962 for the first contract, 1964 for collective bargaining for per session work and 1967 for educational quality. 1968 saw the strike for the UFT's survival, a strike in three waves that closed schools for 36 of the first 48 school days.

The strike began after Ocean Hill-Brownsville's demonstration board dismissed 13 teachers, five assistant principals and the lone principal whom it had not chosen. There were two apparent reasons for the firings: race and religion. All were white and Jewish. (When the board learned one teacher was African-American, but had a name similar to a white teacher's, it rescinded his dismissal.) Their alleged crime: "The community lost confidence in them," said unit administrator McCoy.

The UFT reacted exactly as it would have if an African-American teacher

had been dismissed for such reasons. Members stood together to protect the contract's due process provision: Tenured teachers can't be fired without written charges, without provable facts and without a hearing where they can defend themselves.

The union had to protect the due process rights of its members, or it could not have survived. The union also believed that it was important to stand up for a color-blind, religion-blind, egalitarian society – the very commitment that had put the UFT in the forefront of the civil rights movement.



Union members voted overwhelmingly to strike. At crunch time, 93 percent stayed off the job, compared to 12 percent in 1960, 52 percent in 1962 and 77 percent in 1967, *The New York Times* reported.

Of course, the issue was more complex. What happened in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, and to a lesser extent IS 201, reflected national tensions that had been highlighted in February by the Kerner Commission, which President Johnson had appointed to investigate urban riots. It found a nation "moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal" and a "national climate of tension and fear."

Ocean Hill-Brownsville's governing board refused to be an experiment to see how parents might affect the fringes of policy. They demanded total authority over education, budget and personnel. They declared independence – independence that state law did not permit and the Board of Education couldn't grant.



The ineffectual responses of the Board of Education, Superintendent Donovan, Mayor Lindsay and state Education Commissioner Allen contributed to the debacle. To some extent, they feared appearing anti-black by opposing the demonstration board's arrogation of power. Donovan, for example, gave the district authority to hire "demonstration principals," which a court soon ruled illegal in a suit brought by the UFT and the Council of Supervisory Associations.

At a memorial service for Martin Luther King Jr. at JHS 271, the principal ordered white teachers to leave. Audience members attacked several teachers, one of whom was knocked unconscious and hospitalized.

Then came the dismissals, which shocked JHS 271's UFT chapter leader, Fred Nauman, who was terminated after having taught there since 1959. "I enjoyed the age level and the nature of the kids ... And 271 had a great staff ... I had never planned to leave," he told Shanker biographer Richard Kahlenberg.

Donovan had privately assured Ocean Hill-Brownsville administrator McCoy that he would quietly remove a few teachers if the district wished. The Rev. C. Herbert Oliver, the board's chair, later wrote, "We were never able to get them to see that we were talking about hundreds of teachers."

The dismissed teachers refused to go quietly and asked the union to fight. For weeks



UFT staff meeting with Rhody McCoy over Ocean Hill-Brownsville confrontation
L to R: Vinny Speranza, staff rep.; Abe Levine, VP elementary; John O'Neill, VP JHS; Sandra Feldman, staff rep.; Sid Harris, asst. secretary, Rhody McCoy, at desk



police escorted them through protesters. On May 22 more than 300 of the district's 556 teachers walked and were locked out for the rest of the school year.

The UFT convinced the Legislature to delay a school decentralization bill. But legislators let the Board of Education delegate authority to districts, equated the demonstration districts with the city's 30 other administrative districts, and expanded the Board of Education from 9 to 13 so Lindsay could appoint pro-decentralization members.

Then the Ford Foundation granted almost \$1 million to the Institute for Community Studies, including \$275,000 for Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

That summer, McCoy hired nonunion replacements for the strikers.

In August, Judge Francis E. Rivers, an African American, dismissed all charges against the dismissed teachers and ordered their return. McCoy refused, triggering a strike on Sept. 9.

It ended with agreement among the union and officials – but not the district – to return the teachers, among other provisions. The next day, Feldman was at McCoy's office before 7 a.m. to arrange their safe entry, but he stalled for time. When 10 teachers appeared at JHS 271, a group blocked the entrance.

"We're here to teach," said Nauman.

The teachers forced their way in, but had

neither time cards nor teaching assignments. Sent to nearby IS 55, they and 100 other "disputed" teachers found 50 men, some armed with sticks. For 90 minutes

they withstood taunts, slurs and threats. Some one threw .30-caliber cartridges at them; a Daily News front page showed Shanker holding one of them. Police "battled through a crowd of jeering and cursing demonstrators" to get them back inside JHS 271, The Times said.

Lindsay refused to enforce the agreement. He didn't want Ocean Hill-Brownsville to blow

FINAL **DAILY NEWS** **8¢**
 NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER ©
 Vol. 50, No. 117 New York, N.Y. 10017, Friday, September 11, 1968* WEATHER: Variable cloudiness, cool.

Shanker Ultimatum: BOOT McCOY OR IT'S LONG STRIKE

Allen, State School Boss, Enters Battle

United Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker shows what he identified as a live .30-caliber cartridge which he said was thrown at a teacher who reported to work at Brooklyn's JHS 271 Wednesday. Parents tried to bar it from the school. As Shanker called for ouster of Rbody McCoy and other officials of Brooklyn's Ocean Hill-Brownsville district, State Education Commissioner James E. Allen Jr. stepped into the school crisis. But late last night he had taken no immediate action to avert teachers' strike.

—Story on page 1

ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY LEONARD DENTON

Meet some of the "unwanted" teachers.

They are teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. They want to continue teaching there.

They are in the group of eighty-three that some newspapers have seen fit to call the "unwanted" teachers.

They are what the Ocean Hill-Brownsville dispute is all about. Why is the world as they fight to stay in Ocean Hill-Brownsville? With all the abuse they have been taking from vigilantes there, why stay?

With all the inducements offered them to get out—secure teaching assignments elsewhere, desk jobs, overseas fellowships at Harvard on full pay—why stay?

The decision has been up to each one of them. Each has been alone with his conscience. Each has chosen to stay. And to fight to stay there. They are stouthearted in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. By the kids.

When the news was out on this sacrifice Monday that they were returning to teach their classes, students understood that.

One of them has been accused of conducting a strike because, the day she returned, she permitted one of her little pupils to hug and kiss her.

These are union teachers. They have fought hard for more effective schools, smaller class size, greater provision for individual guidance and remedial work. Particularly in districts like Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

These are UFT teachers. They have fought hard to win union recognition, contractual agreements, job security, due process. Very rights he trumped out.

"Unwanted." Unwanted by whom? By a local governing board that has never had any legal standing and is now supported. By a board hearing, without a combination of due process. Teachers later adjudged Manhattan by a trial examiner.

Unwanted by whom? By a small, disciplined band of extremists, indeed. A group which, by disruption, harassment, intimidation and hate-mongering is making a shambles of education and a mockery of elementary civility.

The schools of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, the schools of all New York are very much in want of teachers like these. The need for them is more greater than ever.

These are wanted teachers. They have ability, experience, high standards. They have a sense of duty.

Also, they have guts.

United Federation of Teachers
 Local 4, American Federation of Teachers, AFT-CIO
 400 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10014
 Albert Shanker, President

"Through its rhetoric, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district had become the symbol of black and Puerto Rican people struggling for self-determination. McCoy and the governing board urged their supporters to disregard anachronistic rules and regulations which, in their view, stood in the path of the aspirations of oppressed peoples. They sought to polarize the issue in such a way as to make it appear that anyone who opposed them abetted, even if unconsciously, white racism."

— Diane Ravitch in "The Great School Wars"

The second strike ran Sept. 13 to Sept. 27. State Commissioner Allen suspended the governing board. When 15,000 teachers rallied at City Hall, civil rights icons Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph tried to shift the focus from racism to due process.

A second agreement failed and the UFT struck once more, from Oct. 14 through Nov. 15. On Sunday, Nov. 17, Allen personally guaranteed a third pact: He named a state trustee to run the district; he suspended the demonstration district's board until it agreed to comply with the law and Board of Education directives; he named a panel to protect teachers' rights

citywide; the teachers would return; three principals would be transferred; and three of McCoy's JHS 271 replacement teachers were removed pending harassment hearings (they were cleared).

In return, the UFT agreed that teachers would make up the lost school time by working 10 holidays and extended hours for 14 weeks and that teachers would forfeit six days of pay.

Disruptions continued, but the state trustees – there were three in a month, for the first two quit in exhaustion – restored order. On March 7, 1969, Allen reinstated the demonstration district board at the trustee's recommendation. By then, the Legislature was moving toward a decentralization plan that would obliterate Ocean Hill-Brownsville as a freestanding entity.

Furthermore: Ocean Hill-Brownsville was absorbed into District 23. IS 201 merged into District 5. Two Bridges asked to be dissolved and become part of a bigger district, later District 1 ... When Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered in April, Shanker said this "places a serious and profound

obligation on all Americans, black and white ... to rebuild a society where racial justice and peace prevail." UFT leaders and members later traveled to Memphis to march with the strikers whom King had been leading, while also sending them thousands of dollars ... Civil rights leader Bayard

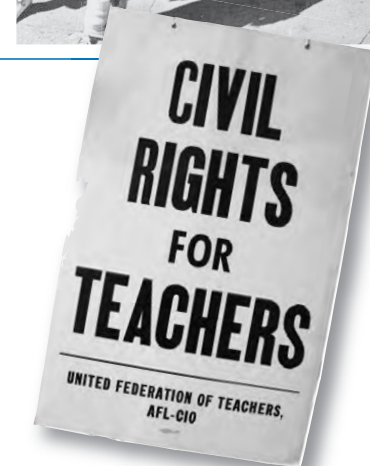
Rustin flew to Memphis as well, but in remarks prepared for accepting that year's UFT's John Dewey award, he said division over community control was dividing the coalition that had advanced civil rights so dramatically; parents should join teachers to secure better facilities and education, he added ...



Parents rally in support of teachers



Community Crisis School during mass resignation



George Altomare and Al Shanker



1969

Facing contempt charges for violating two court orders during the 1968 strikes, the UFT waged a vain legal fight up to the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court to have a jury hear the case.

In February, Justice Francis J. Bloustein convicted Shanker, Council of Supervisory Associations President Walter J. Degnan and their unions. But since he found they acted under "extreme provocation," he fined the UFT far less than the \$620,000 which the city sought. Bloustein fined Shanker \$250 and sentenced him to another 15 days in jail; the union paid \$220,000. He fined Degnan \$125, jailed him for 3 days and fined his 3,300-member union \$43,500. (George Meany of the AFL-CIO said the national organization would raise funds to

help pay the \$220,000. "The United Federation of Teachers will not bear this burden alone," he said.)

Bloustein wrote: "It should have been clear to all concerned, especially to the State Legislature and the Board of Education, [for] as long as a year or more, that deep trouble was brewing over school decentralization, and yet neither the Legislature nor anyone else in official office [sic] took the necessary steps to forestall an agonizing conflict by supplying a mechanism (criteria, guidelines and restraints) for its implementation and resolution. This failure ... contributed in a large measure to the unfortunate conditions that brought about the strikes."

He added: "There is uncontroverted evidence that known militants and extremists, strangers to the communities involved, contributed to the unrest and violence."

That spring, acknowledging the union's newfound strength, Gov.

Rockefeller brought the UFT into round-the-clock negotiations to hammer out a decentralization law, which he signed into law in April. It divided the city into 31 (later 32) community school districts, each run by a locally elected community school board that would oversee and, to some extent, set policy for elementary and middle schools. The central Board of Education ran high schools and special education, while retaining overall responsibility for educational policy. A strong chancellor, who had the power to remove community board members and the superintendents they appointed, ran the system.

By saying districts needed at least 20,000 students, the law erased Ocean Hill-

Brownsville, and legislators raised few objections.

At Shanker's behest (and Lindsay's, since he wanted labor peace during his re-election campaign), there was quick agreement on a contract to start July 1. Salaries and benefits rose considerably.

Moreover, the union used the contract to repair frayed relations with the community, parents,

minorities, liberals and the press. UFT negotiations coordinator Dan Sanders told *The Times* that the union passed up \$10 million in benefits to help disadvantaged youngsters by:

- Allocating \$500,000 for a union-board drive to recruit minority teachers nationwide.
- Adding 10 service-rich MES schools for poor neighborhoods.
- Creating the UFT Scholarship Fund.
- Reducing class size selectively.
- Opening day-care centers for 3-to-5-year-olds in 50 schools in high-needs areas. A *Times* editorial said these "centers ... in which teachers will be able to leave their own infants side-by-side with neighborhood youngsters during teaching hours is an imaginative step toward sound teacher-community relations, as well as integration at an early age."

And then the union took another deft step – it organized classroom paraprofessionals, who were mostly minority, mostly female and all low-income. As biographer Richard Kahlenberg put it, this "put the lie to the myth that Shanker and the UFT did not care about blacks and Hispanics and integrate[d] the largely white union."

The paraprofessional position was created by Lyndon Johnson's Great Society antipoverty program. When Congress required schools to educate all handicapped children, the board hired more paras to provide individual care.



Bayard Rustin and Al Shanker rush to City Hall rally



They initially were paid \$1.25 an hour and lacked job protection, pensions and health benefits.

In 1968, the city had secured funds to offer tuition-free college courses to 100 of the 1,000-plus paras. Virtually every one took a qualifying exam. "You can't imagine my despair when I was told in 1969 that the money had run out and I could not continue," recalled Maria Portalatin, later the paras' chapter leader. "How could I begin to pay for college myself?"

To organize the paras, the UFT turned to Velma Hill, another protégé of Randolph and Rustin. Hill, an African-American activist, was attracted by Shanker's vision of providing para-professionals with a career ladder that would

enable them to become teachers.

The representation election in June was hard-fought against AFSCME District Council 37. Due to irregularities, the final ballots were not counted until November, and the UFT was 30 votes behind. Everything hinged on 300 to 400 uncounted votes, all from Ocean Hill-Brownsville, where McCoy had hired the paras. But they heeded the union's campaign promise: "What we did for teachers, we can do for you." Virtually every one voted for the UFT.

In December the union issued bargaining demands for paraprofessionals – a substantial pay hike, pensions, vacations and holidays, and the career ladder. The board bizarrely contended that if it paid paras too much, they

would move away, thereby obliterating their value as links to the community.

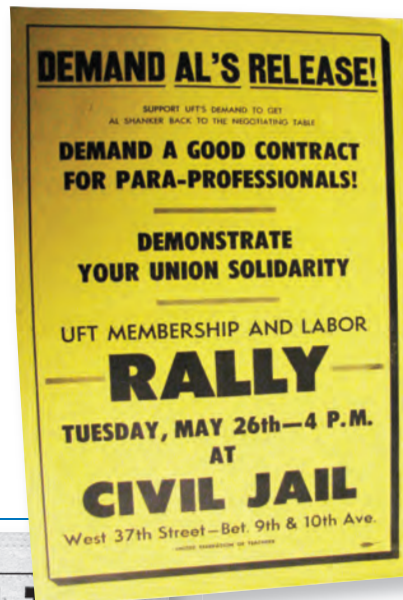
As the 1960s ended, the UFT had been bloodied and demonized, but it emerged with stunning victories. It had upheld due process, taken the first big step toward reconnecting with minority communities by organizing para-professionals, shaped the decentralization law, secured a strong contract and recruited a dynamic minority group that swelled the membership to about 70,000. The UFT was arguably the strongest political force in the city – and a decade earlier it hadn't existed.

Furthermore: Provisions of the UFT contract settled in June included: collapsing the salary scale from 15 to 7½ years; paying teachers who cover classes of absent teachers; and raising board contributions to the UFT Welfare Fund ... The UFT won the right to approve a list of officers who hear cases against members ... The union became an "agency shop," meaning that all employees in titles covered by a UFT contract must pay dues or the equivalent, called an agency fee, whether they choose to be members or not; the reason is that the union's contract covers all employees in the title and the union makes its services available to everyone covered by the contract ... Also as part of the agreement, the city agreed to support major improvements in state pension laws (Tier 1)...



UFT Pres. Albert Shanker and Emergency Committee Chairman Bayard Rustin on the walk across the Brooklyn Bridge.

N.Y.C. Central Labor Council President Henry Van Arsdale flanked by Al Shanker and Barry Farber. With direct congressional candidates. At Farber's left is Alice Marsh, UFT legislative representative.



DAILY NEWS, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1969

Shanker Draws a 15-Day Jail Term

UFT Is Fined 220G Over Strike; Degnan Must Serve 3 Days

By ALFRED ALBELLI and JUDSON HAND
 Albert Shanker, president of the United Federation of Teachers, was sentenced yesterday to 15 days in jail and fined \$250 for leading the school strikes last fall in violation of two court orders. The union was fined \$220,000. At the same time, Walter J. Degnan, head of the Council of Supervisory Associations, which represents most of the city's school administrators, was ordered jailed for three days and fined \$125. The council, which backed the UFT strike, was fined \$43,500.



Justice Francis J. Bloustein imposed the sentences and fines in Manhattan Supreme Court after 41-minute sessions of his 97th ... have drawn 30-day sentences. The \$250 fine against Shanker was the maximum under the law. The question of how

SECTION II

COMPLETE TEXT OF UFT CONTRACT WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Summary of Major Benefits
(Summary of Major Benefits)

Salary:	Now	Oct. '69	Oct. '70	Oct. '71
B.A. Min.	6,750	7,250	8,450	9,400
B.A. Max.	11,150	12,500	13,900	15,950

First Differential \$500
 Second Differential \$150 on October 1, 1970
 Promotional Differential \$1000

Additional Annuity: All those under UFT contracts on maximum salary will have \$400 a year beginning 1970 placed in their annuity fund. 8 years to maximum—two \$350 increments each year (one on the regular increment date, another on every March 1).
 Maximum with all differentials goes to \$16,950 plus \$400 annuity—an increase of over \$3000 in 3 years.

Welfare Fund: More benefits made possible through an increase of \$80 in contributions.
 Coverage: Payment of \$7 per coverage period if compensatory time is not provided.

Pension Benefits:

- Retirement after 20 years of service with deferred payment of retirement allowance when teacher is 55 and would have reached 25 years of service.
- Retirement allowance of 2 1/2% for each year of service (compared to present 2% or less).
- Retirement based on last year salary instead of last 5 years.
- Double death benefit.
- Vested retirement allowance paid at 55 years of age.
- 2 to 1 contributions by City into retirement fund.

Educational Benefits:

- 10 More Effective Schools.
- Special Services for transitional schools.
- 50 Early Childhood Centers.
- \$500,000 teacher recruitment fund.

Organization Goals:

- 2 more chapter chairman periods in elementary schools.
- Half-time UFT District Representatives.
- Agreement for agency shop as soon as any city union gets it.
- UFT right to reject names on trial examiner list.

Instructions for Voting
 Contained here is the agreement that has been negotiated by the UFT for the classroom teachers unit.
 Cut out the ballot and mark the ballot according to the instruction thereon. Then insert the ballot in the small envelope. DO NOT WRITE ANYTHING ON THIS ENVELOPE. Seal the envelope and insert it in the larger envelope, which is to be marked on the outside with your name, school and file number.
 The ballot is to be returned to your chapter chairman as early as possible on Friday, June 27th, but no later than 3 P.M.
 The count will be made by the Honest Ballot Association.

Classroom Teachers Agreement

YES NO

Place a check in one of the boxes.

Vote YES if you accept the agreement.
Vote NO if you reject the agreement.

June 25, 1969

This is a great contract!

New teachers will benefit by annual \$700 increases bringing them to the \$16,950 maximum in only 8 years.

Experienced teachers benefit from an increase of \$3,050 and \$400 annuity in 3 years. Also, they benefit most from an outstanding pension package.

On top of teacher benefits, we have won outstanding educational gains.

Our functional chapters also made outstanding gains.

These contracts are the outcome of skilled negotiations—but they are also the outcome of our union solidarity. They come from the realization that we would have gone on strike again if we were not given a good contract. These gains come from our ability to oust a hostile Board of Education through our legislative efforts.

It has been a long time and a difficult one. Many had given up hope—but it is now clear that **WE HAVE WON.**

I urge you to vote YES AND I urge you to enclose \$78 dues for next year NOW! We need it badly. Also, if we are to keep it up, enclose a substantial political action fund contribution.

Your dues and your contributions are a great investment—just read the contract.

Fraternally yours,
ALBERT SHANKER
 President

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York

VOL. CXXIV No. 42,963

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City Schools Are Crippled As Teachers' Strike Starts

Only 1,300 Staff Members and 37,000
Pupils Report—260 Schools Closed
—Negotiations Are Resumed

By LEONARD BUDER

Special to The New York Times

A teachers' strike crippled president, said that the system the city school system on the could not meet the teachers' second day of the new term contract demands and the yesterday, forcing at least 260 board's productivity needs with-



By Overwhelming Margin, 1461-42 Paras Accept 'Landmark' First Pact

By an overwhelming margin, para-professionals voted to accept the three-year landmark agreement negotiated last month by the union and the Board of Education. The package, which will provide an overall boost of 140 percent in wages and fringes, was accepted by a margin of nearly 35 to 1 — 1,461 votes for the agreement, 42 against.

The vote was held at Irving Plaza Hall, 15th Street and Irving Place, on Monday, Aug. 3.

UFT President Albert Shanker said the pact will "set a nationwide precedent for bringing thousands of black and Puerto Rican workers into the

profession in a meaningful career ladder program."

Velma Hill, chairman of the para-professional steering com-



said, "gives the lie to those anti-labor forces who have tried to drive a wedge between teacher unionists and the black community through spurious and irresponsible charges of racism."

The agreement covers 4,000 para-professionals — teachers aides, educational assistants, educational associates and auxili-



The

FREES FUNDS
HOUSING AID,
DRAFTED BY SUIT

Million Will Help

CITY AVOIDS DEFAULT BY HOURS AS TEACHERS RELENT, BUY BONDS; FINANCIAL MARKETS DISRUPTED

The New York Times Associated
g early yesterday to sign le
Gribetz, put the bill before F

bers of Boar
ition at City

Bruiised, the UFT sought to re-establish its image as a pluralistic union committed to social justice for all New Yorkers. Sandra Feldman recalled: "In the early 1970s, we sought to create a coalition among teachers, kids, parents to build a network for the benefit of kids. It was difficult because there was tremendous stratification from all the divisiveness that had come out of the 1960s. All the fights among people who should have been together allowed the conservatives, the reactionaries, to win."

Vietnam raged, splitting society like no prior war. Liberal Baby Boom college students battled conservative hard-hat construction workers in the streets. Screaming matches punctuated the UFT Delegate Assembly and even union officers split between hawks and doves. Some men became teachers because that meant deferment from the draft.

The cliché about drugs, sex and rock and roll really did split flower children from their befuddled parents.

The feminist movement was in full swing. As women gained entry into jobs that previously were closed to them, many left the classroom. Some became school administrators, others chose totally different careers.



1970s

NEW YORK TIMES, Sunday, September 10, 1972



Where We Stand

A Weekly Column
of Comment on Public Education

by Albert Shanker

President, United Federation of Teachers

A 16-month recession flattened the economy from November 1973 to March 1975, quenching the post-World War II boom.

A stock market collapse wiped out 45 percent of the value of the Dow Jones Industrial Average between January 1973 and December 1974. Oil prices quadrupled due to an embargo by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Stagflation – global stagnation and double-digit inflation – was the buzzword. Unemployment hit 8.5 percent in 1975 and kept rising. Interest rates soared; mortgage rates exceeded 20 percent by decade's end.

President Nixon's 1971-74 wage-price freeze paradoxically stoked inflation. Labor was furious, for wages couldn't possibly track prices.

The fiscal crisis of 1975 triggered an educational disaster with decades-long repercussions. With inflation and city budget cuts, the Board of Education needed \$268 million to stay even. It needed still more to finance bilingual education under a legal agreement known as the Aspira consent decree. So the board slashed programs by 20 percent – and that meant laying off 14,000 teachers and 7,000 other educators.

1970

With the board stalling negotiations, on April 22 the 4,000 paraprofessionals awaiting their first contract voted to strike.

From the cell where he served his appeal-delayed sentence for the 1968 strike, Shanker wrote a letter to teachers, urging them to authorize a strike to support their new colleagues. UFT Secretary Jules Kolodny read it aloud to 2,000 union members outside the jail.

Ocean Hill-Brownsville was part of an effort “to break union solidarity through racial strife,” Shanker wrote. “There is nothing new to this technique. Black and white workers in the South have been exploited for years because race hatred has been used to keep workers weak and un-unionized.” Supporting paraprofessionals offered “a great opportunity to end this tragic and divisive racial conflict.” Not supporting them could escalate conflict, which “neither the union nor our educational system can survive.”



Teachers stood by the paras, giving the union leverage to win a three-year contract that more than doubled paraprofessionals' salaries; the average rose from \$2,000 to \$4,600. They gained health and welfare benefits and, most important, a career ladder; they could attend college on released time and with stipends. Countless thousands have climbed the ladder and become teachers, principals,

other professionals and even a member of Congress.

The fact that the largely white teaching force had stood up for the mostly African-American and Latino paraprofessionals was not lost on minority communities. Paras were hired by local school boards and usually lived in the communities where they worked. The union had taken a big step to restoring its image.

Sign landmark contract for UFT para-professionals

NEW YORK CITY — The collective bargaining agreement signed on Feb. 11 between the central board of education and the United Federation of Teachers covering para-professionals in the titles of teacher aide, educational assistant, educational associate and auxiliary trainer is a “landmark agreement and should serve as a model for school districts across the nation,” according to Velma Hill, chairman of the UFT Para-Professional Chapter.

In the four short years that paraprofessionals have been represented by the UFT their salaries have risen by 200 percent. Under the contract signed last week para-professionals will receive pay hikes ranging to \$1,386 a year, a 17 percent increase in stipends paid during the summer and 11 more weeks of pay. Including vacation time and stipends, para-professionals are now paid for 50 weeks of the year—virtual annualization.

Under the terms of the contract, para-professionals will also receive all the UFT Welfare Fund benefits that teachers and other professionals on the school team get.

The agreement also improves griev-

ance machinery, includes gains in the area of leaves, career training and promotions and strengthens job rights so

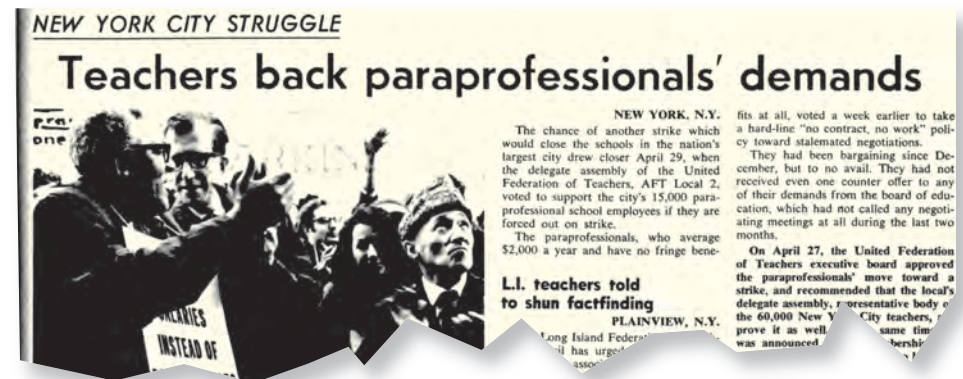
that para-professionals will be treated as regular, on-going employees of the central board.



UFT President Albert Shanker signs contract for union's para-professional members. Board of education President Seymour Lachman is seated next to Shanker.



UFT Secretary Jules Kolodny reads aloud to the members a letter written by Shanker from his jail cell in support of a strike vote



NEW YORK, N.Y. The chance of another strike which would close the schools in the nation's largest city drew closer April 29, when the delegate assembly of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, voted to support the city's 15,000 paraprofessional school employees if they are forced out on strike.

The paraprofessionals, who average \$2,000 a year and have no fringe bene-

fits at all, voted a week earlier to take a hard-line "no contract, no work" policy toward stalemated negotiations. They had been bargaining since December, but to no avail. They had not received even one counter offer to any of their demands from the board of education, which had not called any negotiating meetings at all during the last two months.

On April 27, the United Federation of Teachers executive board approved the paraprofessionals' move toward a strike, and recommended that the local's delegate assembly, representative body of the 60,000 New York City teachers, prove it as well. The same time was announced.

L.I. teachers told to shun factfinding PLAINVIEW, N.Y.

Long Island Federation of Teachers has urged its members to shun factfinding sessions.

In the column marking his retirement as UFT president in 1985, Shanker wrote that he was proudest of having organized paraprofessionals and negotiated their salaries, benefits, career ladder and, eventually, a pension. “The paras have done us proud,” he wrote.

With the new decentralization law, the UFT modified its structure, but kept the idea of a borough representative who oversaw a representative in each of the board’s 31 districts. (Later that became 32; the union also fielded other district representatives, such as for high schools and special education schools.) These representatives became increasingly important as boards ventured into policy and budget decision. The union became the dominant force in low-turnout community school board elections, but even board members who won with union support often went their own ways.

On the civil rights front, in 1969 the union had demonstrated with United Farm Workers President César Chávez to support the California grape boycott; in 1970 it gave him the John Dewey Award. The UFT was in at the start of multicultural education, writing an African-American history curriculum and a teachers’ guide and lesson plans on Puerto Rican culture and history.

Seeking to further restore the union’s reputation, in December the UFT began running Shanker’s “Where We Stand” column as a regular paid advertisement in the Sunday *New York*

Times. This was the easiest way that the UFT could be assured that its message would reach opinion-makers unfiltered by an often hostile press.

Shanker, intellectual as well as practical, came across as the thinker and innovator he was. He later explained that changing the misperception that he was eager to strike was as important as advancing new ideas about education: “Public schools depend on public support. And the public was not likely to support the schools for long if they thought the teachers were led by a madman,” he said.

The payoff was immeasurable. “Where We Stand” became must-reading for educators, legislators, mayors, governors and even U.S. presidents. It positioned the UFT in the vanguard of progressive education. Shanker continued it after he became AFT president; later, AFT Presidents Feldman and Weingarten carried on the column in different forms.

César Chávez, pop singer Melanie and Al Shanker



1971

As the economy slid, the Board of Education cut the budget, but it kept spending, counting on money from other sources that never arrived. Chancellor Harvey Scribner in March announced a \$45 million shortfall and predicted 7,000 layoffs.

A *New York Times* story citing unnamed “city fiscal officials” blamed the deficit on higher teacher salaries (twice those of 1960, thanks to the UFT) and paraprofessionals (up to \$3.50 to \$4.50 an hour), ignoring the fact that federal funds then paid paras’ salaries. The article didn’t explain why the city had not budgeted for these predictable salary costs.

The board stopped hiring day-to-day subs, ordered cuts in central, high school and community school district staffs and froze all but emergency repairs. But local boards – fearing loss of the thousands of patronage positions that each controlled (including paraprofessionals) – got a court order temporarily blocking these measures.

The UFT demanded systemic action. “We’re going to go through the same thing next year and the year after unless we get it solved now,” said Shanker. The union joined a coalition of unions, good government groups and every community school district to sponsor actions

including a “March for a Million Children” on City Hall.

Controller Abe Beame saved the day with bookkeeping legerdemain. He shifted \$25 million in teacher salaries from the last half of June into the fiscal year that began July 1. Lindsay correctly observed that “merely puts off today’s pain until tomorrow,” but it avoided layoffs. It was the kind of fiscal gimmickry that dug the city into deeper trouble.

Soon Lindsay said 90,000 city jobs would have to go, including 11,250 teachers.

Addressing the UFT Spring Conference, Lindsay blamed the crisis on state aid cuts caused by “political surrender to the state Legislature’s right wing.” The state had reduced the share of income tax revenues it had pledged to localities, which slashed \$760 million from the city’s share.

The right wing also targeted union benefits. It took a huge and concerted push by police, fire, sanitation, teacher and other unions to block a nasty amendment to the Taylor Law that would have barred negotiations about most working conditions; had this gone through, unions would have been able to bargain about only salary, hours and vacations, with everything else becoming management prerogative.

In the final budget in June, the city avoided layoffs by raising income and other taxes, but cut thousands of jobs by attrition.



In September, schools had 23,000 more students (up to 1.17 million) and 56,000 teachers, 5,000 fewer than the year before – along with larger classes, less guidance and other services, and an initial freeze on hiring long-term subs (of whom there were 12,000 in 1970-71). Class size skyrocketed.

Rallying and holding vigils, the UFT staved off elimination of the More Effective Schools program. MES was more expensive because four teachers taught three classes of 22 students or less, but MES had proved its worth to 27,000 students in 27 elementary schools.

National research in 1968 cited MES for showing significant pupil achievement. And in 1970, a board consultant wrote: “The program’s major objective was realized to a considerable

degree, especially in instilling in the pupils a desire for learning, a liking for school and increased respect for themselves and others.”

But the cash-starved community districts wanted to shift federal Title I funds from MES to other schools. The city corporation counsel said they could, although MES was in the UFT-board contract. Shanker avoided uttering “strike,” but said, “If the contract is violated, we would have no choice but to act like a union.” They headed into arbitration.

The Legislature infuriated teachers statewide by extending teachers’ probationary period from three to five years. The unions saw this as a way to intimidate teachers, for it let districts replace veterans with lower-paid newcomers. (The UFT later secured legislation that returned probation to three years.)

Shanker seized upon this law as the fulcrum to unify teachers’ voices in Albany. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association each had its own state organization. These were, respectively, the 85,000-member United Teachers of New York (UTNY), who mostly were from New York City, and the New York State Teachers Association

(NYSTA), whose 101,000 members were upstate, suburban and rural. Shanker partnered with NYSTA’s new president, a young Buffalo teacher, Thomas Hobart, for a year-long drive.

Furthermore: In January Shanker and board President Murry Bergtraum separately proposed eliminating the Board of Examiners, established in the 19th century to insulate teacher hiring from favoritism and political influence ... The union’s goal was to dismantle an outmoded and bureaucratic nightmare ... Bergtraum said the Examiners had not integrated the teaching staff; nearly 60% of the 1.1 million students were African-American or Latino, but only 9.1% of teachers and 3.8% of principals were black and less than 1% were Puerto Rican, then the dominant Latino group ... In June the UFT awarded its first college scholarships to needy, high-performing youngsters. Union members finance the UFT Scholarship Fund by forgoing a small percentage of money that could go to salaries, about \$1 million a year ... In December, President Nixon vetoed a bipartisan child-care program for pre-school children of the poor and working poor. Meanwhile, he sounded two themes that would gain force among conservatives and challenge the UFT and AFT for decades – privatizing teaching services and initiating educational vouchers that would redirect public education dollars into nonpublic schools.



The New York Times, March 19, 1972

Crime and Violence Rise in City Schools

By LEONARD BUDER

The number of reported acts of crime and violence in and around city schools increased from 333 in 1970 to 590 last year, according to Board of Education figures.

These incidents involved assaults on teachers and students, including rapes, attempted rapes and molestations; robberies and purse snatchings; the setting off of smoke and fire bombs; and telephoned and written threats

teachers and other school personnel—two fewer than in 1970 but well above the figures for previous years.

Last January and February there were a total of 170 such incidents reported, including 88 assaults on school personnel. If this rate continues, headquarters officials said, the 1972 totals will far exceed those for last year.

197 Arrests in 1971

The headquarters records

At last Tuesday night’s board meeting, a group of parents and elected officials from the northeast Bronx said that about 350 students had been kept home from Adlai E. Stevenson High School since last September out of fear for their safety. A parent spokesman said that students were being “mugged, robbed, intimidated, harassed and stabbed” by other students, who were members of south Bronx gangs.

1972

Protesting budget cuts that eliminated remedial reading, bilingual and pre-K programs, parents in East Harlem District 4 closed schools for 12 days. A shorter boycott followed in Brownsville. The central board tamped down the crisis by finding \$12 million for all districts.

Despite the souring economy, the UFT made bold salary demands and demanded relief from most nonteaching duties. And with more than 450 assaults and robberies of teachers by the spring, the union sought more school security officers. UFT safety expert Edward Muir noted “fighting gangs,” whose conflicts frequently spilled from the streets into schools.

With Lindsay seeking “productivity increases” from all city workers, Chancellor Scribner demanded a longer school workday and -year, fewer preparation periods and changes in seniority, transfers, leaves and retirement. “The Board of Education in effect has just called a strike,” Shanker said.

It didn't come to that and, to the union's surprise, the three representatives of community school districts who sat on the board's seven-member negotiating team smoothed the

way. The districts, after all, had to make the contract work.

The \$300 million contract raised salaries by the 5.5 percent allowed by national wage and price controls that President Nixon had imposed in an attempt to improve the economy. However, the contract further increased salary differentials and rejected board demands for givebacks – the most objectionable of which would have let principals assign teachers to hall patrol and other duties during prep periods. The board boosted Welfare Fund contributions 68 percent per teacher. Gone from the contract, though, was the More Effective Schools program, which the parties were contesting in court.

The contract brought other improvements including:

- Granting 4th- and 5th-year probationary teachers protections equal to those of tenured teachers, such as dismissal only for just cause, after written charges and subject to appeal to binding arbitration;
- Authorizing arbitrators to grant damage awards of cash or time off to teachers who win grievances; and
- Increasing sabbatical pay from 60 to 70 percent of salary.

And during contract talks, the board promised to hire 1,200 security aides from local communities to assist a professional force that would rise from 250 to 450. The board previously had answered the union's call to improve school safety by naming its first safety director.

There also were substantial gains in the new paraprofessional contract. It raised wages, increased the summer study stipend, added two weeks of vacation, gave paras equality with teachers in fringe benefits and – most important for the 6,000 paras then taking college courses – let those who became teachers receive pension credit for time worked as paraprofessionals.

In October the union fashioned a broad coalition aimed at restoring 8,000 teaching and other positions lost in the prior two years due to the city's hiring freeze. In December, Chancellor Scribner helped by forecasting 18,775 more students in the fall; he requested a \$2.5 billion budget that included \$53 million to re-

store essential services and to expand programs. But it would be an uphill fight.

Meanwhile, community school districts remained dysfunctional. By May 1972, 18 of the 31 initial superintendents had quit or been fired and four more were considering leaving; all complained of political interference.

Shanker attacked patronage, charging that districts had hired 2,500 unqualified people in violation of civil service rules; that siphoned a great deal of money from the classroom. Regent Kenneth Clark, once a decentralization advocate, executed what he called a “180-degree change,” saying the decentralization experiment had failed because local boards were more interested in power than in improving schools.

Some districts tried to send parent teams into classrooms to evaluate teachers' performance. In a mail referendum, UFT members voted 26,909 to 2,202 that if a principal failed to remove such a team, all of the school's teachers would take their students to the cafeteria or auditorium, where they would be supervised, but not taught.

Racial tensions flared in Canarsie, as a group of white residents protested the busing of 32 African-American and Puerto Rican students from Brownsville's Tilden Houses to JHS 211. They stoned their buses and sat in for three days.

Chancellor Scribner vacillated, ordering the

The New York Times, Oct. 31, 1972

PARENTS' BOYCOTT SHUTS 6 SCHOOLS IN CANARSIE AREA

9,000 Pupils Miss Classes in Protest on Admission of Brownsville Youths

200 POLICEMEN ON DUTY

29 Black Students Guarded as They Enter J.H.S. 211 With Scribner on Hand

By LEONARD BUDER

A communitywide parents' boycott kept more than 9,000 Canarsie pupils out of classes as schools to close

Tom Pappas at MES rally



NEW YORK TIMES, Sunday, September 10, 1972



Where We Stand

A Weekly Column
of Comment on Public Education
by **Albert Shanker**
President, United Federation of Teachers

For Many New Teachers, the First Days Are Rough

A new school year has begun in communities throughout the country. Millions of students and millions of teachers

arents.” . . . “If you are having disciplinary problems, it means that you are not motivating the students properly.” The con-

students in, then reassigning them to JHS 68, which triggered a six-school boycott. Police blocked African-American parents from registering their children. The central board overruled Scribner. Police hustled students past 1,000 demonstrators, who berated teachers and all African-American youngsters who entered the schools, whether they were local or from Brownsville. For safety, police bused teachers from the stationhouse to school.

"To the cheers of black parents and the jeers of white demonstrators," Shanker led the staff into PS 242, *The Times* reported. Shanker argued that parents should not decide which students or teachers attend a school – the same principle as in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. The boycott sputtered out after the central board ordered rezoning for better racial balance.

The Canarsie teachers "walked through a picket line of their friends and neighbors ... with tears in their eyes. I was very proud of them," Shanker wrote later. "The union does well to make people richer rather than poorer, more and not less secure, but the greatest thing it can do is bring out the heroism of people. A union can make people rise above themselves."

Teachers statewide also rose above themselves, voting overwhelmingly to merge their AFT and NEA state affiliates into the nation's first unified organization – New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). Hobart became president and Shanker vice president.

"The union does well to make people richer rather than poorer, more and not less secure, but the greatest thing it can do is bring out the heroism of people. A union can make people rise above themselves."

— Albert Shanker

NYSUT's birth did not foster harmony between the two national unions, however. They continued to raid and attack one another in other parts of the country for years to come.

After becoming AFT president in 1974, Shanker worked for détente, if not merger, as had his AFT predecessors, Charles Cogen and David Selden. In 1998 AFT President Sandra Feldman and NEA President Bob Chase tried again; AFT delegates approved merger but NEA delegates voted "no"; many in the NEA did not want to join the AFL-CIO, to which the AFT belonged.

Nevertheless, hostilities ceased. There were other statewide mergers, such as in Florida and Montana in 2000. In 2001, the two national unions formed the NEAFT Partnership Joint Council to foster cooperation on policy issues and programs, like school safety. Since then, the national unions have frequently spoken with one voice and lobbied together on significant issues.

Furthermore: *In January, a federal court voided a state law that would have sent \$33 million to financially troubled parochial schools for "secular educational services" ... In August, the union scored a victory for free speech by convincing the central board to overrule Bronx District 9, which sought to fire 20 PS 55 teachers for having walked out of a meeting with the principal. Since this happened after school, not on working time, staff had a First Amendment right to leave, the UFT argued. The central board agreed, but lamented such "discourteous actions" ...*



Al Shanker, UFT, David Selden, AFT, and Tom Hobart, NYSUT. Looking on is Belle Zeller and Israel Kugler



1973

In 1969 Gov. Rockefeller had named attorney Manly Fleishmann to head a commission to study the quality, cost and financing of public education and to address inequities among districts. Among other findings, its long-awaited report called UFT teacher pensions "unacceptably high" and urged that they be cut in half to the level paid to retired teachers elsewhere in the state.

Fighting that and other Fleishmann proposals, UFT Vice President Abe Levine told the state Board of Regents, "It is apparent ... that not only was the commission totally unfamiliar with the day-to-day classroom situation, but also was, in fact, determined to take an anti-teacher attitude." He highlighted the commission's proposals to increase pupil-teacher ratios, shortchange guidance and vocational counseling and cut pay differentials. (Fleishmann also favored forced busing for integration and a state takeover of all public education, to be financed by a state tax on real property.) After a blistering start, Fleishmann's plan died.

Meanwhile, the UFT scored a victory for teacher rights. Jeffrey Zahler, a math teacher in Bedford-Stuyvesant's JHS 35, had told a reporter about being stabbed while breaking up

Abe Levine testifies



a student brawl. District 16 sought to discipline him for speaking without prior authorization. Under union pressure, Scribner reinstated Zahler, writing: “The reasons for the disciplinary action ... are of questionable wisdom and raise a serious question concerning the possible abridgement of free speech.”

Improving security remained a prime union concern, particularly after the well-publicized case in which an intruder robbed third-grade teacher Irene Rosenstein in front of her class in Bedford-Stuyvesant’s PS 81. At UFT insistence, the city added guards to her school. Meanwhile, with UFT support, the City Council tried to shift the hiring of security aides from patronage-hungry districts to the central board after two guards and a school aide were arrested during an attempted armed robbery; all had criminal records and one was on parole for murder.

The year saw several changes in school governance, none of which substantially improved educational outcomes.

In May the Legislature created a seven-member New York City Board of Education to take over on July 1, 1974; the mayor would name two representatives and each borough president would name one. The existing board picked Irving Anker as chancellor.

In December, the outgoing board took a controversial stance, asking the Legislature to ban school employees from serving as elected

members of any community school board. School employees then could serve on local boards, except in the district where they worked. The board saw this as a conflict of interest, since local boards enforce the contract, but Shanker argued: “Teachers pay taxes and they ought to have the same rights as other citizens.” The issue would be debated for years.

The board also carved a new district, Bushwick District 32, out of Ridgewood District 15 and East New York District 19 as the city headed into the second community school board elections.

The UFT ran a huge voter-turnout campaign in 30 districts, explaining: “Bargaining is not enough” to protect the interests of its members; “political action is the answer.” UFT-endorsed candidates won 147 of the 270 contested seats.

Seeking to enhance teacher professionalism, Shanker noted that teachers frequently complained that their education hadn’t prepared them for the day-to-day demands of the classroom. He found a solution in England’s 500 teacher centers. There, teachers could exchange ideas, revise curricula and discuss classroom techniques. It would take years and federal involvement to launch the program in New York.

Furthermore: *In January, Lindsay signed a local law requiring future nonresident city employees to pay full city income tax; 30 percent of city workers then lived outside the five boroughs. “Unfair, inequitable, discriminating and unconstitutional,” said the UFT ... In May, Shanker and state Education Commissioner Ewald Nyquist warned a House Appropriations subcommittee that President Nixon’s proposed education budget would slash services to 100,000 New York City poor children by a quarter, place thousands of paras on welfare and devastate upstate districts. They sought \$2.3 billion more than the proposed U.S. \$6.2 billion education budget ... The UFT made its first mayoral endorsement, backing the eventual winner, then-Controller Abraham D. Beame, a former part-time accounting teacher (Lindsay did not seek re-election) ... In Albany, Rockefeller resigned to seek the presidency ... The city reacted harshly when the Uniformed Firefighters Association struck for 5½ hours; in January 1974 it was fined \$650,000 (the equivalent of more than \$2.8 million in 2008 dollars) – a stern warning to other municipal unions ...*

1974

The AFL-CIO persuaded the UFT to drop a drive to represent 10,000 non-classroom school aides, 30 percent of whom had signed cards seeking to decertify District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and have a representation election with the UFT on the ballot. The national organization deemed this improper raiding. (DC 37 President Victor Gotbaum threatened a counter-raid for the UFT’s para-professionals.)

Local school boards pushed the envelope of their powers. The board in impoverished Brooklyn District 23, for example, directed teachers to visit pupils’ homes twice a year. The UFT favored more parent contact, but successfully insisted on consultation before such a change in working conditions.

As the city’s economy sagged, Mayor Beame sought to retain the middle class and bolster

Political Action Committee on phone bank



George Fesko and Sandra Feldman address members



revenues through a state law requiring city residency for future employees. This would have gone beyond Lindsay's year-old mandate that nonresident employees pay city income taxes; Beame argued that the city should benefit from much more of its employees' economic activity. Teacher, police and firefighter unions, among others, rose in opposition, stalling the measure.

In April, the board announced a fall pilot for an accountability system which the Educational Testing Service had developed over the previous three years with UFT involvement; it would be tried in two or three schools in each district.

Welcoming it, UFT director of staff Sandra Feldman said the plan would help teachers "identify our own effectiveness and give us the concrete proof we need that schools and teachers can do a good job if resources are provided ... [It will] examine all of the factors that affect learning; separate out the socioeconomic effects on which the schools have no influence at all; and find out what in-school factors make for effective learning, what works and what doesn't."

The pilot accountability system might have provided the professional barometer that the union had sought both to improve instruction and to insulate teachers from being blamed when factors beyond their control interfered with student achievement. But by late fall, it fell by the wayside as the board's and union's

attention shifted to survival.

The year's most important educational change came in August, when the nonprofit Hispanic organization *Aspira* won a landmark consent decree from the city in federal court. The city agreed to make access to bilingual or English as a second language classes a legally enforceable federal entitlement for Hispanic students with limited English proficiency. The agreement shaped education for English language learners for more than 30 years, although there would be many bumps along the way. The board created programs and hired staff to meet students' needs.

But this new financial demand came as the city's economy was sinking. By November, Beame had laid off 1,510 workers, barred agencies from filling vacancies and sought \$100 million in cuts. In mid-December, the city said it would dismiss 3,750 more employees, including 1,100 in schools, and would not hire 875 day-to-day substitute teachers.

It would get worse.

Furthermore: *The UFT halted its \$300 per year college scholarship program for members' children after the IRS ruled that the grants were subject to income tax. Since 1967, the UFT had awarded nearly \$11 million. The ruling did not affect the separate scholarship fund for impoverished students ... In January, 6,000 school boiler room and maintenance workers struck, closing most schools on three bitterly cold days; they won hefty wage and benefit increases. Taylor Law penalties did not apply because technically they worked for school custodians, who at the time were deemed independent contractors ... In August, U.S. Sen. Jacob Javits told NYSUT that he favored federally guaranteed collective bargaining for all public employees, arguing that Taylor Law "penalties and punishment won't work" in averting strikes. He also argued for a national health insurance bill,*

citing runaway medical costs as a primary factor in double-digit inflation ... In September the UFT endorsed Democrat Rep. Hugh Carey for governor; he defeated Republican incumbent Malcolm Wilson.



1975

Since Mayor Wagner in the early 1960s, mayors had borrowed to fund operating expenses, much as some people live on credit cards. With slipshod budgetary and accounting practices, the accumulated short-term debt proved crushing as the economy tanked. By spring, no one wanted to buy city bonds, even though the city had paid market-rate 9.4 percent interest on short-term notes in January and an above-market 8.69 percent in March. The city's credit and credibility were shot.

The state had ignored Beame when he asked for help plugging an \$883 million hole in January; the state was in its own financial hole and had to spend \$100 million to bail out the insolvent state Urban Development Corporation and \$67 million to stave off transit-fare increases.

With the city forecasting 14,000 more layoffs, the UFT, NYSUT and their allies petitioned politicians at every level. Chapter leaders enlisted parents in the fight by offering specifics of what the cuts would mean to their schools.

Nudged by the new governor, Hugh Carey, and UFT political action, the Legislature set up the Municipal Assistance Corp. in June. The agency, jokingly dubbed Big MAC after the burger, would sell bonds on behalf of the city;



Jacob Javits at NYSUT



Sandra Feldman leads executives in union song "Solidarity Forever"

the bonds were secured by the city's sales and stock transfer taxes, which became state taxes. To keep the city afloat, the state prepaid scheduled aid.

By then, the loss of federal Title I funds had cost 2,000 paraprofessional jobs. Summer programs, kindergarten, psychological counseling, guidance, bilingual instruction, extracurricular and athletic programs were gone. School lunches were curtailed.

And then Mayor Beame forecast 38,000 more city job cuts.

Districts orchestrated a "Day of Mourning" that drew thousands to City Hall. At another rally in late June, the Board of Education drew 25,000 to City Hall – on the day it sent termination letters to thousands of teachers.

In August, Beame signed legislation that let him impose a wage freeze. Shanker said this would destroy collective bargaining "by asserting that one of the [contract] signatories ... has the right to break it."

On September 4, thousands of UFT members marched across the Brooklyn Bridge from

Board of Education headquarters. "Are you ready to go out if you have to?" Shanker asked. The crowd roared its approval.

Sept. 8, the chaotic first day of classes and the day before the contract expired, saw four meetings that swung the union toward a strike. First, at the negotiating committee, Shanker argued against a strike, citing the city's shaky finances and uncertainty about whom the union would be striking against, since Albany was considering creating a new agency that would strip the mayor of financial authority. The negotiating committee agreed – until they got to the Executive Board meeting and heard about chaos in the schools that day. The officers changed their minds.

At the Delegate Assembly, teachers detailed the impact of 7,000 layoffs: classes up to 60, oversized classes for children with disabilities, two and three grades per room, no security, no guidance counselors, no attendance teachers, no paraprofessionals, no school secretaries.

That night, UFT members meeting at Madison Square Garden voted 22,870 to 900 to

walk out the next day, Sept. 9. Speaking for many, chapter leader Frank Skala of Queens' JHS 218, with a pregnant wife and a child in nursery school, said, "I'm dead broke now, but we've got to stay out until we have everything we need."

Also the next day, both houses of Congress overwhelmingly overrode President Ford's veto of a \$7.5 billion education appropriations bill; New York State schools would get \$100 million.

But gloom prevailed. On Sept. 10, after MAC failed to market city bonds, the Legislature created the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB). The governor, the mayor, the city and state controllers and three private citizens whom Carey named would oversee the city's finances and could review contracts.

The strike ended after five days with a two-year pact. It maintained contractual class-size limits through a creative mechanism: teachers waived two 45-minute preps but gained them back by shortening the student day by 45 minutes twice a week, so schools did not have to pay someone to cover classes during the preps. (Later, the UFT entered four lawsuits against local districts that refused to implement the prep-period swap; a judge ruled that the central board was the teachers' sole employer and the contract is not subject to local interference.)

The contract also brought a \$300 cost-of-

living adjustment, a \$50 per member increase in Welfare Fund payments in each of the two years, and longevity increments for 10 and 15 years of service – but those provisions were later frozen. (Near year's end, the UFT convinced the board to reimburse paraprofessionals for tuition money they laid out to continue in the career ladder program while the contract was in flux.)

UFT members each forfeited two days' pay for each day of the strike – 10 days' pay in all – and the board agreed to use those funds plus the salaries saved during the strike – a total of \$30 million – to rehire 2,400 teachers. Members approved the deal that night at Madison Square Garden's theater, the Felt Forum.

The irony of the board using fines and unpaid salaries to rehire laid-off teachers was not lost on the union. Indeed, the previous May, UFT founder Dan Sanders, then with NYSUT, told state legislators that the Taylor Law's penalties "act as catalysts rather than a deterrent to strikes," since boards "are tempted to consider the financial savings" gained by "forcing teachers to strike." The Assembly passed a bill to change the law, but Senate Republicans blocked a vote.

In any case, in October, the Emergency Financial Control Board rejected the UFT contract, saying it "gravely violates" recovery plans; it also demanded that teachers defer part of their wages for three years. However,



Shanker leads thousands of UFT members in a march across the Brooklyn Bridge

"Are you ready to go out if you have to?" Shanker asked. The crowd roared its approval.



Deputy Chancellor Bernard R. Gifford countered that the contract met budget limits, adding, "Trying to get answers from the governor's consultants is like trying to carve a statue out of smoke."

Board President Isaiah Robinson also protested the EFCB action: "We cannot foretell the future with sufficient skill to negotiate an agreement that would conform to yet-to-be-established guidelines."

Meanwhile, the Legislature passed a \$2.3 billion rescue package. MAC was made responsible for raising \$1.15 billion from non-state sources. The law specified that \$150 million would come from the Teachers' Retirement System. TRS trustees sued; the Court of Appeals declared the mandate unconstitutional.

On Oct. 16 Carey left his Manhattan office for the white-tie Alfred E. Smith political dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria. He believed that a deal was in hand to redeem \$477 million in city notes that were due the next day; the city had only \$34 million on hand and the state counted on the Teachers' Retirement System to voluntarily come through.

But at 10 p.m., MAC Chairman Felix Rohatyn learned that TRS remained adamant against investing more than the \$138 million it had already invested in MAC bonds. "We must watch that investments are properly diversified, that all our eggs aren't put in one basket," said TRS trustee Reuben Mitchell.

Shortly before 11 p.m., Carey left the dinner and phoned state and federal leaders, saying default was imminent.

The UFT offered to look favorably on TRS buying more bonds, but only if the state barred more layoffs and EFCB accepted the contract. Carey refused. At midnight, developer Richard Ravitch, a friend of Shanker's who was serving as Carey's representative, went to Shanker's apartment for an inconclusive two-hour meeting.

On Oct. 17, Rohatyn told the press that everything hinged on the UFT: "The future of the city is in their hands." That morning, investors saw city obligations as trash; the notes plunged to \$20 to \$40 per \$1,000 face value.

Shanker met early with Beame.

Meanwhile, State Supreme Court Justice Irving H. Saypol ordered the city to outline priorities in case of default, placing payrolls above debt repayment. At 10:30 a.m., note-holders lined up at the Municipal Building for their cash; they were told to come back that afternoon.

In Ravitch's apartment, Shanker, backed by Van Arsdale and former Mayor Wagner, met with Carey, Ravitch and MAC counsel Simon Rifkind. The latter stressed that in a default, a bankruptcy judge could overrule pension laws and even suspend the state constitution, with its pension-benefit guarantee. The implied threat: Cuts in retirees' pension checks.

After three hours, Shanker met with TRS trustees. At 2:07 p.m., he announced they had voted to buy the bonds. Carey said there were no concessions over layoffs, but an arbitrator would see if the contract was within budget; this eventually led EFCB to accept the collective bargaining agreement. MAC put in writing that it would not seek more money from TRS.

With that, state Controller Arthur Levitt bought \$250 million in MAC bonds with the separate state pension funds that he controlled; the Court of Appeals had confirmed his power to do so on the same day that TRS agreed to buy the bonds.

The state banking commissioner ordered Manufacturers Hanover Trust, the paying agent for the city notes, to stay open past closing time. The Federal Reserve Bank of New York also stayed open late to expedite the deal.

The city paid its debt. On Wall Street, city bonds rose from their morning lows, closing down moderately from the day before.

Shanker wrote: "We are angry because teachers were singled out for this money. It was

blackmail, but the price if we had not acceded would have been the destruction of the city ... Teachers displayed more civic responsibility than the governor, the mayor, the bankers, the whole Control Board, or anybody else."

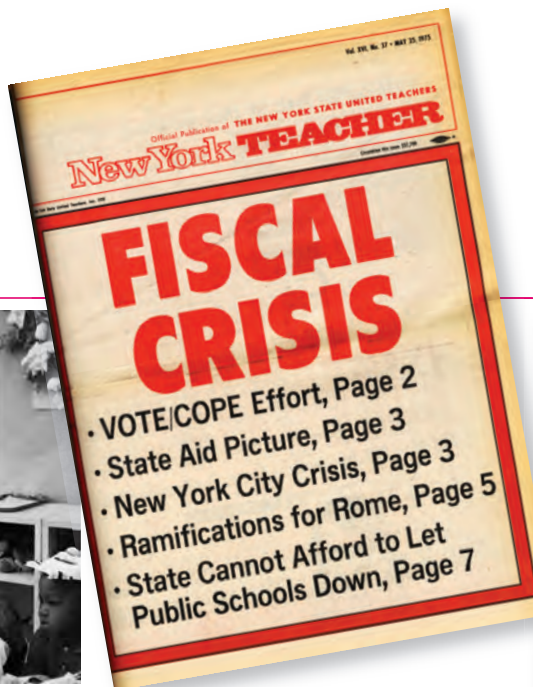
The union was celebrated as the city's savior. Just one example: The day after TRS averted the city's default, Abe Lebewohl, owner of the Second Avenue Deli, had waiters deliver a huge platter of chopped liver with all the trimmings to UFT headquarters. Spelled out on the top was something like: NYC thanks the UFT.

Fearing that the ongoing risk of default would trigger the collapse of 150 banks and a national economic crisis, House and Senate committees crafted legislation to back loans to New York City.

Carey sent a telegram to President Ford: "We need not a bailout, but the recognition by the federal government that we are part of this country and that we are suffering because of the economic distress in this country."

But Ford spokesman Ron Nessen responded, "This is not a natural disaster or an act of God. It is a self-inflicted act by the people who have been running New York City."

On Oct. 29, Ford stated: "I am prepared to veto any bill that has as its purpose a federal bailout of New York City to prevent default." He favored letting the city default and enter bankruptcy with federal support for "essential



The New York Times Anxious Night on Brink of Default as City Sought to Get Teacher-Pension Funds

continued From Page 1, Col. 7
 Meanwhile, board members of the Municipal Assistance Corporation began gathering at the Governor's office for what was supposed to be a formal, the certification after the trustee meeting that the \$1.15-billion "threefold" of money from other-state sources had been reached, enabling the state to channel \$250-million to the city in time to meet its Friday morning obligations.
 The M.A.C. meeting started promptly as scheduled at 10 P.M. with three participants still wearing formal dress from the Alfred E. Smith dinner.
 "There was absolutely no sense of what was about to happen," one participant said later. Alan Thomas, one of the corporation's lawyers, was presenting some data about the city's coming cash flow needs when Felix G. Rohatyn, the corporation's chairman, burst into the room carrying a news release just issued by Mr. Shanker's office.
 In the release, Mr. Shanker asserted, "We were rather resentful that it was all being put on our shoulders." Mr. Shannon, a nearby and outgoing lifelong resident of Staten Island, asserted that he had not been consulted about whether any of the



suit that hung in his office, Mr. Carey stayed on the telephone informing the legislative leaders, State Controller Arthur Levitt, Ford Administration officials in Washington, and others that default had suddenly become an imminent possibility.
 While Mr. Rohatyn, George Gould, the corporation's finance chairman, and Robert C. Weaver, the former Federal Cabinet official, met with the pension trustees to try to persuade them to change their votes, Mr. Carey—no longer in formal dress—met with his own top aides "exploring our options," as one said.
 Talk on Concessions
 This inner circle included David Burke, secretary to the Governor; Robert Morgado, deputy secretary; Peter C. Goldmark Jr., the State's Budget Director; Judah Gribetz, the counsel, and Mr. Ravitch. The options appeared to be virtually nonexistent.
 There was some discussion about whether any of the

services for the protection of life and property.”

“Ford to City: Drop Dead” read the front page of the *Daily News* – words that the president never uttered but, Ford would say, consigned him to defeat by Jimmy Carter in 1976. In any case, Ford’s speech and the city’s near-death experience ignited support among civic, business and labor leaders, as well as American and foreign bankers. Two months later Ford signed a bill providing federal loans; the city would repay them with interest. New York began rebuilding.

The year’s most significant educational change came with another federal court consent decree. No longer would youngsters with severe mental and/or physical disabilities be warehoused without education in the wretched

Willowbrook Developmental Center on Staten Island. The state Department of Mental Hygiene would “deinstitutionalize” them, placing them in scattered group homes, hostels and sheltered workshops.

As a result, many profoundly disabled youngsters entered the public school system, requiring the board to hire new staff for new programs. Federal financial help appeared in November when Congress passed Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA) – but Congress never fully funded the law.

Furthermore: In March, Washington rejected Beame’s request for an interest-free advance on money due the city ... In April he threatened to close 43 “underutilized” schools in 21 districts, increase class sizes and eliminate 2,533 full-time teachers and 2,374 substitutes ... The city cut subs’ pay to a flat \$40 per day, down from the prior range of \$48.50 to \$72. The UFT launched a drive to organize per diems and regular subs with long-term assignments ... In June, VP Abe Levine objected to a board plan to staff a joint summer program with the Guggenheim Museum with both cut-rate college students and nonunion artists, rather than paraprofessionals and licensed teachers ... The Legislature enacted a \$205 million school aid bill; it trailed inflation, but districts received no less than the year before ... The UFT secured a law establishing K-6 tenure, so districts couldn’t shuttle teachers between schools or grades to avoid granting them tenure ... In May, the financial crisis intersected with the next community school board elections. Shanker urged members to get out the vote, since local boards “make the key

decisions: which programs are cut, how seniority and excessing rules are applied, who keep and who lose their jobs, whether our contract is respected.” UFT-backed candidates gained control of at least 21 of the 32 local boards.

Shanker wrote: “We are angry because teachers were singled out for this money. It was blackmail, but the price if we had not acceded would have been the destruction of the city ... Teachers displayed more civic responsibility than the governor, the mayor, the bankers, the whole Control Board, or anybody else.”

MASSAU SUFFOLK FINAL


DAILY NEWS 15¢

NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER

Vol. 57, No. 307 New York, N.Y., 19617, Thursday, October 20, 1975

FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD

Vows He'll Veto Any Bail-Out



Abe, Carey Rip Stand

**Stocks Skid,
Dow Down 12**

Three pages of stories begin on page 31; full text of Ford's speech on page 36

President Ford gives his message at Washington's National Press Club yesterday.

The New York Times, Oct. 1975

BEAME JOINS FIGHT ON STAVISKY BILL

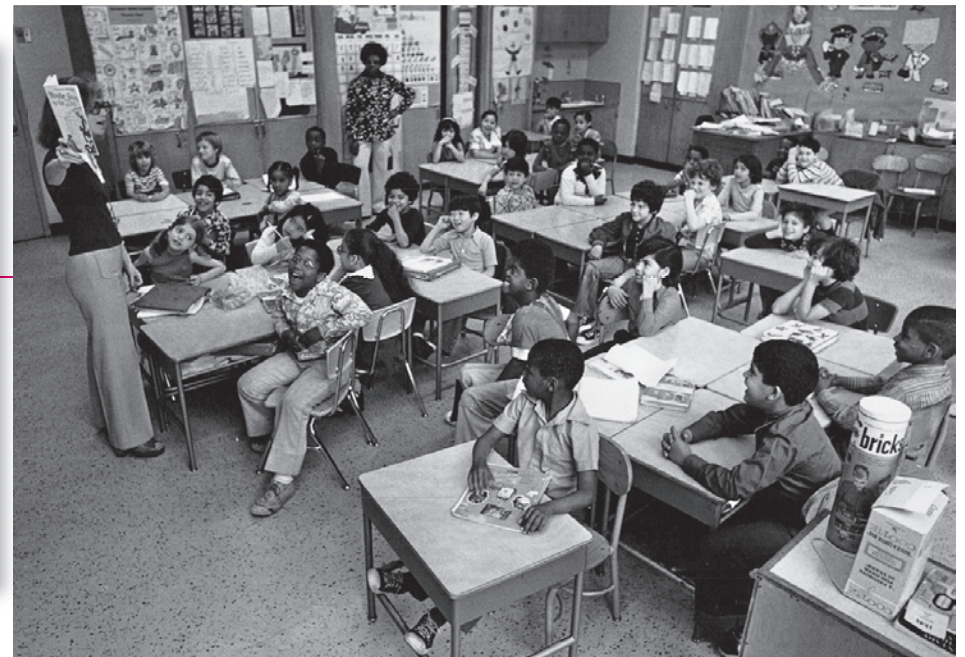
Aims to Halt Override Move
in Legislature That Would
Earmark School Funds

By IVER PETERSON

Sarcelai to The New York Times

ALBANY, March 28—Mayor Beame will join Governor Carey here tomorrow in a final round of negotiations with legislators and their leaders aimed at stopping the Legislature from overriding Mr. Carey's veto of the Stavisky mark

Sandra Feldman visits a classroom



1976

The city and its school system began crawling away from the debacle of 1975. There were 2,000 more layoffs in February, bringing the total to about 14,000 teachers and 7,000 other educators (estimates vary). It would be years before all were called back. Some two-thirds never returned despite being asked – a brain drain that affected students for years to come.

The board stopped buying books and maintaining buildings. Fifteen years later, scholars could trace the precipitous decline in the quality of education in New York City schools to the lingering effects of the cutbacks of 1975 and 1976.

Mayor Beame seemed to single out schools for cuts. The Board of Education lost 21,000 staff, compared to 24,000 among all other city agencies combined. Before the crisis, classes had five more children on average than any other New York county; now they were 10 to 20 above. Before there were 66.5 professionals per 1,000 students, versus 67.4 in Westchester and Nassau; now there were 52 – and city schools taught far more disadvantaged children who needed more services, not less, than suburban systems.

“Our schools are a disaster area,” wrote

Shanker.

Bringing back laid-off members was a union priority. In the fall, Shanker urged the city to rehire 3,000 paraprofessionals, arguing that the cost of unemployment, welfare and Medicaid was “the same or even more” than their salary – and they weren’t paying taxes.

Also supporting paras, an arbitrator in a UFT-lodged case voided the “inability to pay” argument that the board had raised to unilaterally drop paraprofessional stipends for the summer of 1976; he ordered back pay.

Later, the board took preliminary steps to recall 1,400 elementary teachers, as the UFT pushed to recertify teachers in other licenses so they would be eligible in more areas as openings occurred. Union Secretary George Fesko worked closely with Frank Arricale, the board’s personnel chief, who scanned college transcripts, seeking enough credits in needed areas to justify recertifying teachers.

The recession was officially over, but the state and city economies were hobbled. Carey vetoed a \$116 million school-aid bill. Education Commissioner Nyquist urged school boards statewide to freeze wages and act tougher in bargaining.

The UFT lobbied hard for a bill drafted by Assemblyman Leonard Stavisky, a Queens Democrat, and carried in the Senate by Roy Gocman, a Manhattan Republican. Under the bill, New York City’s budget would have to

allot the same proportion to education as it had, on average, in the prior three years.

Beame objected that the city would have to cut \$150 million from vital city services. Shanker noted that police, fire and schools accounted for a quarter of the \$12 billion budget. “What about the other three-quarters?” he asked.

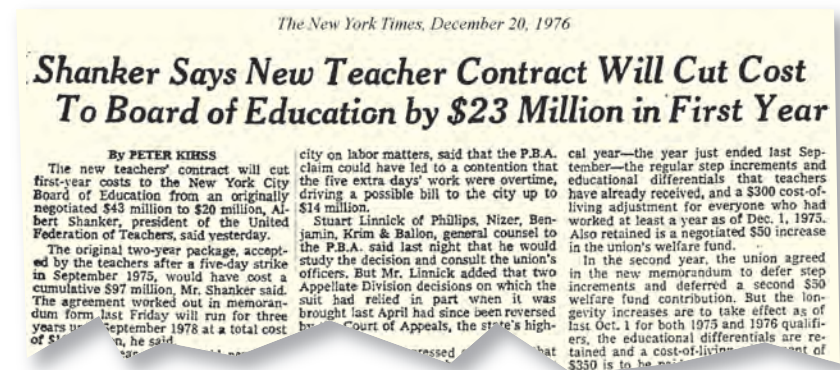
When Carey vetoed the bill, the UFT Political Action Committee kicked into high gear, striving for a legislative override.

Tom Tallarini, a Bronx activist, recalled driving to Albany at dawn with UFT Bronx borough representative and later union political action director Mario Raimo and District 10 Representative Sandy Blair. “We worked the whole day with maybe 25 or 30 other UFT people from different boroughs, meeting with legislators. The vote didn’t come until after midnight and, when the bill passed, we were

all elated.” It was the first time in more than 100 years that the Legislature had overridden a gubernatorial veto and the union honored Stavisky with its 1976 John Dewey Award.

In January, the board docked Taylor Law penalties from the paychecks of 1975’s strikers. In October the IRS added insult to injury, ruling that they had to pay income tax on the fine; the union lost a suit contending this exceeded the statutory penalty. Separately, PERB revoked the union’s dues checkoff privilege for up to two years and put strikers on a year’s probation, resulting in the dismissal of some previously tenured teachers; the union appealed to federal court.

Justice Saypol, who held the UFT and the Council of Supervisors and Administrators in civil contempt of his strike injunction, urged the five district attorneys to prosecute union officers for criminal contempt; they refused.



Left photo: Al Shanker interviews Leonard Stavisky, chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, on UFT's own hourlong call-in radio show



Right photo: Shanker with Daniel Patrick Moynihan



After Saypol died in 1977, Justice Nathaniel T. Helman fined Shanker and Peter S. O'Brien, president of the CSA, \$250 each, the UFT \$50,000 and the CSA \$7,500. There was no jail time. Union-board relations had improved and the judge saw "no useful purpose" to stiffer penalties.

In December, the union and board extended the 1975 contract to Feb. 1, 1978. The deal saved the city more than \$68 million, largely by recognizing the city's fait accompli freeze on longevity increments; the increments would be paid retroactively to those who qualified in 1975 and 1976, along with a \$300 cost-of-living adjustment.

Savings in the second year, 1976-77, included not paying teachers to cover the classes of absent colleagues; using paraprofessionals in large-group instruction; eliminating two conference days; and deferring step increments and the second \$50 per member Welfare Fund contribution. However, teachers got another \$350 cost-of-living adjustment, with a third, to be determined by the EFCB, to come in the last year based on productivity savings and revenues.

Teachers had pitched in as if it were wartime, Shanker said, and "are against odds making it work."

Furthermore: *In April the Court of Appeals upheld the contract's shortened work week, rejecting a suit brought by 22 of the 32 community school districts. Chief Judge Charles D. Breitel held that hours of instruction and terms and conditions of employment are subject to collective bargaining and are "a function of budgetary considerations" ... UFT staff director Feldman and treasurer DiLorenzo met with members of the Gay Teachers Association in June. Soon after the Executive Board reaffirmed UFT support of the civil and human rights of all members, "without regard to sexual orientation" ... Perplexingly, a congressional subcommittee attacked TRS and other municipal pension funds for investing in low-rated MAC bonds and city securities. "They completely ignore the prime consideration: The welfare of retirees is tied to a viable city," TRS trustees responded ... In October, UFT safety director Muir found that New York City schools had more than twice the national average of assaults on staff; overall incidents were up 62 percent in 1975-76 over 1974-75, as staff fell from 85,000 to 63,000 ... Mayor Beame sought divine intervention as New York City continued to struggle against bankruptcy. Leading a delegation of mayors to Jerusalem, he stopped at the Western Wall of Solomon's Temple and placed a one-word prayer between the stones: "Help!"*



Left photo: Executive Director Sandra Feldman on the TV show "StraightTalk"



Right photo: Reporter Mary Alice Williams of Channel 4 news interviews Feldman on fiscal crisis

1977-1979

The Emergency Financial Control Board blocked the contract in 1977, asserting that at \$15 million, teachers' step raises during their first eight years were excessive compared to contracts won by other city unions; as of December 1975, 24,263 teachers, or 48.6 percent of the teaching force, were eligible for step increases. EFCB also objected to longevity increases for senior teachers.

The UFT maintained that these were not wage increases. When both sides agreed in February to send the matter to the courts and the Legislature without payment of step increases or longevity, the EFCB approved the contract, as did UFT members, who had not seen a raise since 1975.

In February 1978, the city corporation counsel determined that there was a "substantial possibility" that the teachers would win, leading to a deal: The union agreed to drop the suit and stretch out payment of step payments

and longevity. That saved the city about \$18 million. By June 1980, teachers were made whole and paid correctly.

State aid improved. In March, the Legislature changed the aid formula, providing an extra \$26 million to rehire 1,400 laid-off teachers, who would cover prep periods, allowing school schedules to return to normal. And, reversing two lower courts, the Court of Appeals in April upheld the UFT-backed Stavisky-Goodman Law, stabilizing New York City spending on schools.

Amid talk of a general strike in February 1978, the UFT joined in a 225,000-member municipal bargaining coalition, forming an alliance that would last through several contract cycles.

President Jimmy Carter's Treasury secretary, W. Michael Blumenthal, pressured Carey and legislative leaders to increase the \$200 million in state school aid they had agreed upon. The new mayor, Edward I. Koch, said, "There is no money in our budget for increases."

Labor leaders walked out of a bargaining session when Koch demanded givebacks and said he would shrink the city work force by 6,345 through attrition to close what appeared

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 1, 1977

Paraprofessionals Face an Uncertain Future

By DAVID VIDAL

AFTER A LUNCH of ham, vegetables, pineapple and milk—and the accompanying lesson in table manners and getting along with friends—the 13 kindergarten pupils settled in a corner to read.

Two women were in Room 115 at Public School 137 in Lower Manhattan near the East River. Beverly Milkowitz led the 4-year-olds to the bookshelf and generally maintained order. Shelyv Young sat in a partitioned area and read a book about boats to four pupils. To the pupils, both women were "teachers," and that is what they called them.

"Teacher, my father is going to take me on this one and that one," one child told Mrs. Young, who had pointed to the book, saying, "This is a tugboat, this is a ferryboat." She told the children that the boats could be seen in the East River, visible from the classroom window.

Miss Milkowitz, in fact, is the teacher. Mrs. Young is a "para," one of 9,525 trained personnel in fields such as law, medicine and education. In education, the advent of the Head Start Program, passage of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act and passage of the Education Professions Development Act of 1967 provided the Federal funds and the impetus that placed education in the vanguard of the paraprofessional movement.

By 1973, the American Federation of Teachers estimates, there were 300,000 paraprofessionals working in the American school system.

Mrs. Young is in her mid-30's and the mother of two daughters, aged 14 and 15. She is an early-childhood para and took the job nine years ago.

"I was home alone, the kids were small, they went to Head Start. I felt I could be of some help so I approached the school," she said.

She has a variety of tasks in Room

Shelyv Young with her pre-kindergarten children in P.S. 137 in Lower Manhattan.

The New York Times/Arndt

to be a \$457 million budget gap. Koch foresaw 1,390 fewer teachers in 1978-79 between new hires, teachers leaving and an anticipated decline of 35,700 students.

Transit workers were the first municipal workers to settle; they got a 6 percent raise in a package aimed at saving the 50-cent subway fare. Koch, however, said this would not set a pattern for the coalition. Negotiations stalled.

Koch needed something from the unions – support for extending the life of EFCB, which was due to expire at year's end. Koch sought a 20-year extension, because Congress was demanding a solid fiscal package before it would consider federal loan guarantees for the city.

Tensions were so high that the mayor and the labor leaders did not meet face-to-face during a long night of bargaining in late May; instead, mediators shuttled between rooms in Carey's Manhattan office.

Pivotal issues were arbitration awards and how EFCB would handle them. Koch worried because an arbitrator had just boosted Nassau County police salaries by 24.5 percent and city police wanted something comparable; Nassau was forced to raise property taxes to pay the higher salaries.

In a complex deal, Koch got a legal change barring arbitrators from granting wage increases unless it determined that the city could pay for them without raising taxes. Labor leaders – Shanker, Gotbaum of DC 37 and Barry

Feinstein of the Teamsters – won a legal change prohibiting EFCB from rejecting awards granted by impasse panels or arbitrators. In a provision that ran through 1982, both sides had the right to a special judicial appeal of arbitration awards.

The bill, which the Legislature passed the next day, dropped “emergency” from the FCB's name and extended its life for 19 years. It also authorized MAC to borrow \$3 billion and let it continue serving as the city's chief financing mechanism for four more years.

With Koch hurrying to wrap up contract talks before he made his pitch for loan guarantees to the U.S. Senate Banking Committee, he and coalition leaders agreed to an 8 percent wage hike over the two years ending the following June 30.

The next day what *The Times* called “the hidden force on the unions' side” in negotiations came into play. The city's pension funds invested close to \$400 million in short-term MAC notes, with the Teachers' Retirement System anteing up another \$133.7 million.

When Shanker spoke to the Banking Committee in June, he said the disaster that hit the school system “has spurred the exodus of middle-class residents from our city” to the suburbs, where “schools can be found which provide what our schools cannot.” He predicted that “inadequate” city schools “will produce a work force that is incapable of meeting

the demands of business – and business will have no choice but to leave.”

City teachers had made “odious changes in their work conditions to enable the recall of their colleagues,” Shanker said, and so far – with federal work force funds – 4,500 had returned to work. But the city needed substantial, long-range help from Congress to rebuild the school system. Congress staved off city bankruptcy by authorizing loan guarantees. City pension funds bought about \$1 billion in long-term bonds.

New York City wasn't out of the woods, but it had found the path.

In January 1979, Koch set about closing an estimated \$439 million budget gap for the next fiscal year, ordering the Board of Education to cut \$85 million (about \$50 million stemming from an anticipated enrollment drop of 45,000). Then things looked up. When the city sought to market its first short-term notes in four years, it found higher demand – and at a lower interest rate – than anticipated.

The UFT contract negotiated the previous June hit a roadblock. Koch had delayed submitting it for FCB approval, saying its pension and welfare benefits exceeded those awarded other unions. The union showed otherwise.

In February Koch finally let the teacher contract go forward, but blocked the parapro-

fessional contract, contending that provisions moving paras from hourly to salaried employees paid over 12 months – thereby making them eligible for pensions – would cost \$12 million more than the pattern that other unions had agreed to. The UFT sought binding arbitration. It wasn't until 1983 that paras got their pensions.

The teaching force remained shaken and demoralized. In 1978, to encourage more teachers to return, the Legislature passed a bill reviving expired civil service eligibility lists for 20,000 prospective city teachers.

Meanwhile, the board sent out 9,000 letters to laid-off teachers in order to rehire 2,000.

Why had teaching in New York City become so undesirable?

The UFT surveyed those who refused to return. Many were working in more appealing jobs in business. “Their salaries were going up faster,” union spokeswoman Susan Glass told *The Times*. “And they discovered that their training and experience made them highly sought after, especially in the area of sales, because they were articulate and used to conveying a message.”

Seeking to improve education, in 1978 the federal government endorsed the idea of teacher centers, which Shanker had been pushing for several years. A significant part of pro-

The New York Times, December 23, 1977



Mayor-elect Edward I. Koch, at left, and Albert Shanker, president of the United Federation of Teachers, leaving a meeting of the Emergency Financial Control Board yesterday at the World Trade Center.

Mayor-Elect Wins Skirmish in First Brush With Labor

By LEE DEMBANT
 Mayor-elect Edward I. Koch had his first confrontation with organized labor yesterday at a meeting of the Emergency Financial Control Board and while labor was on a hard, well-orchestrated fight, announce both the board and Mr. Koch, who was also on hand to defend his position. “It was a rotten thing to do,” Mr. Shanker said of the postponement after the meeting. board approved six other contracts, some of them with step-up increases. “The issues are not legal, and they're not financial,” Mr. Shanker said. “It looks good to be tough,” he added, glowering at Mr. Koch across the room.



professional training would shift from the central administration and colleges of education to union-school board operations that, in practice, were controlled by teachers.

By 1980 the New York City Teacher Center Consortium, established by state law as part of a statewide teacher-development efforts would have eight sites operating. In fall 2010, New York City had Teacher Centers in 184 schools; elsewhere in the state, there were sites in 132 school districts.

The UFT found another area for growth in health care. Registered nurses from Lutheran Medical Center in Brooklyn joined the UFT in 1979 after approaching unions including District Council 37, District 1199 and the Teamsters.

At the time, Lutheran's RNs belonged to the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), but found it undemocratic, dysfunctional and unable to reach a contract agreement. As nurses saw it, NYSNA "represented management, not nurses," according to Renee Setteducato, now the Federation of Nurses/UFT chapter leader at Lutheran.

When Lutheran nurses approached the

UFT, they found what at they were seeking. "I want you to do for nurses what you did for teachers," Lutheran nurse leader Anne Goldman recalled telling him.

Because they were fighting a union as well as management, the pro-UFT nurses moved swiftly and secretly. In three days their organizing committee collected cards from a majority of the nurses without either NYSNA or management learning what they were up to.

In response, after two years of fruitless efforts, NYSNA quickly signed a contract with management without seeking membership approval; their goal was to prevent decertification. Over NYSNA's objections, the National Labor Relations Board scheduled a representation election for July 1979. Out of 500 RNs, all but 7 joined the UFT. Setteducato credits Goldman with an almost single-handed victory. "If someone else had met with him, Shanker might not have wanted to take up the campaign," she said. "Anne rallied the whole hospital."

Shanker, who at the national level would build the Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals as a vital part of the AFT, said of the

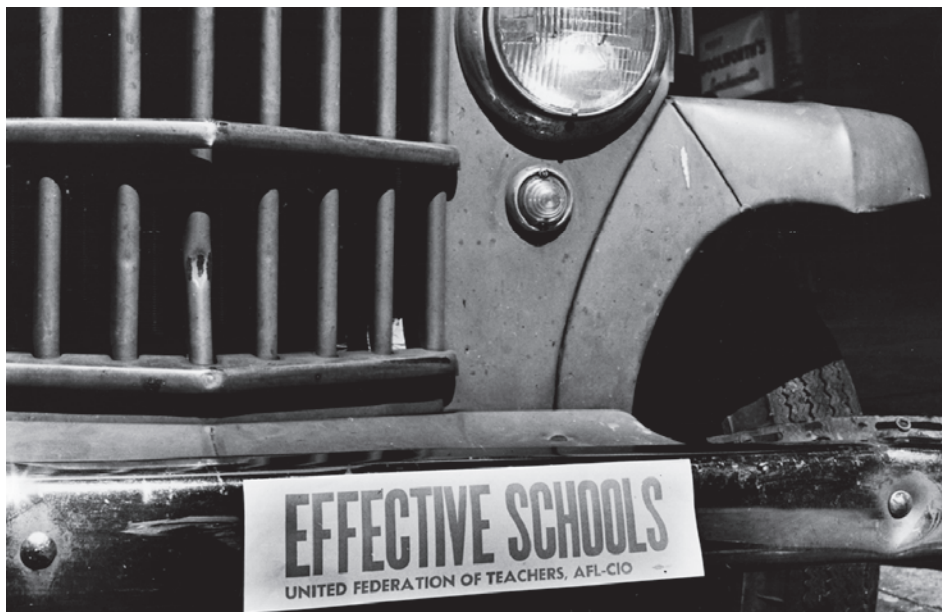
victory at Lutheran: "Some people will be astonished at the results, but it is a clear sign that nurses are seeking an effective, professional union to represent them. It was no accident. The nurses talked to us, came to our meetings, read our contracts, looked at our record and cast an educated vote."

An early gain for the nurses was creation of their own Federation of Nurses Welfare Fund, which occurred even before Lutheran's nurses negotiated their first contract under the federal Taft-Hartley Act. As nurses at other facilities became part of the federation, they, too, were covered by this Welfare Fund. Governed by a union-management board, it assures that management cannot make unilateral changes in benefits.

Furthermore 1977: *In May, Mayor Beame sought control of the public school system, asking the Legislature to replace the Board of Education with a commissioner responsible to him ... The UFT got out the vote for district elections in 1977, winning 172 of 288 seats, but just 8 percent of voters went to the polls. Said Shanker: "The public has little interest in who runs local schools, largely because the whole concept of small, cohesive communities just isn't workable in*

our city. It is time to rethink the whole question of decentralization" ... Accepting the UFT's John Dewey Award, U.S. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan said New York was shortchanged in federal school funds ... City Comptroller Goldin found that New York City spent more on education than other cities, but that bureaucracy ate up so much that less reached students in direct services than elsewhere ... In November, an arbitrator reinstated sabbaticals, saying the board had violated the contract by unilaterally cancelling them in January 1976 during the financial crisis.

Furthermore 1978: *In April, Koch sought legislation allowing him to appoint a majority on the Board of Education ... The board replaced retiring Chancellor Irving Anker with Koch's candidate and former top education advisor, Frank J. Macchiarola ... In May, an audit by Comptroller Golden found that 5,000 secondary school teachers were saddled with routine clerical chores that took them away from teaching.*



Teacher Center course

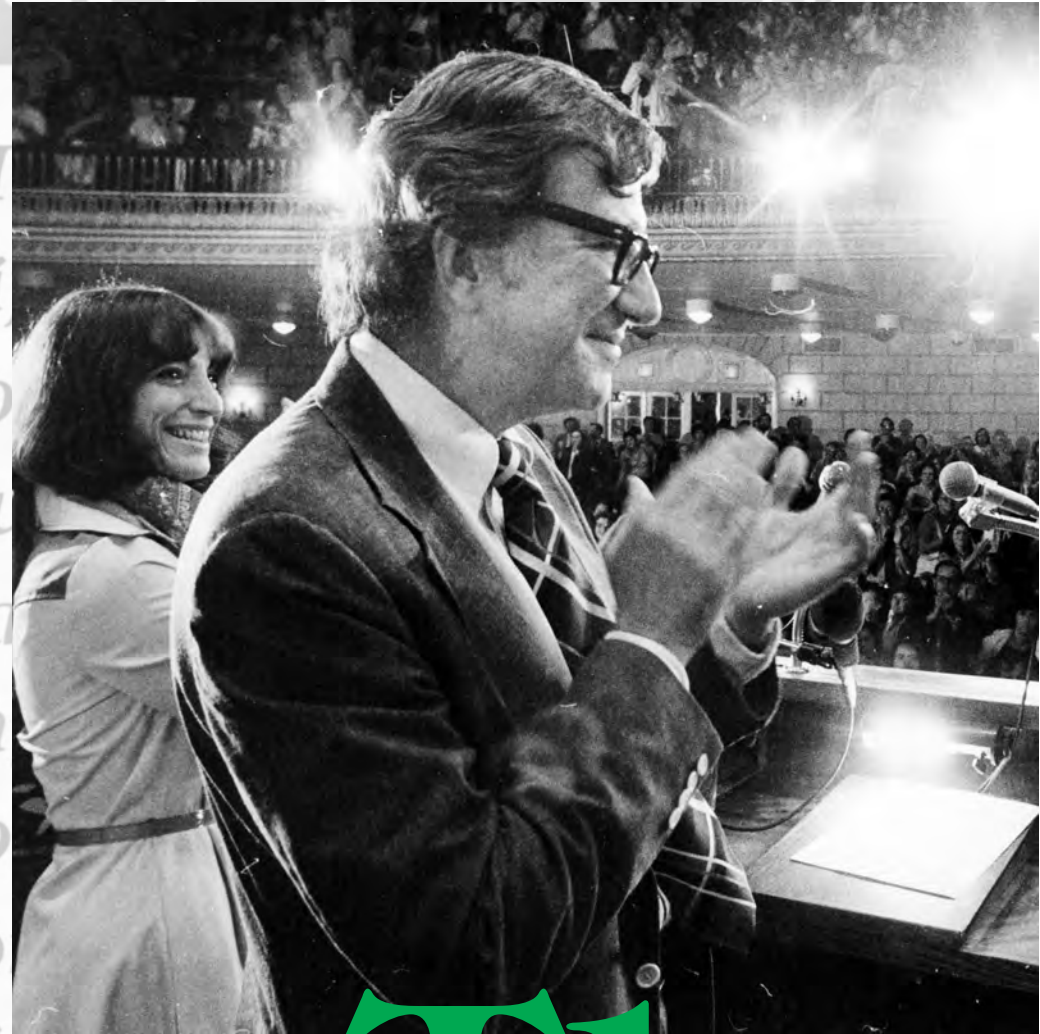


Albert Shanker retiring from UFT Presidency on January 1



“I
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to

*the American Federation
in this critical time nationally
for our profession.*”



The

VOTE in your VP election

Educational improvement was the challenge of the 1980s, spurred by the 1983 federal report “A Nation at Risk,” which Al Shanker, almost alone among local educators, embraced, spurring a decades-long movement for more rigorous school standards.

When Sandra Feldman became UFT president in 1986, she unleashed a torrent of educational initiatives. Charles Cogen and Al Shanker had established a firm contractual base and a robust political structure. With that and an improved economy, she could focus on professionalism.

By decade’s end, New York City’s educators achieved record salaries and landmark contractual protections that began to give them the voice in running their classrooms and schools that Henry Linville and John Dewey had first envisioned 70 years before. UFT membership, active and retired, topped 100,000.

Schools Chancellor Macchiarola launched “promotional gates,” the first system to use test scores and other performance indicators to hold back tens of thousands of youngsters for intensive remediation. But a long-term study showed that 40 percent of those retained dropped out, compared to 25 percent of those promoted. Chancellor Quinones scrapped gates in 1991.



1980s

Newly-elected UFT President Feldman spells out action agenda for the profession and schools

The decade was an economic rollercoaster, starting with a 22-month recession. There were three years of double-digit inflation – up to 18 percent in 1980. Unemployment peaked near 10 percent in 1985.

But in 1986, the city had balanced its budget for three straight years, retired its federally guaranteed debt and had access to credit markets. The Financial Control Board relinquished authority. The Times credited the FCB, MAC chairman Felix Rohatyn and other businessmen, Carey's leadership, Koch's financial practices "and the commitment of labor – both in sacrifices in salary and in the investment of billions of dollars in pension funds."

In 1980, Ronald Reagan defeated President Carter, who had created the Department of Education. Reagan had pledged to scrap the department, but instead increased its bureaucracy, cut classroom aid and shifted categorical funds into block grants that states could apportion as they wished. For many reasons – including insufficient government funding – by 1990 the public perception of schools was bleak. President George H.W. Bush called for "a national crusade for excellence in education," telling corporate leaders: "Our schools are in trouble, in real trouble. That means our kids are in trouble, too."

Education was under pressure.

1980

Forecasting a \$500 million budget gap, Mayor Koch sought new taxes; spoke of cutting 13,000 city jobs through "accelerated attrition" and layoffs; and tried to cut \$150 million from the board's \$3.3 billion budget for the next school year.

Chancellor Frank Macchiarola had shuttered 14 schools in 1979 amid furor. Koch pressed him to mothball 40 more; Macchiarola ordered an additional 14 to close. (Lamented Superintendent Carmen A. Rodriguez, of struggling South Bronx District 7: "Once the school goes, the community seems to go.")

Board president Stephen R. Aiello predicted bigger classes and the layoff of 4,000 teachers and thousands more staffers. "Education is not a major priority," he said. "It is not even a secondary priority. It is an afterthought."

Koch replied: "Would anyone say we're getting our money's worth? We are not." Police, he said, had to come first.

Board Vice President Joseph G. Barkan said schools had lost \$558.4 million in the previous five years. But, said Shanker, with 42 percent inflation over that time, the real loss was \$1 billion. Cuts were disproportionate, he said; school allocations had risen just 2.6 percent in that period, versus an overall 14.5 percent city

budget hike. Although there were 87,000 fewer students, new state and federal rules had increased the number of costlier special-needs students by 56 percent.

Meanwhile, *The New York Times* revealed in January that nearly 700 high-paid staff at board headquarters and local districts were hired illegally for "interim acting" positions outside of civil service rules. Few jobs were advertised and none of the workers was tested.

As contract talks began in May, leaders of the union coalition noted that the annualized inflation rate was 18 percent. Double-digit inflation required a double-digit settlement, they said, but the city and FCB wouldn't budge above 4 percent.

But in June, a 25-union nonuniformed coalition, including the UFT, managed to notch 8 percent raises in each of two years, increases in welfare fund payments and no give-backs. William Scott, a former deputy city comptroller and the UFT's economic director, later said the contract was worth 19.5 percent.

In the May community school board elections, UFT-backed candidates won majorities in 26 of the 32 districts. Shanker estimated that 75 percent of voters were parents and UFT members. Low voter turnout – the

208,637 voters citywide were just 9.2 percent of those eligible – helped explain the union's outsized influence on the results.

The Times ran a caustic analysis of the decentralized system's first decade. It found patronage and corruption rampant. In the coming decade, the union would sharply curtail its election involvement.

On the integration front, U.S. District Judge Jack B. Weinstein upheld a voluntary 1977 pact between the board and the U.S. Office for Civil Rights to better integrate teachers. The UFT and Queens District 26 had sued, concerned about an illegal quota system, but Weinstein ruled that it "sets goals, not quotas" and would not impinge on teachers' rights.

The 32 districts now needed to bring their teaching staffs within 5 percent of the racial and ethnic composition of the entire teaching corps. This led to a contractual and voluntary "Integration Transfer Plan" to encourage teachers to move to schools that needed to adjust their ethnic balance.

The UFT's new nurse chapter reached its first contract at Lutheran Medical Center. It dealt with the thorny issue of weekend scheduling and brought



the hospital's first salary scales. Before, management had set pay arbitrarily. But during negotiations, the union learned what every nurse was paid and built a rational salary structure with full disclosure; it provided raises based on service and expertise.

The nurse chapter also organized RNs at the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, who also had belonged to the New York State Nurses Association. Their first contract in January 1981 boosted starting salaries by almost \$3,000 and provided two 8 percent raises for current nurses over two years.

The Federation of Nurses/UFT also waged a fierce campaign to represent RNs at the 17 Health and Hospital Corporation facilities, the city's public hospital system. It began in January when the Federation collected 3,000 cards from the 5,500 HHC nurses. But when the dust settled on the three-way campaign in May, NYSNA had won.

Furthermore: In February the UFT piloted Dial-A-Teacher, a homework hotline for students; four teachers served 17 elementary schools by phone after school ... The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that New York State could reimburse parochial schools for the cost of state-required tests and record-keeping. The state's rationale: If financially troubled religious schools collapsed, public schools would be overwhelmed ... In April, the UFT and education officials opposed a Regents plan to set a

uniform standard for selecting, testing and disciplining teachers mostly because it wasn't tough enough; unlike the Regents' boards that govern physicians and other professionals, the proposed new teaching board would have lacked decision-making authority and only advised the Regents. Another provision would have let the state revoke a teaching license for Taylor Law violations ... In a sign of recovery from the fiscal crisis, 46.7 percent of pupils in grades 2 through 9 scored at or above the national norm in 1980, compared to 40.3 percent in 1979. But, Macchiarola warned, budget troubles could lead to 2,200 more layoffs – and harder work by the teachers remaining ... In December, Koch sought a law empowering him to appoint a majority on the board; similar efforts had been blocked in 1981 ... The board's crime reports were up 150 percent since 1975, pointing to ill-trained school guards, less money to hire them and administrators unwilling or unable to grapple with crime ...

1981

Newly inaugurated President Reagan moved to reduce education spending, particularly Title I funds for impoverished children. He proposed a total \$124 million cut to New York City schools, including school lunches (he famously claimed that ketchup was a vegetable). He would fold "categorical" federal funds into block grants to states, but there were no guarantees that states would spend the money that previous law had allocated for specific purposes.

Cheered on by Big Business, Reagan undercut unions. In his most notorious action, he fired 11,345 striking members of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization and banned them from federal service for life, which broke the union. (President Bill Clinton lifted the lifetime ban in 1993.) It would take 10 years for staffing and air-travel safety to return to pre-strike levels.

Reagan's action encouraged companies across the country to get tough on their unions, which chilled collective bargaining and organizing.

On the other hand, the new

Republican administration praised unions elsewhere, like Poland. There, Solidarity – the first independent trade union in the Soviet bloc – led the fight to throw off communist oppression.

The UFT offered Solidarity public relations support and space for an information office at union headquarters at 260 Park Avenue South in Manhattan. Radio Moscow attacked the UFT's actions as a CIA plot.

The Wall Street Journal – no friend of labor – lambasted the Soviet Union for its accusations: "American labor is indeed aiding the Solidarity movement, openly and unashamedly ... It learned early in the game that communist parties and free unions are natural mortal enemies, more violently so because free unions, more than any other free institution, threaten Communist claims to legitimacy."

After Solidarity led Poland to freedom, UFT members traveled there to train teachers how to teach about democracy.

Bill Scott, Shanker's financial aide, addresses the City Council



Furthermore: *Bushwick High School teacher John Sette was fatally injured in April while breaking up a homeroom fight between two youths. The district attorney later dropped a manslaughter charge against a 16-year-old student, saying “ordinary negligence which results in a person’s death does not subject a person to criminal liability for homicide” ... Under UFT pressure, Macchiarola in May required virtually automatic suspension of students found with weapons; through March, school authorities had confiscated 50 handguns, two rifles, 181 knives and 37 other weapons. “It’s about time,” said Shanker ... In December, the city’s nine Teacher Center sites survived Reagan’s cuts as the Board of Education and six community school districts boosted support, along with financing from the state, the Carnegie Corporation (to mainstream children with handicaps) and the UFT.*

1982

A federal appeals court in April upheld the constitutionality of the state Public Employment Relations Board decision to revoke UFT’s dues checkoff privilege after the 1975 strike. As a result, the union had to collect dues individually from its 70,000 members in 1,000 schools. Although 90 percent of members paid up, the UFT lost \$2 million during a five-month suspension that ran into August.

As a result, the union was forced to curtail services to members. It was a low blow coming after the union had rescued the city from bankruptcy, paid a fine and seen its members forfeit \$30 million in lost wages and Taylor Law penalties.

Meanwhile, 22 of the 32 local districts had failed to comply with the 1977 agreement between the city and the federal government to bring school staffs within 5 percent of the racial mix of the total teaching force, which in 1982 had 19 percent from minority groups. Reagan’s Department of Education threatened to forcibly transfer 3,000 teachers, which UFT Executive Director Sandra Feldman called “unconscionable.” The union had negotiated a voluntary transfer plan in the contract to better integrate teaching staffs.

Al Shanker, BOE President Joseph Barkan and Victor Gotbaum

Chancellor Macchiarola said that if forced transfers occurred, about half of those transferred would be minority teachers with primarily African-American and Hispanic students. He called this “unfair and educationally destructive,” adding that a quarter of new hires were from minority groups.

Sen. Alfonse D’Amato, a Republican swept in on Reagan’s coattails over UFT opposition, interceded. Under an agreement reached with UFT involvement, the “specter of forced transfer has been removed,” Feldman said. The city would make “good-faith efforts” to seek racial balance through new hires and would try to come within 15 percent of matching the racial mix of teachers in each borough, not the entire city. However, the board could offer “legitimate educational reasons” if it failed to comply by October 1983, when the pact would expire.

Contract talks progressed without drama. In September, a 40-union, nonuniformed, municipal labor coalition negotiated a two-year contract with the city. The deal came the day after the UFT’s contract expired and more than two months after the others had lapsed. The pact brought 15 percent raises and increases in city contributions to welfare funds and the health plan. And the city agreed to repay wages that had been deferred during the fiscal crisis with 9 percent interest. UFT Treasurer Jeanette DiLorenzo lit a fire under the board to determine what arrears each affected member

Al Shanker, Herbert Magidson, Lech Walesa, Tom Hobart, Sandra Feldman and Governor Mario Cuomo

was due and, with Secretary George Fesko, created a union-board committee that heard appeals from members who believed there had been an error.

By December, with the state dithering over aid, the city’s budget was again in trouble. Koch spoke of 6,600 job cuts through attrition by 1984, with half from the school system, which was just a third of the city work force. Shanker called this “disproportionate.”

The board foresaw catastrophe. Enrollment was down 200,000 from the 1975 peak of 1.1 million and there were 7,000 fewer teachers, but due to the Willowbrook consent decree, the number of children with disabilities had grown to 100,000. They were entitled to smaller classes and extra support, and special education teachers were the fastest-growing segment of the faculty. With such instability, how could staff cuts possibly attract new teachers to its classrooms?

Furthermore: *In February, Gov. Carey proposed raising aid for poor and heavily taxed districts like New York City by hiking the sales tax from 4 to 5 cents per dollar; taxpayers earning less than \$25,000 would have gotten a rebate; the plan went nowhere ... The Court of Appeals in June upheld the state’s system of financing public education, in which legislative politicking determined how much aid flowed to districts each year. Ruling in the Levittown case from Long Island, the court found*



no constitutional requirement that school spending, services and facilities had to be equal among districts. In 1983 the U.S. Supreme Court would refuse to hear an appeal. A generation later, a UFT-backed lawsuit led to a different conclusion ...

In August, the UFT reported that crime against members had fallen 22 percent, thanks to tougher security and discipline, including summoning police and immediately suspending weapons-carrying youngsters. Pushed by the UFT, the board in December directed each school to establish a disciplinary code by September, based on a citywide model that the union helped craft ... In September the UFT and other unions backed Lt. Gov. Mario Cuomo for governor to replace the retiring Carey; "Mario told us this was 'the single most important event in the campaign,'" Shanker said. In the primary, Cuomo defeated Koch, whom union members saw as unsympathetic to their concerns. Cuomo then defeated Republican-Conservative Lewis Lehrman ... September also saw predictions that the nation would need more than 300,000 additional teachers by 1990. Yet fewer college freshmen were choosing education careers due to layoffs, low wages and broader options for women.

1983

Startlingly, the economy revived and schools opened in September half a billion dollars richer. Elementary schools saw an uptick in enrollment with the introduction of full-day kindergarten (up from half-day). Some districts had waiting lists for the new program, which was part of a long-range plan to reach students early and reduce the high school dropout rate. There also was a \$1 million dropout prevention program at 10 of the 110 high schools.

But schools opened 600 teachers short, in part due to the federal integration agreement; two weeks into the term, 300 vacancies remained, mostly in predominantly African-American districts.

The new chancellor, Anthony Alvarado, had worked closely with the UFT as Manhattan District 2 superintendent in piloting shared decision-making. However, by March of the next year he was gone, ousted in a flap over his personal finances.

In a vote of confidence, 66 percent of the city's public school parents rated their children's schools "A" or "B," as did 86 percent of parents whose children attended magnet schools or specialized high schools, according to a poll done for the New York Alliance for the Public Schools. That surpassed the 44 per-

cent of public school parents who approved of their schools in a national Gallup poll.

Fifty-five percent of New York City parents said funding was inadequate; they overwhelmingly said classes were too big, teachers weren't paid enough and teacher recruitment was inadequate. Sixty-eight percent agreed that it was best for schools to be integrated racially, ethnically, socially and economically.

In February, the UFT negotiated its first contract for day-to-day substitute teachers, who had been frozen at \$50 a day since 1975. (The union waged a frustrating struggle for representation rights at the state Public Employment Relations Board, then, with NYSUT's political action help, in 1982 pushed a bill through the Legislature that allowed per diems to organize.) The two-year contract starting Sept. 9, 1982, raised their pay to \$63 as of Dec. 1, 1983. It also guaranteed them a duty-free lunch period, a preparation period and, in secondary schools, a maximum of five teaching periods a day.

On the national stage, public schools were under increasing fire. In April the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned that "a rising tide of mediocrity" in education threatened to undermine the nation's position in the world. President Reagan blamed "people here in Washington" for usurping parental prerogatives.

Shanker responded by suggesting a summit of business, education and military leaders to discuss national needs in math, science, engineering and foreign languages; that conference later took place. He urged teacher unions to consider longer school days and years as part of a broader effort to improve education – but only with higher salaries; the UFT later successfully used this framework in negotiations. Shanker noted that the UFT contract already allowed math and science teachers to agree to teach during their prep periods for extra money.

Bucking a defensive reaction among national teacher union leaders, he urged the



Sandra Feldman and Bayard Rustin



Leading the Labor Day Parade, Feldman tells the crowd, "The union card is still the ticket to higher pay and benefits, and it always will be. And the labor movement is the battering ram to break down the door of callousness at the White House."

union to embrace the national report and join the push for higher academic standards – a movement that would dominate education policy for years to come.

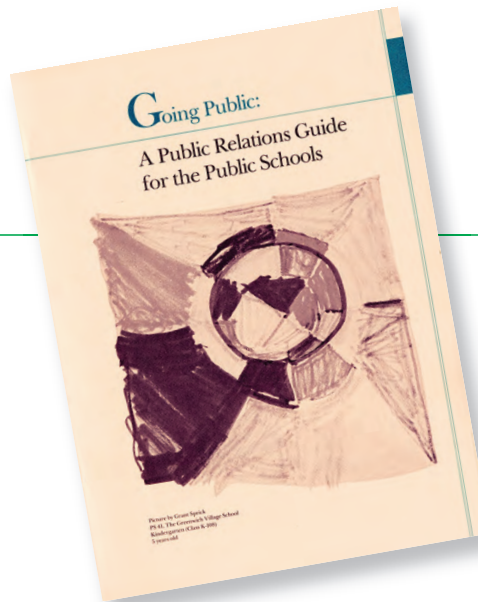
Perhaps such ideas were too sophisticated. In May Reagan attacked teachers for “not doing the job they should.” His solutions: merit pay, school prayer, tuition tax credits and vouchers for private and parochial schools. This set the scene for years of right-wing assaults on public education.

Furthermore: Chancellor Macchiarola announced his resignation in January. Koch tried to replace him with his former deputy mayor, Robert F. Wagner Jr., but the state said he lacked required educational credentials. Wagner later served with distinction as board president ... In June, Koch asked unions for \$50 million in productivity savings. “Productivity is one thing; givebacks and changes in work rules are something else entirely,” said Bill Scott, Shanker’s financial aide ... In July, the Board of Regents unanimously voted to phase in a tougher curriculum. Students would take more math, science, social studies and the arts; learn a foreign language; take more tests; do more homework; and start learning about computers in elementary school. “I favor the entire program,” said Shanker, who cautioned that provisions needed to be made for students who have trouble meeting the higher standards ... Leading the Labor Day Parade in September, Feldman said, “The union card is

“Productivity is one thing; givebacks and changes in work rules are something else entirely.”

— Bill Scott, Shanker’s financial aide

still the ticket to higher pay and benefits, and it always will be. And the labor movement is the battering ram to break down the door of callousness at the White House.”



1984

Responding to the growing state and national concern about education quality, the Legislature passed the largest annual increase in school aid up to that time. City schools would get \$1.6 billion, up by \$162 million. There was money for dropout prevention, guidance and alternative classes; computers; adult literacy; even tax credits for employers who hired teachers for teaching-related summer jobs.

Yet the Board of Education scrambled to fill 3,500 vacancies and, for the first time, lowered hiring criteria. Sixty percent of the 3,211 new teachers that summer had no education credits. They were college graduates who passed a “temporary per diem” substitute teacher license

exam, which was generally regarded as setting a very low bar.

Shanker wrote that about 10 percent of candidates failed the oral exam and 5 percent failed the written portion. That may mean “that we are getting very good people. But it also may indicate that the test means almost nothing.”

TPDs, as they were known, took a summertime crash course in classroom essentials, plus six college credits in each of their first four years as they worked toward state certification. They worked full time, but had no job security, for the board had to replace them as soon as a regularly appointed teacher (one off a Board of Examiners rank-order list) showed up with the appropriate license. That infuriated not only the TPDs, but also the principals and colleagues who often welcomed their energy and developing skills. Even when TPDs

Newspaper ads from 1984 and 2000

The New York Times

DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS TO BE THE BEST, OR THE CHEAPEST?

Education workers' salaries \$18,000 - \$42,000

N.Y.C. teachers' salaries \$4,000 - \$24,000

In New York City it's becoming harder and harder to attract and to keep high quality teachers, because in New York City the teachers' salaries are so disgraceful. A starting teacher with a Bachelor's Degree is currently paid only \$4,527 a year in New York City, compared to over \$18,000 a year in many of New York's suburbs. And it's not just the starting salaries that are so bad - all of New York City's teachers, including our most experienced ones, are woefully underpaid.

So how can we expect the best teachers to come and teach in New York City when they can find so much more green in the suburbs?

UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION.

THE TEACHER CRISIS: SOME FACTS TO CHWEN ON

HOW DO YOU ATTRACT THE *best* TEACHERS IF YOU PAY THE *worst* SALARIES?

The demand for teachers nationwide is acute. And in New York City, it's reached crisis proportions.

Our public schools need to attract 54,000 good new teachers in the next five years. That's *two-thirds* the current teacher force of 78,000. And yet, New York City pays teachers 25% *less* than they can make teaching in Westchester or Long Island.

The law of supply and demand applies to teachers just as it does to any other profession. Newly certified teachers are heading for high-paying suburban schools. And many experienced teachers in New York City are being cherry-picked by the same schools. Meanwhile, thousands of seasoned teachers are about to retire.

The teacher shortage is a civic crisis New York City must face now, before it wrecks havoc on a school system already grappling with a severe shortage of certified teachers. The only way to solve it is by making teacher salaries competitive with the suburbs. Let's give New York City kids what they need to succeed. Let's put a well-paid, well-qualified teacher in every classroom.

United Federation of Teachers
Arnold Weinstein, President

were appointed, they got no credit for their temporary service.

Shanker noted the shortage of certified math and science teachers, warning that 5,000 teachers would be working out of license in fields in which they lacked knowledge. The board cobbled together a mediocre mentoring program.

Furthermore: *Nathan Quinones replaced Anthony Alvarado as chancellor in May ... In November, UFT and AFT members protested in Washington against apartheid, South Africa's legal system of racial separation and discrimination. There were arrests outside the South African embassy and civil-rights style sit-ins ...*

1985

Shanker wrote in February about Julio Valentin, a bilingual rookie at PS 321 in Brooklyn who loved teaching computers to second-through fifth-graders, but quit to become a police officer because "I couldn't afford to teach."

Divorced, he was supporting his ex and an 8-year-old daughter while paying for a master's degree on his \$14,527 salary. As a first-year cop his pay jumped to \$21,810; a year later it would be \$25,000 and in three years \$27,000 – a mark a teacher wouldn't reach for 10 years.

Koch announced in March that if teachers wanted higher starting pay, they'd have to give up some prep periods, work longer days and a longer school year and forego raises.

"Is he kidding?" asked Shanker.

The UFT contract ran out in September. Two months later the city declared an impasse with all unions and requested arbitration. Koch offered 3 percent raises in each year of a three-year pact; the municipal labor coalition demanded 9 to 15 percent in each of two years.

In April a frustrated UFT quit the coalition, hoping for more traction on its own. A few days later Koch settled with the rest: 5 percent more in each of the first two years and 6 percent in the third, plus benefit increases and a paid holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. DC 37 said the package totaled 18.7 percent over three years.

Saying he was delighted, Shanker again demanded negotiations. An agreement with the UFT would "have to meet the very different needs of teachers."

But a deal was not to be had. Both sides agreed to an untried mechanism: last-offer binding arbitration (LOBA). After mediation to bring the parties closer, an arbitration panel would pick either one final offer or the other. Each side had to guess how far the other was willing to move; sticking to unreasonable demands could mean trouble.

Time passed. The 17 uniformed unions in June accepted a 20.4 percent increase in wages and benefits over three years.

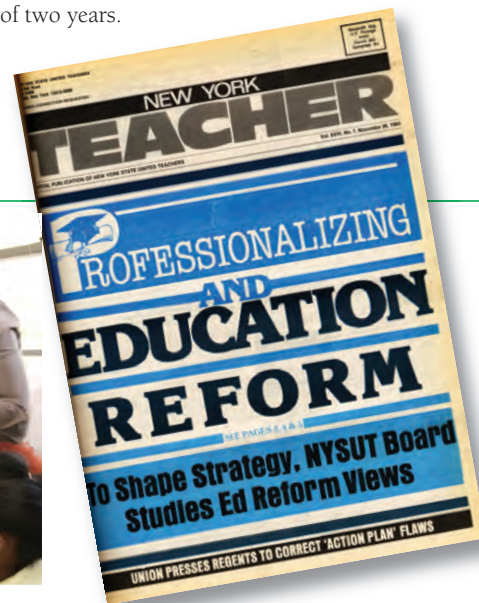
By August, schools were short 4,200 teachers. The board recruited from Spain and Puerto Rico. It asked retirees to return. Enrollment was up, but so was retirement fueled by a surge of 55-year-olds in pension Tiers I and II who, Feldman said, were sick of low wages, "onerous working conditions and a lack of job gratification."

City teachers ranked 109th in pay out of

111 area districts. "A starting salary of \$14,500 [versus \$18,867 in Valley Stream and \$19,403 in Scarsdale] is very difficult to explain to people from out of town," admitted Gerald Brooks, the board's deputy executive director of personnel. "They ask how they can live on that here, and we are hard pressed to answer them ... We've never been able to recover from 1975."

The board mistreated new recruits, such as by assigning a high school biology teacher from Spain to fifth-grade special education. First-year attrition soared and the board anticipated hiring another 1,500 for the spring.

The LOBA panel's decision came in mid-September. It raised teacher salaries 19.6 percent overall. Starting pay jumped 38 percent, from \$14,527 to \$20,000 by September 1986. The top salary, after 15 years and 30 credits beyond a master's, rose from \$34,076 to \$40,700. But secretaries lost sabbaticals and there were fewer sabbaticals for teachers. New teachers in disadvantaged junior high schools had to teach three more periods at the expense of three prep periods, so they had the same one prep a day as other middle and high school teachers. Principals gained latitude to assign homeroom teachers to administrative duties. New teachers won 10 days of professional development; UFT curricular input later developed this into a worthy preservice course with in-school follow-up, but in the years be-



Sandra Feldman and Mayor Koch address the media



Ronald Miller, first para to become a principal

fore this publication, this program had withered.

This was the city's final LOBA offer – the sixth that each side had submitted. Arbitrators had “hinted to us that we were out of line on money, and hinted to them that they were out of line on givebacks,” Shanker said. As a result, the final offers were just \$14 million apart in the contract's last year.

The arbitration award stated: “The decision may be best described as a difficult and borderline selection between two reasonable final packages which were very similar in major respects.”

Although, as Shanker said, “It is better than what we would have gotten through negotiations,” union leaders vowed not to relinquish control over negotiations again.

A negotiated paraprofessional contract raised maximum pay to \$15,000, let paras join the Welfare Fund and finally annualized their salaries – the threshold for a pension. The union soon secured a law letting paras opt into pension Tier IV

and immediately buy back credit for prior service. UFT political action also lifted a waiting period and allowed many senior paras to retire.

There were other pension gains: 55-year-old teachers in Tiers III and IV could retire with 30 years of service (the prior minimum age was 62); the union removed the Tier III requirement that pension checks be reduced by Social Security income; and after the U.S. Supreme Court required gender-neutral pensions, the UFT won a commitment to refund overpayments by female members. (In December 1986, TRS mailed \$31 million to 17,000 people.)

Meanwhile, the teacher-members of the Teachers' Retirement System board – Mel Aaronson, Sandra March and Joseph Shannon, with the City trustees – convinced TRS to crank up the pressure on corporations with pro-apartheid policies in South Africa. When friendly persuasion failed, TRS – in a financially prudent way – divested their stock.



Sandra March and Mel Aaronson



Furthermore: In *Aguilar v. Felton*, the U.S. Supreme Court in July ruled it unconstitutional for New York State to provide Title I remedial services inside parochial schools; several hundred UFT members were then teaching 25,000 students at 253 nonpublic schools. The board opted for costly mobile classrooms parked at the curb outside parochial schools; the UFT would later troubleshoot countless complaints from members about fumes, lack of heat and more ... In September, the union educated members about AIDS, a new and poorly understood disease that was widely feared. There were just four known students with AIDS, but a Queens school board and parent groups elsewhere threatened a boycott if any were admitted ... Ronald Miller became the first former paraprofessional to be appointed a principal. At PS 138 in East Harlem, a school for children with severe mental and physical disabilities, six of the 90 teachers also were former paras ... In October the UFT urged the state Commission on Child Care to provide quality preschool programs to the poorest families. Just 113 schools in 25 districts had pre-K ...

In November, UFT Executive Director Feldman and her top aide, Tom Pappas, launched a years-long drive to upgrade building conditions. First up was IS 137 in the Bronx, a decade-old school with abysmal ventilation, nonfunctioning sinks and clocks that had stopped four years earlier. The biggest prize: a \$750,000 air conditioner ... Dial-A-Teacher went citywide to serve all city elemen-

tary students ... In December, the state Education Department released its first Comprehensive Assessment Report (CAR), which listed the bottom 10 percent of the state's 6,000 schools, including about 400 in New York City. “Schools do need improvement, but they don't just need to be told that – they need help,” said Feldman. She called CAR a simplistic look at dropout rates and test scores, but not at factors like student mobility ...

“Children who are least likely to find a quality preschool program are the ones who need it the most. We must not allow quality of care to depend solely on family income” because “we risk condemning the most disadvantaged ... to permanent inferiority.”

— David Sherman
Assistant to the President

David Sherman



1986

After 21 years, Shanker retired as UFT president to focus on leading the American Federation of Teachers. Sandra Feldman, who as the union's secretary and executive director had handled most day-to-day operations in the 22 years that Shanker held both posts, became UFT president on January 1.

At her first press conference, she promised to "fight like hell" for the UFT and for students, whose only chance "for the good life" is through success in school. She highlighted the teacher shortage and pledged to hold Koch to his inaugural promise to make schools a priority.

She blasted "top-down, factory model management," saying: "Teachers are low men and women on the totem pole. They are required to follow orders and only in rare instances are they given authority outside their own classrooms." She called the UFT "a children's lobby ... We're going to reach out to parents and work with them" on pre-school, anti-dropout programs, special education and more.

Her program: real educational decision-making; better safety and maintenance; sufficient textbooks and supplies; less paperwork; teacher-developed and -run training; mentoring for new teachers; tougher discipline for



students; and lower class size.

She would largely carry out this program.

The union organized a committee for the 12,000 uncertified temporary per diem substitute teachers (TPDs) most of whom, despite their title, held full-time positions. Negotiations coordinator Lucille Swaim was instrumental in winning state legislation so the UFT could represent them.

Cuomo signed a UFT-backed bill requiring the Board of Examiners to offer "closed examinations" so thousands of TPDs could get regular licenses. Since the Examiners had not offered many exams for years, TPDs who passed had priority for appointment – and then finally could move past salary Step 4A and join the pension system. Koch objected because costs would rise without increasing the number of teachers. Feldman said it was "part of our overall battle to improve the city's schools."



"Unless we begin to honor those who have dedicated their lives to building the next generation ... we cannot survive as a community."

— Chancellor Richard R. Green

UFT Secretary George Fesko later chided the Examiners for not offering closed exams for TPD psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors, lab specialists and secretaries. The UFT went to court.

A 19-bus UFT caravan besieged Albany in April, helping to win a record state aid package. Included was \$95 million in "Excellence in Teaching" funds to permanently boost teacher salaries statewide. Koch initially rejected the city's \$31 million share – \$500 per teacher on average – for it also would raise the price of fringe benefits and pensions. He held out for one-time merit raises, but in December gave in.

A third Albany victory changed state law so a teacher cannot lose a pension by contesting dismissal, as the city Administrative Code had required. This followed a UFT win in federal appeals court, which said the code put "a price on a procedural due process right." The case involved a teacher who resigned to protect her pension while successfully defending a misconduct charge lodged by a harassing principal.

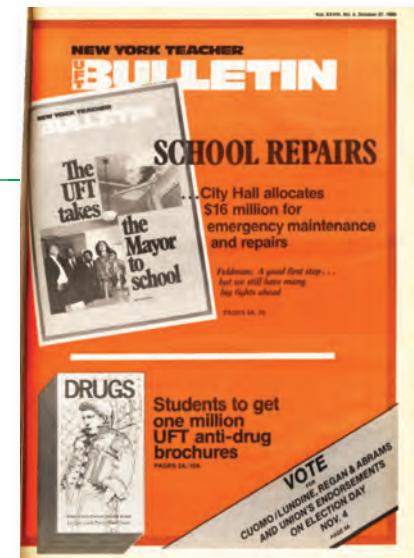
The UFT secured a contract for adult education teachers that annualized their salary (instead of hourly pay) and made them eligible for

pensions, with raises retroactive to 1983. The UFT and the board also agreed to provide paraprofessionals with health coverage from their first day of work, rather than after 90 days.

Buildings were crumbling, the foreseeable result of the city's penny-wise, pound-foolish decision to defer maintenance during and after the fiscal crisis. Small leaks became big ones, and soon falling plaster was spewing hazardous asbestos into the air.

Feldman took Koch to the epicenter, the Seward Park High School Annex in Manhattan. The UFT had closed it for a day and a half and brought in its own safety consultant to monitor the asbestos cleanup. She showed him rooms with gaping holes in the ceiling and floor, a "teacher's lounge" without furniture, and a floor buckled from contractor-caused water damage. He saw the only two toilets available to male faculty and the three for women.

During a wide-ranging discussion with faculty, Koch said he was amazed that the school had to send computers out for repair, which



could take a year, with no replacements. “Isn’t there on-site repair?” There was just one reprograph (an ink-alcohol duplicating machine) and insufficient supplies. Teachers described shoddy work by contractors who came, sometimes shirtless and cursing, into classrooms. “Why can’t this work be done during the summer?” a teacher asked.

Koch produced a downpayment of \$16 million to fix up schools. The board announced a \$4.5 billion capital plan, with \$758 million for the maintenance backlog.

Staff director Tom Pappas worked with chapter leaders to funnel repair requests to the board. He also built a team of special representatives, industrial hygienists and a consulting physician to handle workplace health and safety issues. He prodded and encouraged the string of hapless board officials who flitted through top building positions. His operation – like so many at the UFT – provided continuity and far more attention than its board counterparts.

Similarly, the union began to take charge of professional development, with Feldman’s assistant and later VP David Sherman as inspiration and goad on education reform issues.

The UFT Teacher Center Consortium, created by state law in 1980, was growing. Its school-based centers (in 2010 there would be about 250) provided hands-on help, laying the groundwork for teacher-focused professional

development. In 1986, though, top-flight instructors like Aminda Gentile – then a teacher specialist at Bronx PS 102 and later the center’s director and a UFT VP – taught new-teacher survival skills. (Gentile’s later work blending the union’s educational and labor efforts were instrumental in building capacity and strengthening the teaching force in the 2000s and shaping strategies to counter so-called “reformers” and their efforts to close schools and evaluate teachers solely based on standardized test scores.)

In addition, there was UFT coaching on Saturday and Sunday to help newcomers pass the National Teacher Examination Core Battery exam, which the city mandated for licensure after Albany mandated it for state certification. City teachers thus had to pass one more hurdle than any other teachers in the state (except in Buffalo, which also had a Board of Examiners) – an Examiners test for a conditional license plus the NTE Core Battery for a permanent license. The union stepped up efforts to eliminate the Examiners.

In the coming decade, tens of thousands of certified and uncertified teachers would stream through the Teacher Center’s doors. In the 1990s, 10,000 or more UFT members a year would take its courses, workshops and seminars, as well as those offered by NYSUT’s Effective Teaching Program, in UFT offices and in schools across the city. Many members earned master’s degrees through UFT collaborations

Under Feldman, the Teacher Center was on the way to becoming an informal “UFT University.”

with area universities. Under Feldman, the Teacher Center was on the way to becoming an informal “UFT University.”

The smaller UFT Special Educator Support Program started in 1982 when the state offered to double funding for a pilot Teacher Center mainstreaming program for special education teachers. Like their school-based Teacher Center counterparts, SESP specialists provided nonevaluative mentoring. “I hope that the connections I make between my work with teachers and my work with children can help other teachers make changes in their classrooms ... [so they can] change and grow,” said SESP’s Catalina Fortino of PS 321 in Brooklyn.

SESP director Howard Gollub criticized the board’s “negative reward system. The teacher who can ‘handle’ difficult children is ‘rewarded’ by being given all of the difficult children ... The teacher should be acknowledged and given time to share with colleagues the approaches and techniques that have proven successful.” (SESP later merged back into the Teacher Center.)

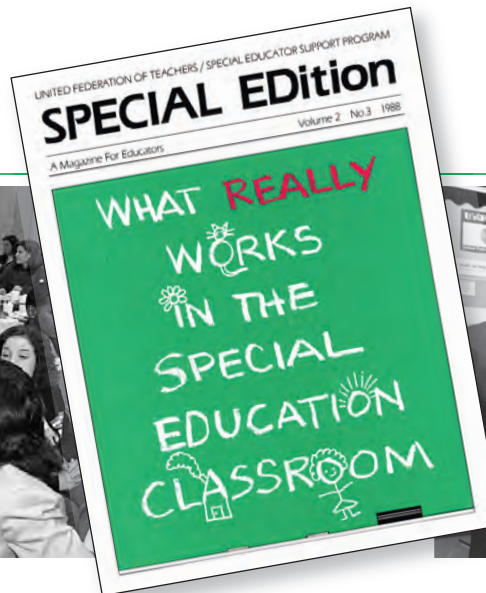
The UFT and NYSUT pushed mentoring, securing \$1.4 million in state money for a pilot Teacher-Mentor Program. This paid for release time so that about 90 first-year probationary elementary teachers could work with some 45 veterans.

Each community school district had to negotiate its program with the union; mentors were selected by a teacher-majority committee; the union – not the principal – chose the teacher members, but the principal could serve as well. This was the basis for a broader Mentor-Teacher Internship Program that later evolved.

At the UFT Spring Conference, Feldman faulted the board for its “unwritten but pervasive” system of automatic student promotion, whether students were prepared for the next grade or not. To assure a strong foundation, she suggested an ungraded “primary unit” where 6- to 8-year-olds could progress at their own pace, advancing in content when ready, not according to an arbitrary schedule.

Interrupted 20 times by applause, Feldman said, “Those who argue that there isn’t enough money are not thinking about the far greater costs ... of maintaining special high school programs for unprepared students who often

Howard Gollub



turn into disrupters, the costs involved in drug programs and – yes – the costs of maintaining prisons.”

Starting in 1987, PS 41 in Brooklyn District 23 would pilot the primary unit under a chapter leader, Michelle Bodden, who would become the union’s elementary VP and, later, leader of the elementary campus of the UFT’s charter school.

Despite its logic and educational merit, the primary unit never caught on. Administrators “never adjusted to the idea of ‘ungraded,’” recalled UFT Special Representative Joseph Colletti. “The bureaucracy kept asking, ‘Yes, we know it’s ungraded, but how many of the second-graders in the ungraded unit took this test?’”

The UFT’s first membership survey asked members about working conditions that June. It found that teachers routinely spent \$300 to \$500 a year of their own money on classroom supplies. The UFT secured City Council funding so teachers could choose their own supplementary instructional supplies. The key word was “supplementary,” for the union insisted that the board provide basic supplies, from books to chalk – a demand later written into the contract. Teacher’s Choice started small, but soon included all teachers, guidance counselors and school secretaries.

A second questionnaire at year’s end for the first time asked members what they wanted in

the next contract. “We are not only looking for an indication of priorities, but for indications ... of possible demands,” said negotiations coordinator Swaim.

Under UFT pressure, the 1986-87 city budget capped third-grade class size at 28, capped the entry-grade classes of intermediate and junior high schools, hired full-time security guards in elementary schools and improved equity in high school course offerings.

Redesign – that is, top-down, board-initiated school redesign – was in the air, which would cause dislocation and pain across the city for years. Instead, the UFT supported an early faculty-run redesign effort for troubled Julia Richman High School, a large comprehensive school in Manhattan. The faculty favored “educational clusters” based on strong existing programs, as well as ongoing tutoring, mandatory summer school for failing students and voluntary summer school for ambitious students.

Feldman said redesign “is off in the right direction when teachers are being consulted at every stage of the planning.” UFT Manhattan HS Representative Nicholas Spilotro added, “If the board can come up with the resources to make redesign work ... [Julia Richman] will undoubtedly be restored to ... [its former] standard of excellence.”

Things didn’t work out, in part because the board didn’t support the staff’s vision. By fall 1993, the board would be

phasing out Julia Richman and installing its own smaller high schools in the building.

Having hired a professional communications staff headed by former *Daily News* education reporter Bert Shanas, Feldman launched a PR blitz to position the UFT as a champion of education and a voice for students. The union’s first radio campaign in October featured 60-second spots about the rigors of teaching, Dial-A-Teacher and UFT college scholarships. Reaching out to parents again, the UFT produced and distributed 1 million copies of a booklet describing the symptoms of drug and alcohol abuse and promoted it on the radio – to the praise of the *Daily News*, *New York Post*, *Amsterdam News* and others.



These initial communications campaigns – later buttressed with print, television and, as they emerged, digital media – were the most obvious facets of an ongoing effort to build a broad alliance to support quality education.

Two events topped the union’s civil rights agenda. In November the UFT continued its long-

standing support for the United Farm Workers union by rallying members to demand the removal of pesticide-tainted California grapes from stores; the union also distributed a related documentary, “The Wrath of Grapes.” UFT and AFT support for the UFW and its dynamic leader, César Chávez, dated from the 1960s. In the summer of 1973, VP Altomare was arrested and jailed for three days with Chávez during a California protest.

In December, the UFT sent a team of union counselors and violence-prevention experts into schools traumatized by the tragic death of Michael Griffith. A group of white residents of Howard Beach, Queens, had attacked the African-American Griffith and two friends as they sought help after their car broke down. The assailants, including three high school students, shouted slurs, then beat and chased them. Griffith was hit by a car while fleeing. The event outraged the city, prompting the UFT to set up a task force to develop programs to ease racial tensions.

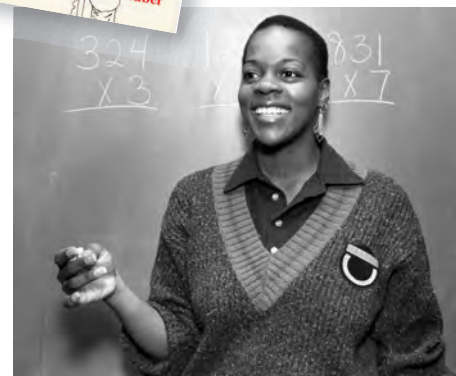
On the medical front, the UFT Welfare Fund added a significant benefit – the optional rider, which retirees can use to defray the cost of prescription drugs. Also, active and retired members and their spouses who are both Fund members won joint dental and optical benefits, meaning that one spouse could get double benefits if the other spouse did not use them.

It was quite a year.

Bert Shanas interviews astronaut Ellen Baker



Michelle Bodden



César Chávez and George Altomare



Furthermore: No sooner had the Federation of Nurses chapter at Lutheran Medical Center set a strike deadline in February than the hospital spread the rumor that RNs with green cards who struck could be deported. The UFT brought in U.S. Senators Alfonse D'Amato and Daniel Patrick Moynihan to debunk that claim. The nurses settled a few hours before the deadline ... The UFT convinced the city to budget \$6 million for a pilot project to improve four middle schools on the state's CAR list of low-performing schools ... Amid a crack epidemic, the UFT in September joined Cuomo's drug education campaign, including a one-day "teach-in" on drug abuse and prevention ... In December, board President Wagner lambasted local school districts as so mired in politics and patronage that education reform couldn't happen ...

1987

John Barrett, teaching at IS 192 in Bronx District 8, became a legend when he was docked pay for punching in late to school. He was one minute late. The penalty was 31 cents.

Feldman made sport of the case, but time clocks were part of the factory model she wanted to demolish. Chancellor Nathan Quinones directed superintendents to work with UFT chapters to find better ways of checking attendance

First up was Clara Barton High School, where pedagogues flipped their old timercards over in the rack to indicate whether they were in or out. "And nothing horrendous happened!" Feldman told the Executive Board. Nevertheless, it took years to eliminate time clocks.

Koch secured a one-shot allocation from the Municipal Assistance Corporation for maintenance, bringing the total stemming from his visit to Seward Park Annex to \$91 mil-

lion. Speaking about Feldman to the press, Koch said, "She knew what she was doing when she took me there."

Feldman commented, "We've been seeking to educate the mayor to the many needs of our schools. What he refers to as 'seeing is believing,' we in education call 'experiential learning,' and we intend to provide more of that."

Feldman next took Koch to an "average" high school, Park West in Manhattan. The faculty asked for better security and more rational procedures to deal with students who assault teachers.

The union took unprecedented action at PERB against the principal of Herbert Lehman High School, charging him with violating labor laws through a pattern of anti-union activities. If a teacher spoke up, the principal would conduct unannounced observations that often led to unsatisfactory ratings. He used students to spy on teachers. An astonishing 125 teachers transferred. Among them was the chapter

leader, who quit after receiving five disciplinary letters and a "U" rating within four months – this after 20 years of a clean record. In 1989 PERB found the principal guilty of anti-union animus. Chancellor Richard Green gave him a "U" rating and empowered a UFT monitor to watch his every move for years.

When the UFT reported on the story in the *New York Teacher* and Vice President John Soldini's newsletter, the principal sued for libel, naming the UFT, as well as Feldman and Soldini personally. The state's highest court eventually tossed out the case.

Feldman spotlighted the needs of 11,000 of the city's most fragile children, "hotel kids," whose homeless families were shunted to run-down hotels by the city. She appealed to a state Senate panel for more funds to help them and tens of thousands of other at-risk students. "Based on enrollment alone, our students would get \$200 million more ... and if district wealth and need were factored in, as they

"We're going to reach out to parents and work with them" on preschool, anti-dropout programs, special education and more.

— Sandra Feldman



should be, that figure would be even greater," she said.

The union protested loudly when, as was their habit each January, high schools laid off 682 new teachers as midterm graduations and dropouts shrank enrollment. What the board called "tipping" made little sense, since the board had to hire thousands of teachers anew each September. Who would want to work in such an unstable job? And if teachers had more than a 15-day break in service, they would lose benefits, seniority and eligibility for the closed exam. Wouldn't it be better to maintain those teachers on payroll, ensuring a pool of experienced teachers for the following fall? They could provide support services, cover classes or cover temporary vacancies while awaiting permanent openings. It would take years to end the practice.

Convinced of the necessity of concerted political action, Feldman named Bronx Borough Representative Mario Raimo as political action director; he served through 1989. He built muscle and sophistication into the union's operations, such as by adding dedi-

cated phone lines for get-out-the-vote calls to members at headquarters and borough offices.

Federal law limits what unions can spend on dues-funded political activities, so the UFT created COPE, a political action committee financed with voluntary contributions. Raimo was instrumental in moving COPE contributions to payroll deduction. He also was key to developing NYSUT's Committee of 100 – originally 100 NYSUT members from every Assembly and Senate district who lobbied legislators together, making it clear that teachers and other NYSUT members were part of a statewide force. (That committee retains the same name, but routinely fields 500 to 600 members.)

One fruit of political action during that time was passage of a law that strengthened a basic pension right – if you've earned it, it's yours, even if you've been dismissed on charges. The law's implications are more significant than it might appear, for it blocked attempts – such as in the old Condon-Wadlin Act – to strip strikers of their pensions.

The UFT clinched an on-time, three-year contract ending with a \$25,000 to \$50,000 salary range made possible by Cuomo's Excellence in Teaching funds.

"This contract, the best we've had since 1969, finally makes us competitive with the salaries paid to teachers in nearby school districts," Feldman said. "It is a contract that respects both the needs of our teachers and the

students they teach."

There were similar raises for functional chapters and, in a first, paraprofessionals gained a longevity raise. Teachers in non-Title I elementary schools got one prep period a day instead of two a week. There were better transfer, excessing and class-coverage rules, less cafeteria duty for secondary teachers and an expedited disciplinary procedure for pedagogues.

Contractual provisions advanced teacher professionalism, which board President Wagner said placed the city at the head of the education reform movement. They:

- Allowed a "school-based option" (SBO), so a school's staff and administration could improve education by modifying contractual and board rules governing class size, rotation of assignments or classes, teacher schedules and rotation of paid coverages.
- Created "professional conciliation," so teachers could challenge administrators' educational decisions in matters like grading policy, textbook selection and program scheduling.
- Improved new-teacher training, which would occur during the

school day with peer mentors, among other changes.

- Launched the confidential and voluntary Peer Intervention Program. Teacher "interveners" would help struggling tenured colleagues. If classroom performance didn't improve, PIP counseled teachers to leave teaching. Disciplinary action was stayed during the intervention and intervenors could not be called as witnesses if the principal pursued dismissal.

At the press conference announcing the contract, a reporter asked Feldman, "Sandy, is there anything you wanted that you didn't get?"

Before she could answer, Koch, his eyes gazing skyward, shouted, "The moon!"

Feldman later told members that "almost every major gain we achieved ... was something you asked us to try to get" in the contract survey.

That included one change that got no publicity: On the last day of school, pedagogues now would get five postdated salary checks running from the end of June to the end of August. Previously, teachers received a July check at the end of school and waited until September for their August check. The advent of direct deposit later ended the need for checks.

Asbestos bedeviled the opening of school that fall. The UFT commissioned a study by the independent New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health. It found that three-

UFT Focus on: Safety and Discipline

The HomeTeam

A Newsletter from the UFT to Families of New York City Schoolchildren

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SCHOOL SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE

Join a few months ago, amidst news about violence, discipline schools was making big headlines. "Zero-tolerance" discipline policies were being implemented in schools across the country. The message was to "lock down" the school environment and bring discipline to bear on students. In the spotlight of the issue, the danger is that safety and discipline will go hand in hand. This special feature presents and explains the ways that schools can be safe and ready for children to focus on learning. Instead, we can take the greater atmosphere as an opportunity to assess what steps schools can take to improve safety and discipline and as a chance to engage students with a common goal.

What are the facts?

With the data collected by the UFT about about 40 percent of the incidents about the discipline of students in the city from 2001-2002, 2002-2003, the numbers also show that 17 percent of schools account for the vast majority of these incidents. The numbers suggest the school with the most incidents are not necessarily the largest schools. In fact, the numbers suggest that only a small percentage of schools account for most of these incidents.

Unfortunately, the Department of Education (DOE) has not been willing to share the numbers. However, we know what we see for ourselves in our own schools. We know that some schools have a higher rate of incidents. We know that some schools have a higher rate of incidents. We know that some schools have a higher rate of incidents.

What you can do:

- Stay involved in your child's school. Stay involved in your child's school.
- Stay involved in your child's school. Stay involved in your child's school.
- Stay involved in your child's school. Stay involved in your child's school.

The keys to safe and orderly schools

Research shows that effective schools have several key characteristics that contribute to their success. These characteristics include high expectations for all students, a strong focus on learning, and a positive school culture. Effective schools also have a strong focus on learning, and a positive school culture.

Research: School culture that emphasizes everyone's right to succeed with courage and confidence, consistent communication of positive messages, and respect for the needs of all the effects. Professional development, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Character development: Schools that emphasize character development, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Community involvement: Schools that emphasize community involvement, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Parent involvement: Schools that emphasize parent involvement, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Teacher involvement: Schools that emphasize teacher involvement, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Student involvement: Schools that emphasize student involvement, such as the ongoing professional learning at each school New York schools must have. It is a key to success in creating a safe and positive learning environment for all students.

Parental Involvement in Schools: Parents play a vital role in their child's education. They should be actively involved in their child's school, attending meetings, conferences, and other events. They should also be involved in their child's learning at home.

Teacher Involvement in Schools: Teachers are the backbone of the school system. They should be actively involved in their school, attending meetings, conferences, and other events. They should also be involved in their students' learning.

Student Involvement in Schools: Students are the future of our society. They should be actively involved in their school, attending meetings, conferences, and other events. They should also be involved in their own learning.

Community Involvement in Schools: The community plays a vital role in the success of our schools. They should be actively involved in their school, attending meetings, conferences, and other events. They should also be involved in their community's well-being.

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THE PEER INTERVENTION PROGRAM

TEACHER-TO-TEACHER HELP

THIS PROGRAM GIVES TEACHERS THE CHANCE TO BEHOLD TO TAKE CHARGE OF THEIR OWN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ADDRESS PROFESSIONAL ISSUES -- TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WHAT WE ARE REALLY ABOUT IS PROVIDING THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION FOR THE KIDS OF NEW YORK CITY.

THIRD EDITION



quarters of the 36 buildings surveyed posed serious asbestos problems and that all of the schools had some health and safety issue. The union demanded improvements.

Urged on by UFT lobbying, Gov. Cuomo and the Legislature enacted a record increase in school aid, including more Excellence in Teaching salary support. The budget allocated \$34 million to bring students with deficiencies up to grade level, bolster attendance and dropout prevention, help students learn English and more.

On Capitol Hill, the union urged two House committees to increase federal aid for disadvantaged students, particularly for school-wide projects that could upgrade entire schools and provide flexibility in how the money was used. (Schools where a majority of teachers agreed could use Title I to design educational programs to help all disadvantaged students, rather than direct funds to just some of them.) Congress agreed and, through its leverage, the UFT assured that schoolwide Title I funds brought real improvement.

Furthermore: With a boost from the Carnegie Foundation, the AFT helped found the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, embodying a notion which Shanker had championed since 1985. For the first time it established “what a teacher should know ... and the best way to measure that knowledge,” Shanker said. The UFT contract later made nationally certified teachers

eligible for an existing salary differential ... At the behest of Vocational VP Edwin Espaillet, the UFT in March sponsored a two-day conference on the dangers of asbestos in automobile brakes and clutches for 100 automotive trades teachers, the first training of its kind in the nation ... At the Spring Conference in May, Feldman proposed a High School for Teaching geared to growing the city’s own teachers. Board President Wagner agreed and within months a union-board design team was working toward a September 1988 launch ... Over the summer, the Legislature included TPDs in the teacher-mentor program, making them eligible for the same on-the-job coaching as other new teachers ... Using corporate grants, the UFT in September placed 9,000 posters in subways to promote Dial-A-Teacher, then staffed by 45 teachers and serving the 600 city elementary schools, as well as older students. For Open School Week a month later, the union produced and distributed 1 million copies of a new brochure for parents on how to visit a school and promoted the event (which the board did not) with a radio campaign in English and Spanish. The union later issued the booklet in additional languages, from Chinese to Haitian-Creole to Russian ...

Edwin Espaillet



1988

With the system’s infrastructure deteriorating because of long-deferred maintenance, the union pressed Albany for construction funding. “Our school buildings are falling apart,” Pappas testified. “The hazards ... are serious and unacceptable. Many schools are bursting at the seams, while classes meet in converted closets and bathrooms.”

This helped set up a stunning union coup that transformed the way schools were built and refurbished. The Legislature created the independent School Construction Authority (SCA), initially to build 40 new schools and repair 600 others. The Municipal Assistance Corporation released \$600 million for school construction.

Feldman, said *The Times*, “was widely credited with having won the support of the major labor unions for the bill.” It exempted the SCA from the costly and inefficient Wicks Law, which required separate contracts for different trades, rather than a general contractor, in public construction.

Construction unions had fought to retain Wicks, seeing more jobs. But Feldman and Republican Sen. Roy Goodman worked out a deal to encourage union labor on school projects, and Cuomo promised to refrain from seeking

Subway poster reaching out to parents through Dial-A-Teacher

to repeal Wicks for other state construction for five years. With that, Senate Majority Leader Warren Anderson let the bill go forward.

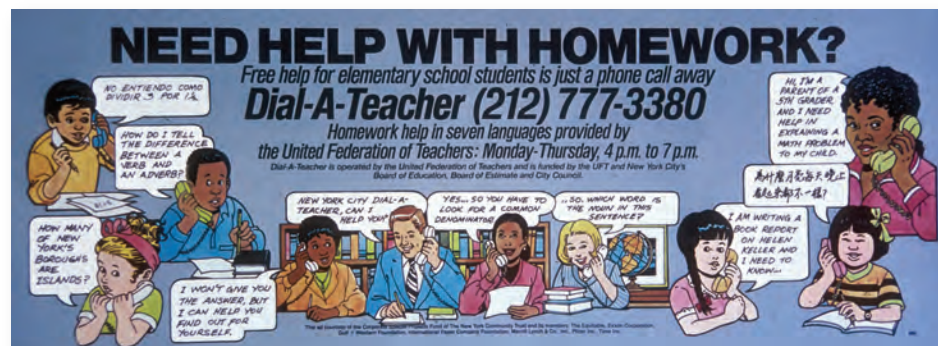
“I’m looking forward to new schools with clean halls and good lighting,” said Feldman. “Six months ago there wasn’t even hope.”

Koch strove to gain control of the school system, but the Senate had already said “no” by the time scandals broke in Bronx Districts 9 and 12, implicating their school boards in drugs, theft and extortion.

After the new chancellor, Richard R. Green, pledged to protect whistleblowers, similar reports flooded in from across the city. The board’s inspector general charged, for example, that Manhattan District 4 board members paid personal expenses from secret bank accounts.

Koch asked former prosecutor James F. Gill to investigate. In 1989 the Gill Commission revealed that Queens District 27 Superintendent Coleman Genn had secretly recorded board members discussing creating unnecessary jobs and considering race, religion and political favors in hiring.

The UFT’s campaign to professionalize teaching found an ally in Green. The UFT had helped him replicate Dial-A-Teacher in Minneapolis when he was superintendent there. In his inaugural speech in March, he urged substantial reform and cited the teacher shortage. “Unless we begin to honor those who have dedicated their lives to building the next gener-

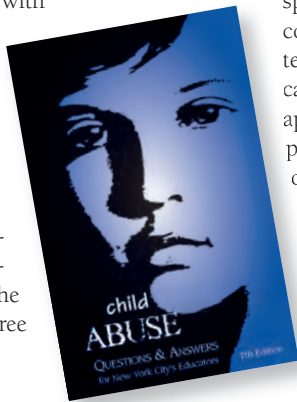


ation ... we cannot survive as a community.” He favored teachers and principals sharing decision-making. He called for treating teachers with respect. The school system was “too resistant ... too complex ... too rigid” to deliver services effectively, he said.

Even before, there was some movement toward shared decision-making. For example, the staff of Charles Evans Hughes High School for the Humanities had reorganized the school, redesigned its curriculum and gotten permission to help pick a new principal, who then invited staff to help choose an assistant principal. Such participation wasn’t yet a right, but it was a start.

There had been a bruising battle in 1987 over the board’s plan to spin off special education to the districts, a move affecting 90,000 vulnerable students and 10,000 wary staff. The UFT had joined a lawsuit challenging decentralization, and then, with the board and other plaintiffs, collaboratively worked out a mechanism to ensure that the spin-off safeguarded services for children.

Forty board monitors and three UFT liaisons would check the implementation of three



union-backed educational initiatives: Project Child (early intervention for kindergarten and first grade); services for students in decentralized special education; and basic school staffing, a City Council program to rebuild basic staff development, guidance, library, supervision, attendance and instructional services that had been lost in the fiscal crisis.

The UFT’s goals were simple: assuring that students continued to get services; enforcing the contract’s limits on the number of mainstreamed children per class and period; insisting that schools provide adequate time for general and special education teachers to plan and consult; and making sure that districts did not divert funds from special education.

But in 1988, a UFT survey of members affected by the decentralization of special education found inadequate, inappropriate or nonexistent supplies; inappropriate workspaces and poor conditions; lack of time to consult with colleagues about students and teaching strategies; excessive paperwork; high caseloads for related service providers; lack of appropriate (especially bilingual) service providers; and insufficient professional development.

Child abuse hit the headlines with the battering death of 6-year-old Lisa Steinberg by the man who had informally adopted her. Charles Schonhaut, the acting chancellor between Quinones and Green, and the UFT

launched separate campaigns to train school staffs about how to spot and report signs of abuse. Feldman named a UFT task force led by District Representative Joan Goodman. It devised a two-hour training course that was taken by thousands of members and became the model for a subsequently mandated state licensing requirement.

Meanwhile, the board expanded the pilot mentoring program that it and the UFT had created to all new uncertified teachers. The UFT’s Ann Rosen, who ran the pilot with two board staffers, said the initiative proved to have “as much value to the mentor as to the intern in terms of mutually helpful professional development. The overwhelming majority of mentors want to mentor again.”

One result, the board found, was higher reading and math scores for the students of teacher-interns than for those of nonparticipating new teachers. Rosen built the UFT’s certification and licensing support system, which still guides new teachers in earning their credentials. One of her popular innovations was a graphic “subway map” that helped many new teachers visualize

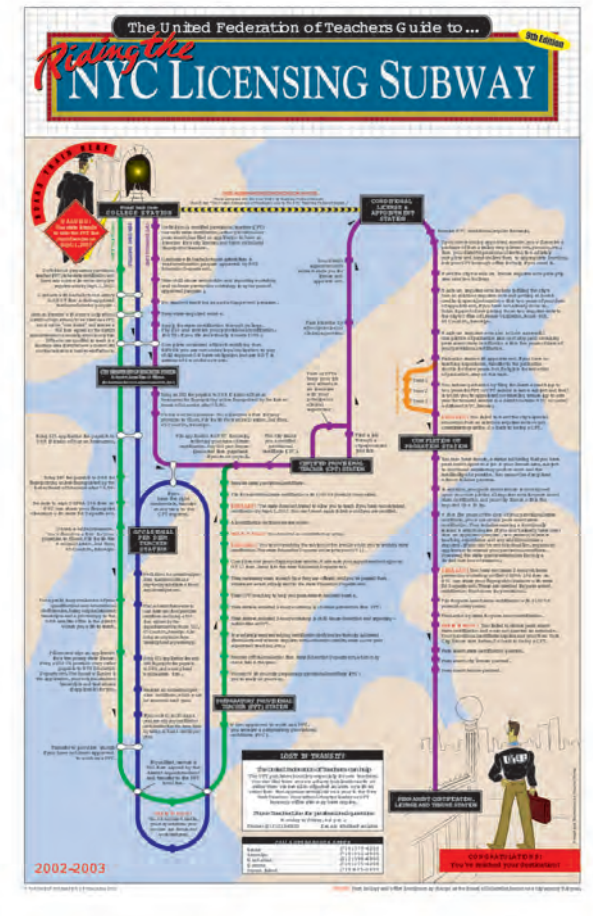
the often baffling process of certification and licensure.

Improving school safety – always on the union’s mind – hit the headlines when four teachers were hurt during one week in May. A mugger knifed an elementary teacher more than a dozen times in a lavatory. A student, his brother and sister beat another teacher. A firecracker thrown into a classroom damaged a teacher’s hand.

And an intruder smashed physical education teacher Gary Smith in the head with a bat as he umpired an extracurricular softball game. Smith, of Bronx IS 166, lost an eye and suf-

Ann Rosen

“I’m looking forward to new schools with clean halls and good lighting,” said Feldman. “Six months ago there wasn’t even hope.”



ferred lasting problems with balance and stamina. The board at first refused to pay \$20,000 of his medical bills that were not covered by insurance, arguing that the attack happened off school grounds. The UFT volunteered to pay, then, working with Green, changed the policy to better protect school employees who are assaulted on the job.

As it has with countless injured members, the UFT's Victim Support Program worked closely with Smith, providing psychological counseling and help with the bureaucracy. Smith could not return to teaching, but he joined the program's staff to help other members who were crime victims.

The board reported 1,322 assaults in 1985-86 and 969 to that point in 1986. The crime wave partly reflected the crack cocaine epidemic that ripped through the nation's cities between 1984 and 1990, and sometimes the easy availability of guns.

In June, the UFT, board and mayor agreed to a sweeping safety plan with more metal detectors and electronic door locks, silent buzzers and classroom phones or intercoms, and expulsion of student assailants to alternate sites. They agreed to seek a law to upgrade assaults against school employees from a misdemeanor to a felony, which UFT political action helped secure. The plan's announcement came

on a day when a student punched a high school teacher in the face and a bullet grazed an elementary teacher as she herded students away from a gunfight in the street.

In August Green backed away from airport-style metal detectors because of the \$9 million cost, but sent roving crews with hand-held detectors. In September, he required drug education for all K-12 students. And after a UFT-requested study, in November he banned beepers, the new communications device for drug dealers – and the youngsters they sometimes employed. (This was before cell phones were common.)

On the nursing front, the Federation of Nurses/UFT was thwarted in a hard-fought run

to organize the nurses at Victory Memorial Hospital in Brooklyn.

At Lutheran Medical Center, registered nurses struck for four days in February and March over understaffing and mandatory overtime. They returned to work with 8 percent raises in each of two years and additional pay for nursing-shortage areas. The pact did not end mandatory overtime, which reflected a nursing shortage, but for the first time nurses gained a say in finding solutions. Among them was "incentive" pay beyond the standard overtime rate to attract volunteers to cover those tours.

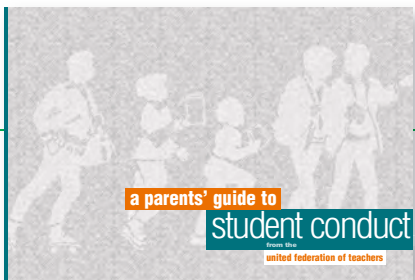
The contract's most important creation was perhaps a three-part professional policy review panel, where nurses would sit as equals with physicians and administrators and share in hospital decision-making. "This contract will be a prototype for other medical facilities throughout the nation where nurses are working horrendous hours due to shortages," Feldman said.

Furthermore: VP Abe Levine in February reported high compliance with class-size caps in grades 1-3 where space permitted; elsewhere, the board added a half-time para or an extra teacher. "Reduction of class size is a major factor ... in the improvement of education for the children. We would like to see the [capping] program extended to kindergarten and the upper grades," Levine said ... UFT Secretary George Fesko sped the long-de-

layed placement of thousands of teachers on the right salary step or differential by convincing the board to accept student transcripts instead of waiting for official ones from colleges ... The union in April negotiated a seniority transfer plan which prevented principals from hiding vacancies to fill with their own picks, as they had done for years; the plan reserved some vacancies for racial balance ... In May, the union and board hammered out a Basic School Staffing, which mandated that administrators consult with the UFT as they restored essential services ...

The union insisted on the closure of two more schools over sloppy asbestos abatement in April ... To lessen the teacher shortage, a task force named by board President Wagner recommended improving working conditions, training and recognition of teachers and requiring school-based planning teams of parents, teachers, students, administrators, among other suggestions ... Koch's operating budget proposal in May preserved funds for schools while cutting most other agencies. His capital plan sought to double spending to \$5.2 billion over 10 years; Pappas said rebuilding schools would take \$8 billion ... At the Spring Conference, Feldman called for a national program to rebuild urban schools ...

Weighing in on a national debate, the Executive Board opposed the conservative drive for "English Only" instruction in favor of "English Plus," which promoted English-language literacy and intergroup harmony ... The UFT's Dial-A-Teacher hosted its



first convention for some 2,000 parents in June; it focused on summer reading and learning activities. This became an annual event ... In November Green suspended Bronx District 9's board in a drug and corruption scandal ... A month later Koch called for changing tenure rules, citing a crack-using principal. "It wasn't tenure that got arrested," replied Ted Ellsberg, president of the principals' union, the Council of Supervisors and Administrators ...

1989

With some UFT-endorsed community school board members snared in scandal, the union changed course. It would endorse fewer candidates and run slates in just 15 districts in May.

Feldman said the union made "32 separate decisions" based "on each district's stand on issues vital to education and whether our involvement would help. We made a conscious effort to support as many parents and grandparents as possible. We want board members whose agenda is education and children."

The Delegate Assembly endorsed 157 candidates, including 92 parents or grandparents; 82 were minorities and 104 had never been on a board. The union stayed away from three tarnished districts. Voter turnout was the lowest ever – just 6 percent – with only 180,377 people casting ballots. Eighty union-backed candidates were elected.

Chancellor Green died in an asthma attack in late May, stalling his ambitious reform agenda, which the UFT had helped develop. Deputy Chancellor Bernard Mecklowitz became caretaker.

In late August, Yusuf Hawkins, an African-American junior high student, was shot dead when he ventured into the white Brooklyn area of Bensonhurst. The resulting anger factored in

Koch's loss to Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins in the Democratic primary. The UFT endorsed Dinkins in the general election – its first mayoral endorsement since 1981. With the union's get-out-the-vote telephone operation going full blast, he defeated Rudolph Giuliani to become the city's first African-American mayor.

In response to Hawkins' murder, the board cranked up efforts to teach "tolerance," as it was called. The board rushed special lesson plans into schools in September to frame discussions about racism – a prelude to a long-developing multicultural curriculum that launched in December; for the first time, it melded race and ethnicity into content areas, rather than treating them as stand-alone concepts. Meanwhile, the UFT sent 9,000 members to diversity training by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

"We ran a contest for teacher-made materials on intergroup relations," Feldman said. "It doesn't substitute for the rest of society, but it certainly is helpful."

The Peer Intervention Program proved its worth in its first year: 43 tenured teachers successfully completed intervention and were back in the classroom; 6 transferred to other positions, such as paraprofessional; five took leaves or sabbaticals to look for other work; 2 retired; 1 was suspended for incompetence. With normal discharge costing \$80,000 to

\$100,000, PIP coordinator Clare Cohen said, "Spending the money instead to make 25 or 30 teachers better is good dollars and cents."

The year ended in more violence. A student at a Bronx high school without metal detectors, Alfred E. Smith, was killed while handing a gun to another student. Earlier, students were shot to death outside Prospect Heights and Bayside high schools.

With informal union surveys showing parents and students backed metal detectors, Feldman once again demanded that the board put them in every high school that requested them. "If we don't take these very strong steps, we're all going to be spending much more time attending the funerals of children," she said. Metal detectors spread.

Furthermore: *The board master plan announced in January called for \$15 billion for school construction, including 189 new schools and repair of most of the others ... Green said he would reassign 348 headquarters workers to districts and eliminate 214 unfilled slots ... There were indictments in Bronx Districts 9 and 12 ...*



George Fesko



OUR HEROES!

New York's Teachers and Paraprofessionals



Rose Bradley
Teacher
PS 95, Brooklyn



Dorothy Byrd
Paraprofessional
PS 95, Brooklyn



Angela Damato
Teacher
PS 91, Queens



India Fishon
Paraprofessional
PS 95, Brooklyn



Diane Freedman
Teacher
PS 95, Brooklyn



Fred Gelfand
Teacher
PS 91, Queens

“The school-children... had been trapped in absolute coffin-like darkness for nearly five hours... ‘The several teachers who maintained composure and control through the hours of desperate waiting demonstrated their own heroism,’ Lieutenant Sherwood said.”

(The New York Times, Feb. 28, 1993)



Shirley Jahrs
Paraprofessional
PS 95, Brooklyn



Lisa Perri
Teacher
PS 95, Brooklyn



Rosemarie Russo
Teacher
PS 95, Brooklyn



Bernadette Samuels
Teacher
PS 191, Queens



Carol Susi
Teacher
PS 191, Queens



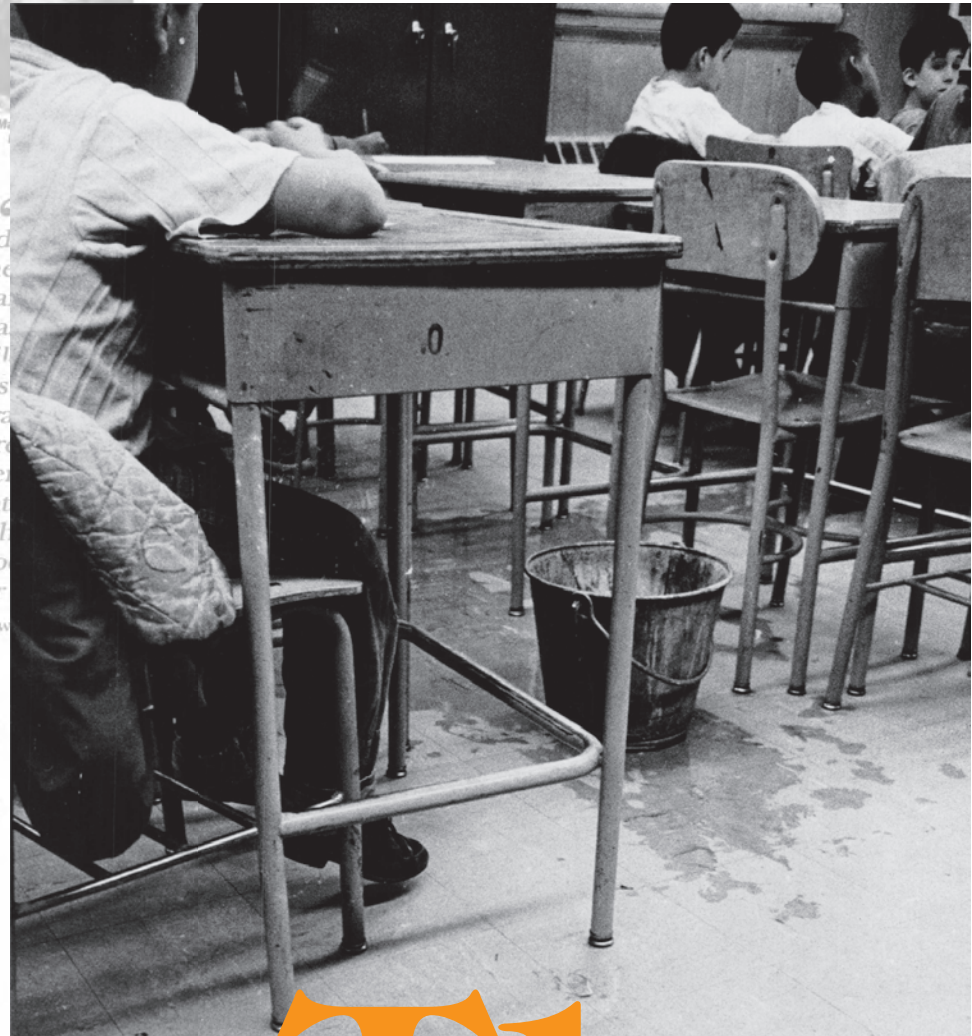
Anna Marie Tesoriero
Teacher
PS 95, Brooklyn



Lydia Traverso
Paraprofessional
PS 95, Brooklyn

“... child returned... it was... Mothers buses, several people cheered children... we their parents Parents I teachers, to them for their

(New York News)



When the going got tough at the Twin Towers, New York City's teachers and paraprofessionals did what they always do—came through for the kids. Some 200 children from three elementary schools were visiting the Twin Towers that day. Many were caught in elevators, others on the 107th floor observation deck. Working with parents, our teachers and paraprofessionals kept the frightened children calm hour after grueling hour, and then, with the help of brave police and firefighters, led them to safety.

The UFT joins parents throughout the city in thanking our dedicated teachers and paraprofessionals for coming through as always.

The



United Federation of Teachers
260 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010
Sandra Feldman, President

The UFT continued striving to professionalize teaching during the 1990s. Sandy Feldman won a contract studded with 100 education reforms, and then her successor, Randi Weingarten, led the charge. But the decade was dominated by a seemingly never-ending fight to avert layoffs and blunt budget cuts.

The union's unexpected endorsement of David Dinkins had been critical to his victory, but his single term was marked by a national recession and budget deficits.

His successor, Rudy Giuliani, was a constant and vicious critic of the public school system. He drove away two promising schools chancellors and sought to divert public dollars into vouchers for private and religious school students. He infamously said he wanted to "blow up" the Board of Education. And he and a new governor, George Pataki, consciously cut both programs and taxes to honor campaign promises – to "starve the beast," as neoconservatives called it.



1990s

FELDMAN: LET'S END SOCIAL PROMOTIONS

2,000 hear call to ensure reading mastery in early grades

Spring Education Conference '97

After the 1990-91 recession and President Reagan's \$125 billion bailout of 750 failed savings and loan associations shriveled federal discretionary spending, the economy took off. The Dow Jones average soared from 3,000 in April 1991 to 11,400 by decade's end.

After President Bill Clinton lost his early health care fight, he declared the era of Big Government over, joining Republicans to slim the work force and cut welfare and other programs. The United States marked its first surplus in 30 years.

The '90s saw the advent of for-profit school-operating companies, led by the Edison Project, whose founder expounded on his vision to a skeptical UFT leadership. Nationwide, conservatives pressured districts to privatize part or all of their operations, which put pressure on the New York City school system, as well.

The 1990s also saw rapid growth of two transformative technologies – cell phones and the Internet – and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

1990

The UFT found an often willing partner in Chancellor Joseph Fernandez. He had introduced school-based management/shared decision-making to Miami-Dade's schools and intended to do the same in New York City. A Harlem native who quit high school to join the Air Force, he came in pledging to abolish the Board of Examiners and to shake up failing schools, including seeking the power to transfer principals and to reject local boards' choices for district superintendent. Even before he took office in January, he said he would cut 200 headquarters jobs to free more than \$15 million for the classroom.

All this was right in line with Feldman's aim to professionalize teaching. On his first day at work, she took him to PS 41 in Brownsville, one of the few schools with school-based management/shared decision-making. For three years Principal Herbert Ross and a committee of six teachers, two administrators and two parents had collaboratively run the school.

Fernandez soon picked 80 schools at all levels that were willing to try collaborative management. It would mean hours more work for teachers, parents and administrators, but, as Feldman wrote, "Every independent poll of

teachers indicates their strong desire for greater educational decision-making authority ... If it were up to the teachers alone, the number of schools applying easily would have tripled."

In October the UFT, Mayor Dinkins and the Board of Education agreed on a one-year contract that raised salaries by 5.5 percent. It also spelled out how school-based management/shared decision-making would work.

In all, the contract included some 100 improvements to working conditions and professional relationships. For example, no longer could principals change a student's grade without giving the teacher a written explanation. Teachers could choose the format of their lesson plans, no longer bound by a principal's whim, and principals could no longer routinely collect and judge them. It gave new teachers more time to prepare by exempting them from some administrative assignments. And it eased teacher transfers among schools.

And, in a mutual effort to speed the discipline or dismissal of teachers, the union and the board agreed to binding arbitration by a single arbitrator, instead of a panel of three, in most cases.

Albany gave the chancellor the power he sought to transfer principals among schools.

He and the UFT then teamed up to topple the Board of Examiners. Ninety-two years before, the Examiners' written and oral tests had assured quality and protected against fa-

voritism and spoils-system politics. Now 12,000 of the city's 64,000 teachers worked with temporary credentials, sometimes waiting years for license exams and licenses. Meanwhile, the state had installed its own certification system, so incoming New York City teachers had to take two sets of duplicative exams.

Under the new system, the Board of Education would interview candidates, but no longer require a written city test. It took years to work out the kinks, but eventually life became easier for recruits.

The Federation of Nurses waged a bitter battle against the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, which sought to undermine the contract with staff RNs by hiring only per-diem employees – and trying to put all of the staffers



NEW YORK POST

The way New York City treats its schoolchildren and teachers is a

SHAME

QUALITY EDUCATION PAYS FOR ITSELF

ENSURE NEW YORK'S FUTURE: INVEST IN ITS EDUCATORS!

FIGHT SCHOOL DECAY: NEGOTIATE TODAY!

UFT
United Federation of Teachers
200 West Avenue South, New York, NY 10011

You can tell it all about a government by the choices it makes in tough times. And the choices they are making now seem a question about whether it is truly committed to education — or just paying lip service to our children's right to a decent education.

Over the past few years, the schools budget has been slashed by three-quarters of a billion dollars. The city has sold off school buildings to raise money to pay for the city's debt. The city's financial crisis has led to the loss of thousands of jobs — the very people who have built up schools together during the worst years. The teachers' contract expired on October 1 last year. The city has refused to negotiate a new contract. Teachers are on strike.

Striking in New York is a tough job, one that the UFT is now doing a commendable job of doing. Children are not in a 20% over budget for 17 months. Classrooms are crowded. Conditions are poor — even the garbage is messy. There aren't enough books and supplies.

The garbage would be even worse if teachers didn't have the very best union of their own. Every year, we negotiate better contracts.

New York's schools are a national model. Our success is due to the hard work of our teachers. And, despite all the obstacles, they're accepting. Attending to special last year our high school graduates were more than \$1.5 million in college scholarships.

Now it's time for the UFT to make an equal investment in the people who are making the difference in our city. It's time to negotiate the future of our city.

on per-diem lines. The Federation headed to the National Labor Relations Board, which eventually ruled in the union's favor. A contract was a contract.

The end result was the inclusion of per-diem nurses in the contract. The Federation shaped meaningful programs for them, as well as bonuses and the opportunity to purchase health benefits.

1991

The fiscal roof caved in barely three months after the union signed its contract. The city was in trouble and then the state suddenly cut aid in the middle of the school year. The UFT faced up to 3,500 layoffs in January.

To save the jobs of newer colleagues, the UFT renegotiated a portion of the contract, deferring \$40 million of their wages for four years. In essence, members voted to lend the city 1 to 1.5 percent of their paychecks, up to \$590 for teachers and \$175 for paraprofessionals, deducted over 10 paychecks. They would be repaid in two payments, one in 1995, the other in 1996, with 9 percent interest that started accruing in September 1995.

"We're a union, and what's a union about except taking care of its own members?" Vincent Gaglione, a teacher at PS 192 in Manhattan, told *The Times*; he later became a UFT borough representative.

What clinched the deal was a city guarantee barring the layoff of any UFT member; the Delegate Assembly had earlier rejected a proposal lacking this guarantee.

There were several sweeteners, particularly the end of "tipping," which saw high school teachers hired in September facing lay-off in January, when their schools reorganized for the

spring term. With lower registers due to mid-year graduation, dropouts and other causes, high schools often needed fewer teachers. These laid-off teachers often headed to other school systems, so the Board of Education lost what it had invested in recruiting and training them.

Years before, then-high school VP George Altomare won a contractual provision that allowed spring-only, half-year sabbaticals for tenured high school teachers with seven years of service. When veterans exercised this option, it created vacancies for newer teachers, but the school system's inability to think creatively kept a more reliable solution out of reach.

Now high school VP John Soldini convinced the board to try a different approach. "Tipped" teachers would become substitutes, staying on the payroll and filling in when other teachers were absent, or being used to reduce class size or to provide supplementary services. In practice, soon after the spring term began, most were absorbed into vacancies.

Another sweetener was the addition of a one-week midwinter vacation, which included existing days off for Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays; as tradeoff, members agreed to work on three days they previously had off, like Election Day. Some parents objected, because it created new child-care problems, but the union maintained that this put the city on

a par with most competing suburbs, which already had this week off.

"We have made it patently clear that we care about our students and we care about our schools, and now it is up to the government to show that it cares," Feldman said at a news conference after the union accepted the pact. She argued that once more schools had been asked to absorb disproportionate cuts. "We have done, we think, a lot more than our share."

Gaining more breathing room, Fernandez got the Legislature to postpone \$60 million of its budget cut until September, when it could be spread over a full school year.

But the economy soured even more and in March Dinkins asked for givebacks in health insurance and other items. "Absolutely no givebacks," Feldman said. "We are not going to open these contracts again."

The contract expired in September, and by November the UFT was on the air with a hard-hitting radio campaign featuring teachers who had quit or were thinking of doing so. "I taught in New York City public schools for five years," said Debra Grinage. "I left two years ago to teach in Nassau County ... The hardest thing for me to do was to leave the children in my community ... [But] the conditions and the salary that were offered to me on Long Island were far superior." She ended with a plea "to pay your teachers."



Sandy Feldman at City Hall



1991 saw the founding of the Edison Project, the most prominent of the early for-profit companies entering the “education business.” Conservatives from Washington on down embraced these companies, loudly championing the privatization of public education. Pressure mounted on public schools.

Feldman invited Edison founder Christopher Whittle to speak at a UFT leadership retreat in 1994. With a laptop computer (then a rarity) on a lectern, he spoke of building a nationwide chain of for-profit schools which would out-perform public schools using technology, management and research-based educational approaches. He said this could be done at a profit on a regular public school budget.

Many in the audience questioned whether this was possible.

Edison’s chain never materialized. There was a backlash against the poor track record of early for-profit operators who didn’t provide the supports needed by students who faced social and educational problems. Edison switched to fee-based contracts and became the nation’s largest for-profit manager of public schools. (By 2010, for-profit education companies had shifted their emphasis to managing charter schools.)

In 2000 the American Federation of Teachers analyzed test scores of Edison’s 57,000 students nationwide. (Coincidentally or not, the

Board of Education was considering Edison and three other for-profit companies to convert some of the poorest-performing schools into charters.)

People should “understand that Edison schools are not doing better than comparable public schools that use proven programs,” said Feldman, then AFT president. The union found similar performance when it compared each Edison school with a traditional school serving similar students. Edison objected, comparing each school to itself and pointing to higher scores after it took over most of them. “The reality,” said Feldman, “is that, like many schools, Edison has had its struggles raising student achievement.”



1992

City finances sagged. In January Mayor Dinkins handed the Board of Education a \$40 million midyear cut on top of the \$430 million it had lost the previous July 1.

When Fernandez asked the UFT to help local districts make cuts, Feldman refused, writing back: “I’ve directed all UFT district representatives not to cooperate with efforts to identify any further school-based services to be eliminated. They also will refuse to sign off on any plans ... that include further loss of classroom support services to children.”

There were 25,000 more students citywide than the year before, but there were fewer teachers. Classes zoomed to 50 percent over the state average size. Books and materials were scant, guidance caseloads enormous, schools jammed and decrepit. “We cannot countenance any further deterioration of educational quality,” Feldman wrote Fernandez. She suggested that the board cut headquarters and district office operations.

For FY 1993, Dinkins sought to divert \$67 million in state education aid for other purposes. Feldman snubbed one of his campaign fundraisers, saying she was reconsidering support of his re-election bid.

When the state eliminated Excellence in

Teaching salary support, Dinkins scrounged for money to maintain teacher salaries. (The expired contract stayed in force under a Taylor Law amendment, which continues existing public sector contracts until replaced by new ones, unless the employees strike.)

UFT members picketed 100 schools on the opening day of school in September. *The New York Times* noted that the UFT, “with its 110,000 hard-campaigning members,” had been Dinkins’ most crucial supporter in the 1989 election, but now Feldman was questioning his commitment to education. “I feel angry at him,” she told *The Times*. “I don’t feel this has anything to do with personality. This is all about whether the mayor, not the man, is making decisions that establish positions in contradiction to the way he presented himself as a candidate.” Re-endorsement in 1993 hung in the balance.

Hoping to restart contract talks, she suggested a higher salary line for master teachers chosen in a rigorous, impartial process modeled on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which Shanker had helped create in 1987. Her idea wasn’t adopted, but the UFT began supporting teachers who undertake the year-long national certification process. Starting with the 1996 contract, NBPTS-certified teachers earn the previously existing salary differential for a master’s degree plus 30 credits.



In September, hysteria ripped through schools over lead paint. Though banned since 1978 because it is hazardous to young children, lead paint remained in countless schools. In some it was peeling, in others it had been pulverized into dust by windows being raised and lowered. The union demanded inspections and cleanups. Pappas and his Health and Safety Committee calmed the anxieties of members and the public.

Once more the UFT championed human rights. Queens District 24's board rejected "Children of the Rainbow," an elementary curriculum about tolerance that included gays, lesbians and people with AIDS. Four other districts rejected just the sections dealing with homosexuality.

When it was still rare for gays to be "out" in any profession, two teachers from Queens District 24, Daniel Dromm and Kim Kreicker, courageously spoke up at a news conference with Feldman. "Gay people throughout the city are no longer living in the closet," said Dromm, a fourth-grade teacher at PS 199 in Sunnyside with 15 years in the classroom. He said some of his pupils had gay or lesbian parents; others, even at an early age, showed bias, so they needed the curriculum. (In 2009 Dromm unseated an incumbent and won election to the City Council with 75 percent of the vote in the same area.)

LEAD
STRAIGHT TALK
FROM THE UFT

Furthermore: *Driving back to her school from a reading workshop in January, Bronx JHS 22 teacher Audrey Chasen was killed in a crossfire on the street, prompting a torrent of concern about safety in and around schools ... Brooklyn PS 15 principal Patrick Daley was shot dead when he walked into a drug-gang gun battle while searching for a missing student at the Red Hook Houses near his school ... On the contract front, UFT members in June authorized a strike at an unspecified time if there was no agreement ... In October, Feldman called for replacing the Board of Education and its petty squabbles, while classes were oversized and teachers were still dipping into their own pockets for supplies and equipment. Municipal Assistance Corporation Chairman Felix Rohatyn offered \$200 million if the present board was disbanded in favor of one controlled by the mayor ...*



1993

Relations with Dinkins deteriorated. The union attacked him in a TV campaign in March and April, demanding a contract to replace the one that expired in 1992. "If the Mayor of this city really cared about teachers and the kids that we serve, we would get a contract, and we would get it now," a teacher said in one spot.

Bargaining got serious in late August, producing a pact with raises averaging 9 percent over four years, two of them already passed. However, in recognition of the city's fiscal mess, the increase wouldn't be paid for 18 months.

The union put more money into the top salaries, rather than spreading it evenly across the salary scale. Starting pay nonetheless remained fairly competitive. The contract emphasized salaries for senior teachers; the maximum would hit \$60,000 in 1995. The

reason was competition from districts like nearby Yonkers, which paid that in 1992-1993 and would boost it to \$63,000 in 1993-1994. The union had documented many teachers who had headed to other suburban districts to earn more.

The UFT gained two prep periods a week for teachers in 200 high-need elementary schools who formerly had three a week; teachers in other elementary schools still had three. (The 200 "special service" schools – which had lower class size and incentives for teachers to transfer to them, among other things – were later absorbed into the broader Title I program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and its successors.)

As part of the union's commitment to ensuring a quality teaching staff, it agreed to join the board in supporting legislation to make the statute of limitations for evidence used in disciplinary cases uniform across grade levels; for high school teachers it was three years, but in elementary and middle schools it was six months. This law passed.

The union also accepted elimination of sick leave accrual by teachers on sabbatical.

The pact encouraged more parent involvement on school-based management teams; previously, teams needed a teacher majority. (In practice, these teams, in a later incarnation called school leadership teams, frequently had trouble attracting parents.)



The political year intertwined the fates of Dinkins, his Republican challenger, Rudy Giuliani, and Chancellor Fernandez, with the UFT having a role in each. In the background were raging “culture wars,” which since the Reagan era had split liberals from conservatives over issues as diverse as abortion, gun control and what should be taught in the classroom.

Dinkins, his two Board of Education representatives and, generally, the UFT supported Fernandez on issues including the Rainbow “tolerance” curriculum and sex education (with consideration given to parents’ wishes). Giuliani and four of the seven board members opposed Fernandez, who was caught up in a mayoral proxy battle, which he also fueled.

For Fernandez, there were two last straws. First was his memoir, which, as *The New York Times* phrased it, put board members “under a microscope and convinced many that he had no intention of staying on.”

Then there was a fight over instruction about AIDS. The board had voted 4-3 that all

AIDS-prevention education should stress abstinence from sexual activity. Fernandez called this “micro-management.” The UFT, joined by civil liberties advocates, AIDS organizations, elected officials and nonprofit groups that provided much of the instruction, appealed to state Education Commissioner Thomas Sobol. He overturned the board, saying it had infringed on “the teacher’s latitude to teach the curriculum in the most effective manner.”

Feldman called this “a great victory for academic freedom.” Her counsel, Randi Weingarten, said, “This case is not about abstinence or any other specific curriculum issue. It’s about letting teachers do what they do best – teach ... The commissioner agreed totally with our argument that you can’t stand over teachers with a stopwatch, counting the seconds they devote to each topic.”

For Fernandez, it was a Pyrrhic victory, for in February, the board majority refused to renew his contract. The revolving door at the chancellor’s office spun once again, as it would 15 times between 1970 and 2002. The union – often the only source of educational commitment and institutional memory – had to start afresh in the fall with his replacement, Ramon Cortines.

In the mayoral arena, the 3,000 Delegate Assembly members divided over an endorsement. Some faulted Dinkins for not standing by them in the contract and for cutting school spending disproportionately. Others worried over Giuliani’s call for shifting power to five new borough boards and community school districts, as well as for privatizing some schools. Ultimately, the union sat out the election without a mayoral endorsement.

An asbestos crisis delayed the opening of all 1,069 school buildings and 107 leased sites to Sept. 20 – still later in some buildings and classrooms.

Asbestos was once used widely for fireproofing and to strengthen plaster and floor tile, but it is a carcinogen. As long as the materials containing it were intact, it didn’t present a problem. But the city’s decision to defer maintenance had let roofs and brickwork leak, causing walls and ceilings to crumble throughout the school system. And that loosed microscopic strands of the mineral into the air.

In August, two independent investigators, Thomas D. (Toby) Thatcher 2nd and Edward S. Stancik, revealed that in 1989 the board’s Asbestos Task Force had fabricated more than one-third of federally required asbestos safety

reports and that many more were flawed.

Dinkins ordered every school surveyed anew, but this wasn’t done quickly enough for classes to start on schedule. Days later, the city dismissed most of its new inspectors because they had been trained by the consultant accused of fabrication. One contractor was suspended for not revealing scores of environmental violations and fines on prior asbestos jobs. And then the board learned that “scorecards” which were supposed to show where damaged asbestos was in each building were essentially bogus. Inspectors had to start from scratch. (The asbestos fiasco doubtless affected the mayor’s re-election chances.)

Early on, the UFT announced that it would not let members enter any building that had not been certified safe. Director of Staff Pappas fielded the union’s skilled Health and Safety Committee, composed mainly of district and special representatives, as well as industrial hygiene professionals like Chris Proctor and Ellie Engler, who later became a staff director, herself. The UFT’s findings became the only ones that members and parents trusted; if the UFT hadn’t cleared a school, students wouldn’t go in.

“You have a tremendous loss of faith on the



ASBESTOS
Straight
Talk
from the
UFT

AIDS
Straight
Talk
FROM THE
UFT



part of parents and the public,” Feldman said.

The asbestos crisis rippled on for years, but it triggered what became billions of city and state dollars to repair the neglected and hazardous school system. For years to come, the UFT’s Health and Safety Committee would ride herd on the School Construction Authority and the board, handling environmental crises as diverse as indoor air pollution, scares about cancer clusters (never substantiated) and meningitis outbreaks.

On the educational front, as the board moved to phase out two troubled comprehensive high schools – Julia Richman in Manhattan and Andrew Jackson in Queens – in favor of new, smaller schools in the same buildings, the union faced twin challenges: Protecting the rights of members who might lose their positions, although not jobs in the system, while assuring that the new schools acted fairly while hiring fresh staffs.

The union team, led by VP John Soldini, negotiated an agreement with the board’s High School Division that established the framework for how schools would be closed. This became increasingly important in the coming decades as the push for small schools gained momentum and continued into the 21st century under Mayor Bloomberg. The pact allowed for an orderly phase-out of a troubled school; faculty left without blame and had other job options based on choice and seniority.

Furthermore: *In the fall, Cortines stepped up the use of metal detectors in high schools and middle schools. School violence was up 16 percent the prior year, including two students who were killed in school, one shot, one stabbed ... Feldman named Tom Murphy as political action director, a post he would hold for the next 15 years. During his tenure he increased voluntary COPE political contributions from members, broadened the scope of political activities and gave members better tools to carry their message, particularly the state-of-the-art telephone call centers that the union uses for organizing, getting out the vote and polling members. At the invitation of NYSUT executive VP Alan Lubin, who rose to prominence as a teacher leader during the 1968 strike and served as UFT assistant staff director, Murphy trained NYSUT political operatives from across the state. (Lubin had an apt maxim, “If you’re doing it alone, you’re doing it wrong”) ...*

1994

Fed up with deteriorated conditions and incompetent inspections, the UFT sued the city on behalf of its members, parents and children. Feldman’s counsel, Randi Weingarten, had a simple, but clever legal strategy: Compel the city to enforce its building code and the City Charter, which required the Buildings Department to inspect schools, investigate complaints and enforce the code. No more and no less.

Said Feldman: “If a private landlord kept an apartment building in this condition, he’d be called a slumlord. The tenants might have a rent strike or go to court to get the owner fined, even jailed. Yet we allow our schools ... to remain in such awful shape ... Students must learn and teachers must teach in an environment of crumbling plaster and paint, flooded and moldy classrooms and hallways, filthy, infested cafeterias, exposed electrical wiring and leaking pipes, shattered windows with rotting frames, cracked stairs and broken banisters, and stinking, non-functioning lavatories.”

The city – now under newly sworn-in Mayor Giuliani – pointed to the budget gap and its pledge to bond rating agencies to slow capital expenditures. New York wouldn’t commit to spending more, even on rotting buildings.

For his part, Chancellor Cortines set a six-month deadline for restructuring the Division of School Facilities, so it could deal with a backlog of 44,000 repair orders carrying a \$600 million price tag.

Giuliani, meanwhile, began fulfilling his campaign pledges to shrink the municipal work force and slash spending. Taking office in January, he confronted slumping tax revenues due to a Wall Street downturn, a current-year budget gap of up to \$500 million and a projected FY 1995 budget chasm of \$2.3 billion. Dealing with those deficits fit neatly into his political goals for smaller government, and he had ruled out tax increases. By September there would be 7,000 fewer city workers, with 9,000 more to go.

At the UFT Welfare Fund, Feldman named a new director, Arthur Pepper, a special representative in Queens. He created specialized units to handle members’ eligibility questions, claims and information, along with an internal pharmacy unit to streamline transactions with members.

From the beginning, the Welfare Fund’s responsibilities had included the Information Systems Department, which provided computers both to manage member benefits and to serve the union. Now the Welfare Fund added accountability features to examine the processing and delivery of services to members. Later, as Internet and e-mail use expanded, the Fund

Tom Murphy and Ann Kessler



Sandra Feldman and Alan Lubin



John Soldini



offered online services, including enrollment, claims and inquiry capabilities.

The Welfare Fund also continually expanded its offerings to retirees. Besides optical, dental and hearing aid benefits and, more recently, legal and elder law services, the Fund sponsors a panoply of programs that range from lifelong learning to day trips and theater outings. UFT operations for retirees now span the country, from Long Island to Florida to California and beyond.

The Federation of Nurses/UFT staged a one-day strike at Lutheran Medical Center, again over mandatory overtime and staffing ratios. "This was another effort by the employer to divide the union and, ultimately, test the strength of the nurses," Federation special rep Anne Goldman recalled. "But once again the union prevailed, and this was a strike of solidarity and union strength."

Meanwhile, the Federation waged a protracted fight to represent the nurses at the south site of Staten Island University Hospital. Previously, the New York State Nurses Association had represented RNs at both of the hospital's sites, north and south, but the Na-

tional Labor Relations Board ruled that the two sites were separate, upheld the signature cards that the union had collected at the south site and certified the UFT as bargaining agent. NYSNA and the hospital management sued, but the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the NLRB's decision.

Furthermore: *In January, the UFT leaned on Cortines to quickly pay differentials to some 5,000 teachers who had applied for them long before ... In May, the union for the first time backed overhauling community school boards. Joining forces with Special Schools Investigator Ed Stancik, the union called for changing the way local boards were elected and for stripping them of authority to hire school administrators ... In July, philanthropist Walter H. Annenberg kick-started the small-school movement by providing \$400 million to launch 50 small schools. The idea was to replace large, overcrowded schools with sharply focused ones where parents and community members could share decision-making ... In November, Republican state Sen. George Pataki – running on an anti-tax and pro-death-penalty platform – narrowly defeated three-term incumbent Gov. Mario Cuomo ... In*

December, Giuliani sought to oust Cortines, saying he doubted that the chancellor could reform schools. Feldman backed Cortines, saying, "Every mayor always wants more control of the school system when you're in this kind of budget crisis. We think it's important for the schools to have some distance from City Hall. We need a leader who is an educator and an advocate for schools" ...

1995

New York City and state were sinking, even though the national economy was roaring in a decade-long boom. The mayor and governor cut taxes, but had not addressed a structural deficit (much of the pain was inflicted by the politically driven budget).

Taking office in January, George Pataki forecast a \$4 billion shortfall for the next fiscal year, yet he demanded \$1 billion in tax cuts – and \$5 billion less spending, particularly for Medicaid and welfare. Ultimately, the cuts weren't as deep, but the Legislature bought his priorities. Pataki won a two-year tax cut, which set up a contentious budget struggle for 1996.

Giuliani got \$271 million less state aid, so he set out to add that amount to a previously announced \$400 million reduction in services ranging from schools to libraries to day-care centers. Like Pataki, he was out to downsize government with a vengeance.

Schools were crowded and supplies were short. At PS 172 in Sunset Park, for example, a part-time school psychologist counseled troubled children in a hallway behind a moveable chalkboard. At PS 6 on the Upper East Side, the former library housed two kindergarten classes with 56 children; the librarian had been let go and parents brought around books.



That spring, the UFT waged a radio campaign criticizing the cuts and urging union members and parents to rally at City Hall. Ten thousand came, some arriving in 185 union-charted buses from the outer boroughs.

Feldman told the crowd that she was “really disappointed” by the chancellor’s absence. “This is not a rally against anybody,” she said. “This is a rally to show that there is a large constituency for public education in this city.” She called on the mayor and City Council to make education a budget priority.

They didn’t and Cortines had to eliminate a successful, six-year-old summer remedial reading program for 30,000 K-3 students. “The notion that there is a painless way of dealing with this budget is a mythical notion,” said a school spokesman. “We have cut and cut everywhere, and the choices we have left will hurt children.”

For the next fiscal year, the state gave the city \$650 million less than expected. The resulting city budget reflected the deepest spending cuts, percentage-wise, since the Great Depression. Welfare, Medicaid and other services were hit. The city payroll would shed 4,000 employees. But the Council was able to blunt school cuts, restoring \$80 million for services and \$200 million for capital projects.

With Giuliani threatening 5,000 more layoffs, the municipal unions in June agreed to \$440 million in cuts or deferrals of city contri-

butions to health care, welfare benefits and pension funds, with \$160 million more in savings to come from work-rule changes. Giuliani agreed not to lay off more employees (for the moment) and to seek a state law authorizing a retirement incentive for teachers and civilian employees.

Feldman said the deal “will not hurt members’ hard-won gains and also will preserve their job security. That obviously was the number one concern for us.”

With money tight, Cortines in July sought to give districts flexibility on early-grade class size. Elementary VP Ron Jones charged the chancellor with shirking his responsibilities by even thinking of allowing local boards – some tainted with corruption – to make such decisions. “Some districts will go right to classroom services in order to preserve political patronage in the district offices,” Jones said.

In August, Feldman and the union opened contract talks by urging a dramatic shift of decision-making power to schools from districts, superintendents and the central board. Teachers would work in collaboration with principals and parents. Individual schools would control their budgets, staff time and hiring. And for the extra time involved, salaries would have to rise.

As September approached, a *Times* editorial noted: “Not since the fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s have New York City schools been as fi-

nancially strapped as they are now.”

Then Giuliani came through for schools, pressuring the board to spend most of an emergency reserve fund to avoid layoffs. This immediately benefitted 1,000 teachers who lacked permanent assignments; their return shrank classes that had swelled to 40. Other educators returned, too – guidance counselors, paraprofessionals and secretaries.

During all this, Giuliani waged a relentless campaign against the board, which state law dating to the 19th century had made independent to insulate it from political pressure (though without its own taxing authority, the board always was captive to the city). He sought to abolish it and replace the chancellor with his own commissioner. He also wanted control of the school budget, just as mayors always had.

Less than two years into the job, Cortines submitted his resignation, battered by what *The Times* called Giuliani’s “near-daily barrage of insults and jabs.” Giuliani picked the next chancellor, Tacoma, Washington, Superintendent Rudy Crew.

The UFT reached a contract agreement in November with a 13 percent salary increase over five years and a written commitment barring layoffs through 1998. But there would be no raises for the first two years and, in an attempt to stem early attrition with the prospect of an illusory “bonus,” 5 percent of the pay of

new starting teachers would be withheld for the first four years, and then repaid in cash. The starting salary would increase from \$28,700 to \$31,911 and the top salary would move from \$60,000 to \$70,000.

And then came a stunning reversal: With more than 55,000 members voting, the UFT rank and file rejected the contract 56 percent to 44 percent. It was the first time that members had ever turned back a contract proposal in the UFT’s 35-year history.

Teachers seethed over the 5 percent reduction in starting pay. Everyone berated the two-year wage freeze. But what really enraged union members was that during the balloting period Giuliani announced 28 percent raises for himself, his commissioners and other elected officials – 63 people in all.

“I think it’s very hard to justify asking teachers to wait two years for a raise and then going out and saying we’re going to give it to other people, to elected officials and managers,” Feldman told the press. “That tipped it.”

And then Rudy Crew said he wanted to raise the salaries of 370 top managers. “Mind boggling,” said Feldman. “Isn’t it just so commonsensical that you don’t do this kind of thing now?”

The Delegate Assembly voted to head back to the bargaining table.

Three days before Christmas, Crew offered dire options to cope with yet more budget

Sandra Feldman, Jeannette DiLorenzo and Randi Weingarten

Ron Jones



“I think it’s very hard to justify asking teachers to wait two years for a raise and then going out and saying we’re going to give it to other people, to elected officials and managers.”

— Feldman to the press



cuts: returning to half-day kindergarten, moving back the birthday cutoff date for 5-year-olds to attend kindergarten and increasing bilingual classes from 15 to 20 students. But he offered a money-making proposal that was widely derided – selling merchandise with the Board of Education logo. If these ideas didn't work, he would consider layoffs.

To be fair, Crew faced an impossible challenge. Giuliani had cut \$181 million in the next fiscal year's budget on top of \$2.5 billion lost in the six prior years, even as school enrollment swelled by 100,000 students.

Furthermore: *To deal with severe overcrowding, Cortines in May suggested year-round schooling to spread out the use of buildings, but the general lack of air conditioning and the opposition of summer camp operators stood in the way ... In June the independent Educational Priorities Panel condemned the board's hiring office as a bureaucratic nightmare. One teacher said the agency took her fingerprints five times in 10 months, and she had to pay each time. "What do they do with the records?" she asked ... In November, state Education Commissioner Richard P. Mills proposed ending the de facto two-tier education system; 38 percent of students took college-level Regents exams and received a Regents diploma, while the rest – including 80 percent of New York City students – took the less demanding Regents Competency Tests and got a general diploma. Instead – and this is*

what the system eventually adopted – all students would take Regents exams. "You can't demand that kids do better at chemistry when they don't have chemistry labs due to budget cuts," said UFT spokesman Ron Davis ... At year's end came a scandal that appeared linked to budget cuts and overcrowding: 77,000 students – 28 percent of high schoolers – received less than the state-mandated 5.5 hours of instruction daily ...



Mayor Giuliani and Sandra Feldman



1996

It wasn't until June that UFT members had another contract proposal to replace the one which members had rejected the year before. It arrived about the time the city Health and Hospitals Corporation laid off 2,800 workers. Teachers voted 78 percent to 22 percent to accept it.

"The first time around teachers did not believe there wasn't enough money to provide them with the wage increase in the first two years," Feldman said. "But as time went by, they began to see the reality of the city's fiscal situation."

Despite endless editorializing about the need for givebacks (think prep periods), there were no major concessions. The second proposal had the same two-year wage freeze, salary scale and three years of job protection. But it eliminated the 5 percent penalty for new teachers, allowed teachers to reach maximum salary in 22 years instead of 25, created retirement incentives and offered \$3,500 more per semester to teachers willing to teach an extra

period daily. The city said the changes were cost-neutral and that teacher concessions – such as extending the contract by two months to 61 months — paid for the improvements.

The UFT and city agreed to strengthen services for special education students through an early intervention model built on Superstart Plus, a successful pre-K program. Special education teachers and counselors who did not have assignments would be redeployed to provide pre-referral support services to children in general education.

In addition, Mayor Giuliani agreed to spend \$70 million to hire and train aides to take over certain administrative duties from teachers, such as hall and cafeteria patrol.

The retirement incentive worked as planned; by the end of July, almost 2,800 educators had put in their papers; more would follow. This was the second straight year for the incentive; 3,100 veteran teachers had left the year before.

Nearly 10 percent of the teaching staff was now gone, creating a troubling deficit of experience. The board sent thousands of recruitment letters to unemployed teachers across the



state, particularly those certified in math and science.

In the year's biggest political contest, President Clinton won a second term against Sen. Bob Dole. The UFT worked particularly hard for Clinton, spurred on by Dole's having singled out teacher unions as his enemy.

"And I say this ... not to the teachers, but to their unions," Dole said in his convention acceptance speech. "If education were a war, you would be losing it. If it were a business, you would be driving it into bankruptcy. If it were a patient, it would be dying. And to the teachers unions I say, when I am president, I will disregard your political power, for the sake of the parents, the children, the schools and the nation." His solutions were privatization and vouchers.



At the subsequent Democratic convention, Feldman, a delegate, said: "Dole's attack on teachers in his acceptance speech was a shot in the arm for us. We

take it quite personally."

UFT members worked the phones, leafleted outside subway entrances and joined a comprehensive and successful get-out-the-vote operation. And the UFT launched a \$200,000, three-week radio campaign attacking Dole.

In one of four spots, Feldman said: "Bob Dole is attacking public-school teachers, but he's badly misinformed. New York City's public schools have many problems, but teachers aren't one of them. Our classes are overcrowded, and there aren't enough books and supplies. But teachers are working hard to give their students a good education. Taking scarce resources out of our public schools to support private education, as Bob Dole wants to do, would make things even tougher for our students."

Furthermore: Giuliani and Crew gave a second look to Cortines' idea of switching to year-round schooling. This came after the business-funded Citizens Budget Commission said it would be cheaper to use schools fully during the summer than to build new ones, with a side benefit of easing overcrowding. Feldman responded: "We have never been opposed to the notion of trying year-round schooling. It's just that it has to be done right. What is good intellectually isn't always what can work practically" – particularly when most schools weren't air conditioned ...



1997

1997 saw the culmination of a long-brewing fight that strained the boundaries of church-state separation.

In September 1996, Giuliani had seized upon an offer from John Cardinal O'Connor for schools in the Catholic archdiocese to take about 1,000 public school students "in the bottom 5 percent in terms of performance ... and get them up to reading level, math level and educate them throughout" in an agreed-upon period of time. "We're going to do everything we can from the Mayor's office to support this ... excellent proposal," the mayor said.

For O'Connor, this would rescue the financially strapped parochial system with public dollars, as well as be a public relations coup. For Giuliani, a parochial school graduate, it was yet another wedge in his drive to take over the board.

Crew refused to allow the public school system to participate on constitutional grounds, since it would have had to identify the lowest 5 percent of students. Ultimately, a firestorm over church-state separation forced Giuliani to back down. Instead, he created a privately financed scholarship fund.

In September 1996, the union ran a full-page open letter to Giuliani in *The New York Times* and the *Daily News*. It read, in part: "As parents and teachers of 1.1 million New York public school students, we won't take issue with your plan to use private funds to send 1,000 of our children to the city's parochial schools. Those schools provide a fine education, and we welcome any effort to alleviate the intolerable overcrowding of the public schools."

However, the ad said, what really was needed was fixing public education. It also addressed myths about the supposed superiority of Catholic and private schools over public schools.

At a February 1997 press conference announcing the privately funded scholarships, the mayor – with three board members in attendance – said: "Enough with bureaucracies and systems. This is putting children first."

In May, a *New York Teacher* editorial noted the rush of 22,700 applications for 1,300 prospective scholarships. "It would be wonderful if city officials and the Wall Street executives who in a matter of weeks came up with the millions needed to fund these scholarships would devote as much energy and money to improve the public schools."

In September 1997, 1,165 students enrolled in the mayor's School Choice Scholarship program, but the end result was less than

Michael Mendel, Sharon Ripley, Randi Weingarten and Amina Gentile



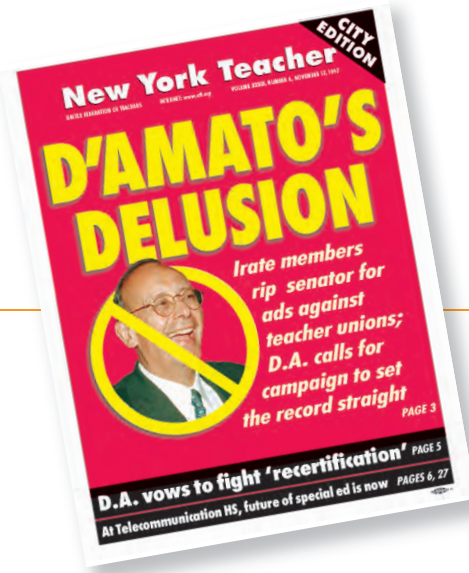
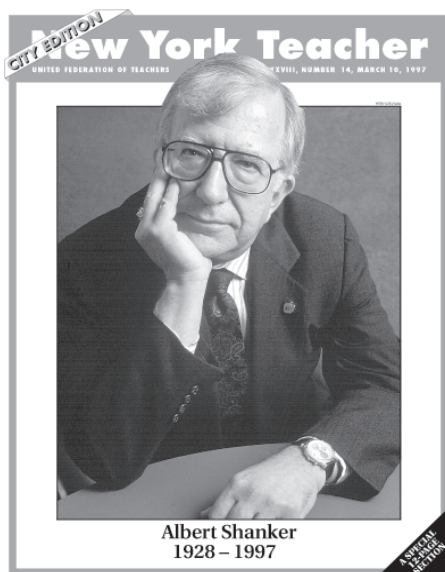
he anticipated. All of the recipients were poor, but three-quarters already attended secular and non-secular private schools. Meanwhile, the episode had further undermined respect for the public school system.

The Federation of Nurses/UFT grew again by adding RNs and home-care professionals at the Jewish Home and Hospital in the Bronx. Here, as in other campaigns, the Federation had to defeat the New York State Nurses Association in an effort that once more went to the National Labor Relations Board.

"They were determined to become a part of a powerful union as opposed to belonging to a nursing association," said Federation rep Goldman. "They recognized the unique accomplishments of the Federation of Nurses/UFT when other unions were without contracts and unable to prevail at the bargaining table."

Furthermore: Albert Shanker died in February. "He could be passionate about his beliefs," Feldman said, "yet at the same time he had the rare ability to rethink issues and come up with fresh approaches as times changed." She was elected to succeed him at the AFT in July ... In March, the UFT filed a class-action suit to make pensionable

all per-session work done by educators. "So if you are a coach or if you teach in a PM school, if you work in an extended-day program, if you work in a summer program – we have found a way to sue in your behalf," Assistant Secretary and counsel Weingarten told the Delegate Assembly ... Schools opened with 5,000 new teachers in what education officials called one of the most competitive hiring seasons in memory. The board recruited from Austria, Massachusetts, Spain and Puerto Rico. In contrast, a year earlier there were 3,000 vacancies the week before school started ... In December, Sen. Alfonso D'Amato stepped up a two-month campaign against the UFT, assailing the union for favoring "automatic" tenure, opposing merit pay and fighting a Republican proposal to let parents choose public schools. Feldman, in the audience, called this "the Big Lie" ...



1998

Feldman resigned as UFT president in January to devote full time to leading the AFT. Randi Weingarten, then the UFT treasurer and chief legal strategist, was elected to succeed her.

They had come to know and respect one another during the protracted LOBA contract fight in 1985. Weingarten was a young labor lawyer at the firm that handled the case. She had learned the importance of unions in high school, when her mother, a teacher, struck in Rockland County. The family struggled, for her father then was out of work; with Taylor Law penalties, her mother didn't get a full paycheck for months.

Feldman and Weingarten plotted major contract and legal battles. Weingarten soon was doing double duty, at night working for the union while, during the day, earning her teach-

ing license and teaching social studies and American history at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn.

When she became president, a reporter asked what the differences were between her and Feldman. "Oh, she's taller, I'm shorter. She's older, I'm younger ... I always look at the problem and try to dissect it step-by-step. She starts globally. I start as an implementer. She starts as a poet."

Not long after, Weingarten got to implement big time. The UFT won its four-year-old lawsuit to force the city to inspect all school buildings and enforce the building code.

"All we wanted was for the city and the board to follow the law," said Weingarten, the suit's architect. "Now the courts have spoken; the city and school system must comply."

Release of State Supreme Court Justice Lewis R. Friedman's decision was delayed because he died just days after finishing it. He wrote: "The health and safety of the children, many of whom are required by law to use the public school buildings, is just as important to the future fabric of the city's life as is their health and safety when they are in private schools or in their homes."

Although conditions had improved since the School Construction Authority began plowing \$2 billion into fixing the most run-down schools, there still was trouble. Just a couple of months before, a 16-year-old girl had



been killed by falling construction debris.

The UFT had undercut the board's defense by revealing an internal report. It identified immediately hazardous conditions at 237 schools – one in five – but only two-thirds of them were scheduled for repair. What's more, the judge found, the board's capital plan was little more than a "wish list" that ignored many projects which, it admitted, needed to be done for the safety of students and staff.

"It is no defense that the law has been breached for the past three decades," Friedman wrote.

The UFT went back to court a month later when the city failed to agree on a specific improvement plan. "In the very week that the brick façade of PS 153 in Queens collapsed, virtually all of the toilets at Madison High School in Brooklyn were not flushing and the mayor was talking about spending \$1 billion on a new stadium for the Yankees, the city's attorneys were stonewalling us," Weingarten said.

The union submitted its own proposed judgment to the court. It gave the city and board 60 days to come up with specifics about

how to inspect, repair and maintain crumbling schools and to inspect every school at least once a year.

And that's pretty much what the judge ordered. What's more, he gave the UFT authority to ride herd on the Buildings Department. Tom Pappas and his UFT Health and Safety Committee combed through inspection reports, checked building sites and ceaselessly exhorted the SCA to make sure repairs were done; it was a mammoth undertaking that essentially turned the committee into construction managers.

At the UFT Spring Conference, Weingarten intensified the union's push for professionalism. She made a bold offer: Give us PS 63, a South Bronx school long on the state's "worst"

list, and the union will turn it around – as long as the Board of Education accepted a 10-point plan.

"What will we do at that school? Nothing extraordinary," Weingarten told 2,800 enthusiastic teachers. "Only what the powers that be in this city should be doing in all 1,100 of our schools ... We are putting our reputation on the line. Yet I believe that even a school like this can become a high-quality school in just a few years."

Crew declined, but gracefully. Nevertheless, Weingarten had put wheels in motion not only for an agreement a year later to reshape lagging schools, but also for the union to open its own charter schools some years in the future.

At about that time, the Legislature cleared the way for charter schools, agreeing to open 100 statewide (later 200 and, in 2010, 460). An unlimited number of existing public schools could convert to charter status; about 10 did, although two reconverted to traditional status when they realized that they would not be exempt from state testing requirements; the rest continue to operate under the UFT contract.

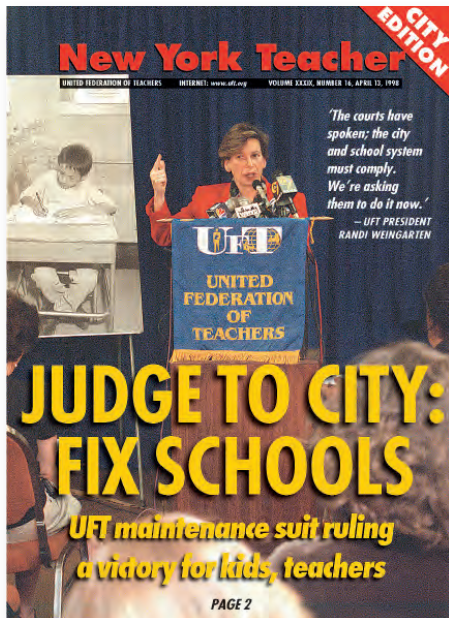
Crew assailed the notion of charters, warning that they would divert money from traditional public schools, which "the state has historically and notoriously underfunded." Weingarten shared some of Crew's doubts, but to assure quality education, she at least won assurances that no charter school would have more than five uncertified teachers.

What won passage of the bill was Pataki's threat to veto a 38 percent pay raise for legislators.

In December, Weingarten took over as chair of the troubled Municipal Labor Committee. She replaced DC 37's Stanley Hill, disgraced by the disclosure that two of his aides had rigged the 1996 ratification vote of the pay-freeze contract. DC 37 was then run by a trustee named by its national affiliate, AFSCME.

Said Weingarten, "I'm taking on this responsibility for one reason only: to help restore the integrity and credibility of the municipal labor movement in New York, which because of recent events, has been tarnished."

She would wear both hats – and keep up a daunting schedule – for years.



Frank Carucci helps assist culinary students

1999

The union fought back with political action when Giuliani's April budget address called for publicly financed vouchers, a \$12 million plan to send 3,000 children to parochial and private schools. With his eye on a Senate race, he demanded cuts in taxes and services, despite a record \$2.1 billion surplus.

"I think the chancellor is working within a system that's dysfunctional ... just plain terrible ... makes no sense," Giuliani said. "The whole system should be blown up and a new one should be put in its place." As evidence, he pointed to the board's failure to adopt a capital budget on time because the Queens representative had held out for more money for classroom seats for her fast-growing borough. In response, Giuliani impounded \$6 billion in capital funds.

This was the second coming of the mayor's voucher plan. The UFT had helped thwart the first as a force behind a Coalition Against Vouchers, comprised of 80 individuals and organizations and 50 elected officials. They said the scheme was unconstitutional. So did Crew, who threatened to resign.

This time, Giuliani sought to avoid constitutional questions by saying his office, not the board, would run the program. But Crew had

his finger on UFT members' pulse in a public letter: "When the mayor declares that the whole system should be blown up, he tells 1.1 million children and thousands of parents, teachers and administrators that they are wasting their time ... that their achievements have amounted to nothing."

Weingarten put this battle in a broader context. In her *New York Teacher* column, she noted polls saying that 51 percent of all Americans – and more minorities – favored "trying" vouchers, while 76 percent of New Yorkers and 58 percent of parents were dissatisfied with public schools. Given choices, 84 percent of Americans thought the solution was putting a qualified teacher in every classroom. Americans, she wrote, "are losing faith that these public school improvements will happen ... Parents don't want to wait any longer. They want to give their kids a better shot now!"

Weingarten wrote that the fight was critical, both because "a common public school system ... [is] the bedrock of an egalitarian democracy" and because "if vouchers enable government and taxpayers to shrug off the need to invest in public schools, we will never convince them that well-prepared teachers [and well-financed public schools] are worth investing in, too."

By June, union-led political action with the City Council had taken the steam out of the proposal. In closed-door budget negotiations

with education and city officials, the union helped shape a deal to "study" vouchers and other education ideas, ranging from changes in education financing to creation of more charter schools. There would be no public money spent on vouchers – as well as no deep tax cuts.

Seeking a path away from vouchers and the mayor's incessant assaults, the union turned to two simple words: quality education.

The UFT would chart that path by developing a core curriculum tied to state academic standards. Amazingly – or, perhaps, not so – such a curriculum did not exist. The union

committed \$2 million to draft it under Teacher Center aegis. Within a short time, teams of classroom teachers from all grade levels began work on a ground-up, experience-based, research-rooted document. It involved hundreds of teachers. (Completed during Chancellor Klein's tenure, the curriculum was well-received but the administration refused to work with the union on implementing it in schools.)

"If we can raise the level of our students' achievement, everything else will follow," Weingarten told the press. "Threats of vouchers will fade. Blaming teachers for every ill will stop, as will the demand that teachers give up



Chancellor Rudy Crew



"When the mayor declares that the whole system should be blown up, he tells 1.1 million children and thousands of parents, teachers and administrators that they are wasting their time ... that their achievements have amounted to nothing."

— Chancellor Rudy Crew



this right or that benefit.”

Nonetheless, the UFT helped to found a broad-based group of religious, civic and political leaders called the Emergency Campaign Against Vouchers to be a counterweight to the well-organized conservative foundations that were backing vouchers.

Giuliani didn't relent, issuing new proposals to use private schools for summer session, as well as private and religious schools for after-school tutoring.

Meanwhile, Crew boldly asserted his authority, dismissing five district superintendents, closing 13 lagging schools and taking control of 43 low-performing schools in a new Chancellor's District. This new nongeographical district was designed with substantial input from the UFT. Teachers had the right to transfer out if they did not believe in the instructional program, but few did. New hires, chosen by a school-based committee, had to be certified.

According to a *New York Times* news analysis, the UFT was the big winner, if not the progenitor, of Crew's takeover coup. "The plan that the chancellor announced ... was strikingly similar to what the union had proposed" in Weingarten's Spring Conference speech, *The Times* wrote. (It also resembled the UFT's long-gone More Effective Schools program.) Both plans involved a longer school day and year, more professional development, smaller class sizes and additional pay, among

other components.

Crew offered a 15 percent pay increase for teachers who agreed to work an additional 40 minutes a day; tuition reimbursement of \$2,500 a year for those pursuing master's degrees; classes trimmed to 20 (from 30) in the early grades; and time for professional development. The Teacher Center created and implemented all professional development in the district.

The Chancellor's District "was a victory for Weingarten, for she has won recognition from the school system that the worst schools, at least, need to pay more to attract good teachers," *The Times* wrote in a news analysis.

There was great interest among teachers in the opportunities not only for educational innovation and a collaborative environment, but also for additional pay.

But that was in June.

For Christmas the board – at Giuliani's behest – refused 4-3 to renew Crew's contract. Crew had dramatically recentralized authority, taken responsibility for failing schools and sent thousands of children to summer school, but his opposition to the mayor's budget cuts and voucher proposal propelled him into the Giuliani shredder. His final days were marred by allegations that teachers had concocted a cheating scandal and that high schools

had inflated attendance to gain more state aid. Neither flap proved persuasive, but Crew was gone.

Furthermore: In February, Deputy Chancellor Lewis H. Spence backed off from 192 "tipping" layoffs. Because of competition from higher-paying districts, 13 percent of the city's 70,000 teachers were uncertified, an unsettling rise after five years of decline in their number. "We've got to hold onto people who have performed satisfactorily," he said ... In December, schools investigator Stancik charged that cheating was growing as standardized tests assumed greater importance. Crew fired three teacher aides and six untenured teachers and brought misconduct charges against 11 tenured teachers and principals. The UFT said that some of the 43 teachers appeared to have been wrongly accused. Besides helping members caught up in disciplinary proceedings, the union hired former School Construction Authority Inspector General Thomas D. (Toby) Thatcher to conduct an independent probe, in which the union was not involved. In

December 2000, the UFT released his voluminous report, which challenged Stancik's methods and disputed his findings. To protect members from similar allegations in the future, the UFT called for a protocol to govern the proctoring of examinations ...



The Metro Section

The New York Times



Unions Find Their Voice in a Rally at City Hall



To the start of the next 50 years

2010

As this history goes to press, 2010 – the UFT’s 50th anniversary year – is three-quarters past. Yet the union again confronts daunting challenges which, for someone who has read this far, sound strangely familiar.

Once more a mayor calls for eliminating tenure, threatens layoffs and refuses to lower class size. Once more a mayor makes midyear cuts, demands charter schools and touts merit pay. Once more state and city budgets are in shambles. And once more the UFT’s public school educators are working with an expired contract.

Here is a look at the trials and triumphs of 2010 so far:

The state and national economies continue to struggle, although New York City – or at least its most wealthy citizens – is beginning to recover.

NYSUT sued when Gov. Paterson, facing a \$9.2 billion deficit, had impounded \$750 million in school aid in December 2009; he released the funds in January. He sought a 5 percent cut in school aid statewide and a stretch-out of paying for the Campaign for Fiscal Equity mandate from four years to 10.

In July, the Legislature passed a budget that

restored most of the governor’s cuts, but he vetoed almost all of them, including \$565 million for school aid (\$177 million for New York City), which the UFT and NYSUT had lobbied hard to include.

With the budget incomplete, Paterson repeatedly called the Legislature into session over the summer to feed them one chunk at a time. Ultimately, New York cut \$1.4 billion from school aid (\$400 million for New York City). It would not be until August 3 – 125 days past the March 31 deadline – that the budget was done.

Chancellor Klein on Jan. 7 ordered principals to cut 1 percent of their operating budgets (\$79 million). In all, since January 2008 the city had carved \$1.044 billion from the Department of Education.

In his January contract gambit, Mayor Bloomberg threatened 8,500 teacher layoffs and offered teachers and principals half the 4 percent raises in each of two years that all other municipal workers had received.

“Simply unacceptable,” Mulgrew said. “The UFT has a history of working with elected officials to find new revenues and to minimize the damage of budget cuts ... There are better ways to secure savings without endangering students’ educations.” Among them: a retirement incentive, oversight of no-bid DOE contracts and placing ATR teachers into permanent assignments.

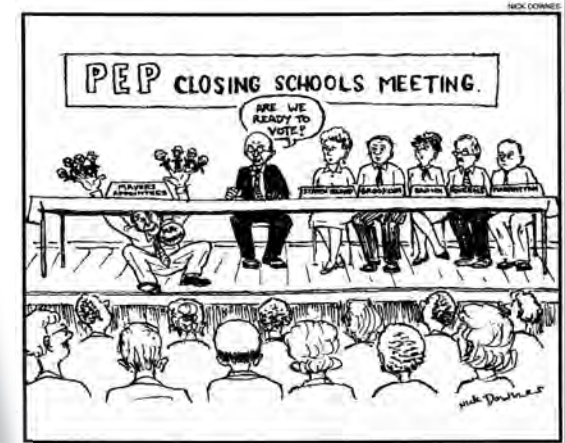
For months, the union fought layoffs, cam-

paigning in both the city and Albany. The union ran a hard-hitting TV campaign. Members rallied and leafleted. “Schools have taken a 12 percent cut in the past two years,” Mulgrew said at a rally at City Hall. “Who does that hurt? The children.”

Because of its refusal to permanently place people who were mired in the Absent Teacher Reserve, the DOE had been shamed into instituting a hiring freeze during 2009-2010 and, with the exception of a few licenses and the Bronx, at least the start of 2010-2011. The idea was that the freeze would force principals to staff their schools from the ATR, but it didn’t work out that way. Instead, the ATR grew to about 1,700, as

principals gamed the system, excessing teachers to shift them off their school budgets, then rehiring them – or letting them work elsewhere – on the central payroll. And Klein hadn’t changed the game.

Yet in May, there was the Panel for Educational Policy preposterously poised to award a \$25 million contract for the New Teacher Project to recruit and train new teachers. With several hundred union members in the audience, UFT Secretary Michael Mendel blasted the mayoral majority on the PEP for the idiocy of signing a costly recruitment contract during a hiring freeze. “A few years ago, the chancellor and the mayor touted that 50,000 people applied for teacher jobs in New York off an ad in



Comptroller John Lui, Michael Mulgrew and Public Advocate Bill de Blasio



The *New York Times*. The *New York Times* ad cost \$10,000, not millions,” he said. The PEP awarded the contract anyway.

At the City Council in June, Mulgrew warned that allowing spending to shrink by up to 7 percent in many schools “means turning our backs on children in ways not seen since 1976” – particularly when the *Daily News* had just reported that “45 DOE administrators and other nonschool staff [were] getting \$340,000 in pay hikes – this on top of \$500,000 in pay raises in the April management reshuffling.”

Since 2007, a UFT analysis of DOE data found, Tweed had reduced its headcount by just 21 people – and those were school lunch aides and low-paid clerical aides. But since 2002 it had added 220 more bureaucrats.

The city budget adopted in June cut at least 2,000 positions citywide and, at Bloomberg’s behest, averted school layoffs by zeroing out across-the-board pattern pay raises for teachers and principals for two years (saving \$900 million).

The union cried foul. “The mayor has the power to unilaterally rescind the proposed layoffs, but he does not have the power to unilaterally decide the teachers’ contract,” Mulgrew

said. Bloomberg wouldn’t come to the bargaining table. The union had declared impasse in January and PERB had named a mediator, but at press time there was still no movement.

At the City Council, relentless UFT political action mitigated some budget cuts. For example, the Teacher’s Choice classroom supplies program, initially slated for elimination after 25 years, continued, but at a lower rate.

The city also downsized non-UFT Department of Health school nurses, reduced library hours, furloughed HIV and AIDS case workers, closed some senior and child day care centers, and shrank fire engine companies in order to keep 20 fire stations open.

Also at the City Council, CTE VP Sterling Roberson made two dire observations: That the DOE’s five-year capital plan would create only 30,000 more seats – not the 167,800 needed to meet mandated class-size targets. And – especially troubling considering the costly deferred-maintenance disaster that followed the fiscal turmoil in the 1970s – “Sorely needed school maintenance projects will be deferred, allowing more schools to fall into an even greater state of disrepair . . . We are . . . making existing conditions in our school

buildings worse,” he said.

There were, however, two huge financial pluses in 2010:

First, Mulgrew traveled with Bloomberg to Washington to argue for more federal aid, part of a larger lobbying strategy that included a major push by the AFT. On Aug. 4 Congress approved \$2.6 billion (\$607 million for New York, which prevented 7,100 teacher layoffs statewide).

Second, thanks to UFT’s and NYSUT’s political skills and educational input into the plan and their collaborative work with the Board of Regents and the state Education Department, in August the Obama administration awarded New York State nearly \$700 million in the second round of its Race to the Top competition. The U.S. Department of Education granted a total of \$3.325 billion to nine states and the District of Columbia; all had adopted changes that federal officials believed would improve schools.

New York had come in next to last among 16 finalists in the first round in March, when just two states won. To grab the brass ring in round 2 five months later would require everyone to compromise. The UFT used its political skill to get most of what it wanted.

The deal had many interlocking parts.

The first involved charter schools, since Race to the Top wanted them firmly in the mix. Bloomberg, Paterson and the Regents wanted

460 charter schools statewide, up from 200. The mayor wanted 10 percent of city students in charters, up from 3 percent.

The UFT and Senate and Assembly leaders countered with a charter bill that would add the additional charters, but more importantly, level the playing field between charters and traditional public schools. Advocating for the bill, UFT members pressed lawmakers in all five boroughs.

Earlier, the union had released “Separate and Unequal,” a study which laid bare flaws in the charter system. The UFT’s bill would fix those flaws, and most of its remedies would become law.

In response, the city allied itself with the New York Charter School Association, ostensibly a pro-kid nonprofit organization, but in reality a front for for-profit charter management companies. Stalemate ensued.

(In a January 19, 2010, post on the union’s Edwise blog, VP Leo Casey noted that an association member, the for-profit Victory Schools, was “sucking up 25 cents of every public funding dollar that should go to the students of Merrick Academy” – three-quarters of a million dollars a year. The UFT had struggled to win a contract there since 2008. Another association member, the for-profit National Heritage Academies, “challenged the right of its New York employees to organize into a union and bargain collectively,” Casey wrote.)

Marching in the Labor Day Parade: Mayor Michael Bloomberg; Gary LaBarbera, Building and Trades Council; Lillian Roberts, DC37; Jack Ahern, Central Labor Council; Michael Mulgrew, United Federation of Teachers; William Thompson, NYC comptroller and Andrew Cuomo, attorney general



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ON TOP OF THE \$700M HEAP

Projects that make the grade

New York will spend its \$700 million in federal Race to the Top funds for education reforms that align with the White House's goals. The city, which will receive between \$200 and \$300 million, must develop its race plan and secure state approval for it within the next 90 days.

N.Y. hits it big, finally, in school funds 'Race'

BY FRANCES MONAHAN
NEW YORKER

NEW YORK MADE a massive comeback in the high-stakes competition for federal education aid, capturing \$700 million to improve schools over the next five years.

Mayor Bloomberg and Khims stressed that the award was proof of New York's great reform successes. "I think it's safe to say we've reversed the federal aid approval," Bloomberg said.

United Federation of Teachers President Michael Mulgrew, though, took a different line, arguing that parts of the improved application over the state were from the high-stakes testing focus on the city. "It was significant that showed that education is at a crossroads," he said. "That's not the only thing you can do to improve a school, a city or any other state."

Students' state test scores recently plummeted after the state, claiming its scores had gotten easier to pass in the last several years, related the bar.

Gen. Paterson, flanked by legislative and state education leaders, discusses state's plans for federal Race to the Top funds yesterday at Manhattan office. Photo by John Brock, Getty Images

THESE ARE THE MAIN AREAS WHERE THE MONEY WILL GO:

A+

This was the situation in March, when New York lost in the first round of Race to the Top funding. Besides the charter cap stalemate, other factors included the refusal of 40 percent of teacher union leaders statewide (including Mulgrew) to sign school district applications and, as Paterson and Klein portrayed it, the 2008 UFT-won law, which prevented the use of student test scores for teacher evaluations or tenure decisions (Race to the Top wanted some link).

On May 28 the Legislature passed a bill which positioned the state for Race to the Top victory – and the UFT got just about everything it wanted. Provisions included: Charter schools have to enroll the same proportion of students with disabilities, English language learners and low-income students as in the surrounding district; for-profit companies are barred from operating or managing any new charter schools; parents have a greater say in co-location issues and compliance with building utilization plans; the state comptroller can audit charter schools; and new disclosure and ethics provisions should help avoid conflicts of interest.

The other major factor that helped New York win Race to the Top was a union-brokered agreement on a new system of evaluating

teachers. In May, the Delegate Assembly overwhelmingly endorsed a pact between the UFT, NYSUT and the state Education Department that will start in 2011-2012. The new evaluation system will be based on multiple measures and will provide customized professional support for teachers who need help.

Among its features: No more than a quarter of the evaluation will be based on test scores, “so teachers can rein in test prep and give students the well-rounded education they deserve,” Mulgrew said. Other states based half of the evaluation on scores. The new system will be fairer, more transparent and more objective, Mulgrew said. The existing system was “too subjective and too dependent on the whims of principals.” Local unions and districts will negotiate how evaluations will be conducted and what the criteria will be.

“Teacher evaluation was never meant to be a gotcha system,” Mulgrew told the DA. “It was supposed to allow teachers to grow and develop professionally throughout their careers.” The new system “will more accurately

identify teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and provide struggling teachers with the opportunities and supports to improve their skills.”

When the Race to the Top award was announced on August 24, Mulgrew said it “will enable New York State to build a curriculum and an early warning data system that will help schools identify the supports that children need to succeed.” And that never would have happened without a great deal of creativity on the part of the UFT.

But what makes a good teacher? To help find out, some 700 teachers in March agreed to let independent researchers into their classrooms to view their day-to-day practices for the next two years. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, this is part of a nationwide Measures of Effective Teaching Study.

VP Aminda Gentile, who directs the Teacher Center, wrote in a *New York Teacher* column: “This is the stuff of real school reform and school improvement, not a simplistic reliance on the sanctity of student test scores in a null (or even worse, political) context or the ritualistic collection of this and that scrap of paper or bit of information ... Although we know a lot about what works, we still have many ques-

tions. Are the problems structural or just a case of malfunctioning? How related is education, with its successes and failures, to the culture as a whole? How do we use education? How do we talk about education, and why?”

At the UFT Spring Conference in May, Mulgrew unveiled a sweeping plan to reduce chronic student absenteeism at nine schools in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx. The union had partnered with Geoffrey Canada, the innovative president and CEO of the Harlem Children’s Zone, the Children’s Aid Society and Good Shepard Services to seek a \$30 million federal grant (still pending at press time).

“We need to create schools as places for families, not just children,” Mulgrew said. “Many of our kids struggle with a huge range of medical and social issues, and our schools should be where families turn for help with all the problems that might affect their children’s academic performance.”

The proposed Community Schools Program could include medical, dental and vision services on site, along with a wide range of family and social services, from GED and English as a second language classes to financial planning and legal assistance for eviction and other emergencies.

Meanwhile, the union was fighting for smaller classes. With its allies – the Hispanic Federation, the NAACP, the Alliance for Quality Education, Class Size Matters





and parents – in January the union sued Klein and the DOE to force compliance with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity mandate to lower class sizes.

In the prior two years, the union argued, classes had swelled in almost every grade and subject, DOE’s own numbers showed. And DOE appeared to have misspent or couldn’t account for much of the \$760 million in state Campaign for Fiscal Equity funds that had been specifically earmarked for class size reduction. It seemed that principals had used it to plug gaps caused by the city’s budget cuts.

Failing to meet its own five-year class-size reduction plan was “deliberate and one of the

clearest examples of mismanagement we have ever seen,” Mulgrew said.

Another firestorm erupted when DOE announced in December 2009 that it would close 19 supposedly failing schools to make room for at least 10 new public schools, four charters and two existing schools.

In the six weeks before the PEP was to vote on the plan, union organizers and data analysts fanned out to the 19 schools.

With their help, schools mounted vigorous campaigns and held hundreds of local rallies and meetings to protest the closings.

On the night of Jan. 26, 1,500 parents, students, community advocates, elected officials and UFT members rallied outside Brooklyn Technical High School, where the PEP held a public hearing that would run nine hours into the early morning.

Inside, before a roaring crowd of 3,000, almost all of the 300 speakers offered emotional pleas to keep the schools open. One student asked, “If my school isn’t working and you failed, why am I being punished?” A young

woman said, “I am not a failure and I will never be a failure.” At one point, when a student asked Klein to listen to what he had to say, the chancellor picked up his cell phone and walked away from his seat.

And then, the PEP voted to close the schools. In all but two cases, the vote was 9 to 4.

The union, the NAACP, the Alliance for Quality Education, a number of elected officials, parents, CECs and SLT members quickly sued DOE. They argued, in part, that the PEP had not allowed meaningful community input and had failed to prepare an impact statement analyzing how each closing would affect the students who would be displaced, particularly special needs students. The UFT had secured provisions in the 2009 school governance law mandating impact statements.

The sense of outrage was reflected by Karen Koch, the CTE education director at Maxwell HS in Brooklyn. What bothered her most was that “not one single person who made the decision to close Maxwell had ever stepped foot inside” her school before or after the closure plan was announced.

Data like those collected by Christine Rowland, a Teacher Center staffer at Columbus High School in the Bronx, undercut the DOE’s case for academic failure. At Columbus, the class of 2009 entered with 5.9 percent reading on grade level and 14 percent on grade level in math. But four years later, 50.3 percent of stu-

dents scored at least 65 on the ELA Regents exam and 56.6 percent met math standards. Clearly, UFT members had done their jobs.

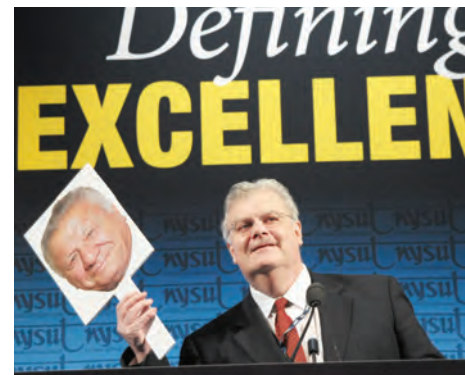
And the union won. On March 26 state Supreme Court Justice Joan B. Lobis declared the PEP vote “null and void.” Education officials cannot pick and choose which provisions of the Education Law they follow. “That entire legislative scheme must be enforced, and not merely the portion extending mayoral control of the schools,” she wrote.

DOE appealed and lost again in July. The DOE then agreed to the union’s demand of additional support for students in the 19 schools. Starting in September, DOE had to provide early intervention programs, small-group instruction and help for new immigrants, homeless students and those re-entering the school system. In exchange, DOE could co-locate new schools and programs in eight schools that had the space.

When the new school year started in September, the impact of budget cuts and staff attrition was evident. “I’m getting a lot of reports about extremely large class sizes ... We’re hearing numbers of 38, 39,” Mulgrew said in a NY1 television interview during the period when the DOE can make adjustments. “Two thousand less teachers, 19,000 more students – do the math.”

Most troublesome was that the DOE had rolled the longstanding early-grade class-size

Tom Murphy standing in for Tom Pappas



reduction program into a larger funding pool, which they could do under the state's foundation aid plan. Principals could still use the money to reduce early-grade class size, but they were not required to. The program had capped those grades at 25 or 26.

"So for the first time we're hearing about first, second and third grade with 32, 33 kids," Mulgrew told NY1. "The number one factor [in a child's success], you hear from the chancellor and mayor, is a highly effective teacher, and I agree with them. But a highly effective teacher becomes even more effective when class size is smaller."

In July the state announced sharply lower test scores, reflecting a higher cutoff point for proficiency. The average English language arts score was down 26 percentage points to 42 percent meeting or exceeding standards; the math scores were down 28 points to 54 percent. State Education Commissioner David Steiner said "there is no blame for teachers," rather, the tests were too "narrow ... predictable ... easy" and no longer reflected what students need to know for college.

The union had long faulted the city for relying too heavily on scores – and then the state Education Department asked Harvard researcher Daniel Koretz to look at its tests. "It is

very likely that some of the state's progress was illusory," Koretz advised in July.

With students getting used to the tests – and teachers being pressured to teach to them so their schools could look better – it had become a game. How else could one explain the rise on state math tests from 57 percent passing in 2006 to 82 percent in 2009? "You can have exaggerated progress overall that creates very high pass rates. It doesn't seem logical to call those kids proficient," Koretz said.

As school began, the union, elected officials and education advocacy groups tackled three nagging issues in a "Save Our Schools" campaign. They called for intensive academic services for students who are below proficiency; strong comprehensive support for schools without rushing to close them; and an end to all high-stakes decisions based on test scores, coupled with a new accountability system for schools aligned with the state.

When Mulgrew addressed the Save Our Schools kickoff rally, he referred to this history, adding: "Yet has there been a change on the Progress Report by the Department of Education? No! ... We are now still basing 85 percent of decisions for schools [and students] off of a test that has been called invalid ... This is wrong. It is bad policy. The parents, the teach-

ers, want their children to be taught problem-solving skills, critical thinking ... We need a well-rounded curriculum that makes us drill down in every subject area, not more and more intensive test-prep. We are playing a game with children's lives."

Through all this, the union kept busy on organizing and contract bargaining.

In January, the UFT's 28,000 family child care providers ratified their first contract 3,658 to 54. This unique agreement phases in health insurance benefits within four years, provides funding for professional development and grants to improve the quality of the learning environment, and introduces a grievance procedure so providers can resolve payment and contract disputes, as well as licensure and inspection issues. It sets a state standard for determining the market rate which the city pays providers, which will be recalibrated every two years. Most important, providers now have a voice on the job and the respect for which they fought.

"There was a time when providers were disrespected by the City and the State of New York," said Chapter Chair Tammie Miller. "Those days are over."

Elsewhere on the organizing front, the union struggled for a first contract for teachers at Merrick Academy, managed by the for-profit Victory Charter Schools. In July the company abruptly fired 11 teachers and teacher assis-

tants – one-third of the staff – with four-sentence letters delivered by FedEx. Those discharged included the chapter leader and two other members of the five-person negotiating team. "A brazen attempt at union-busting," said the union.

The UFT took the matter to PERB which, in a rare move, went to court to secure an injunction against the firings. Victory agreed to rehire all of the staff who wanted to return. "Now we're back to trying to figure out how we get a contract out of them," VP Casey said.

The union organized two other charters and a private school:

- The Bronx Academy of Promise, which at press time appeared to have broken away from its for-profit charter operator.
- The Charter High School for Architecture, Engineering and Construction Industries (AECI) in the South Bronx, another Victory school. "After the Merrick fight, charter boards are deciding that it makes more sense to work with teachers who want a union than to declare war on them," Casey said.
- The private Head Start and special education preschool at the Nazareth Early Childhood Center in Canarsie, operated by Birch Family Services. The NLRB certified the unit in June. Said teacher Christine Sananiello, "We all organized together. That was the big thing for us. We even got the cleaning staff. It was a big accomplishment."

Michael Mulgrew visits Aviation Vocational High School



Arthur Pepper





In early October, thousands of UFT members converged on Washington, D.C., for the massive “One Nation Working Together” rally at the Lincoln Memorial, which drew crowds from more than 300 labor, civil rights and progressive groups. Where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, tens of thousands of demonstrators built momentum for job-creation programs and for a push to get progressive and liberal voters to the polls in November, when Democrats were predicted to see erosion in their majorities in the House and Senate.

The UFT had spent months urging members and the public to attend this rally, including when VP Karen Alford and Anthony Harmon, director of parent and community outreach, promoted the event at Harlem Week in mid-August. The union sent buses and even chartered an Amtrak train to bring UFT, community members and elected officials.

The event took place several weeks after right-wing, tea party activists staged a widely publicized Washington rally to promote a very different vision of America’s future. While the conservative rally underlined economic and cultural divisions and promoted a cramped, jingoistic take on patriotism and American values, One Nation spoke to the expansive vision of America as an inclusive land of opportunity that always has been at the heart of the labor movement.

“This rally is about Americans, it’s about supporting unions and it’s about stopping the destruction of the middle class,” said participant Liz Gray, a teacher from Staten Island’s Hungerford School.

Mulgrew said, “This event represents the true America, multicultural and diverse. One Nation is a movement that’s about bringing people together, not pulling them apart ... We are here to say enough is enough. The middle class is under attack, services for the poor are under attack, unions are under attack and our school communities are under attack. And all the while, the disparity of wealth has grown to record levels.”

At the UFT Welfare Fund, improvements took effect Jan. 1 including extension of disability coverage, a new benefit for members taking child care leave (extending benefits for up to four months following the birth or adoption of a child) and increases in the optical and hearing aid benefits. There also were improvements for retirees in the optional rider reimbursement. To pay for these enhancements, the municipal unions worked out a deal with the city to exchange administrative savings for additional funding, which each union welfare fund could use as it judged best.

At the Delegate Assembly in November 2009, Fund Executive Director Pepper said, “As we see the economy crumbling

around us, we should be proud that we were not only able to hold onto the benefits we have, but actually improve them.”

On the nursing front, the Federation of Nurses/UFT remained a powerful voice on behalf of nurses and patients. With its NYSUT partners on the statewide Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC), the union won a campaign to abolish mandatory overtime for hospital nurses and was trying to extend this protection to visiting nurses. The Federation also was fighting for a nurse on-site in every K-12 school and for stronger laws to protect nurses from violence; and continued to seek better staffing ratios and to overcome the nursing shortage in the city and state.

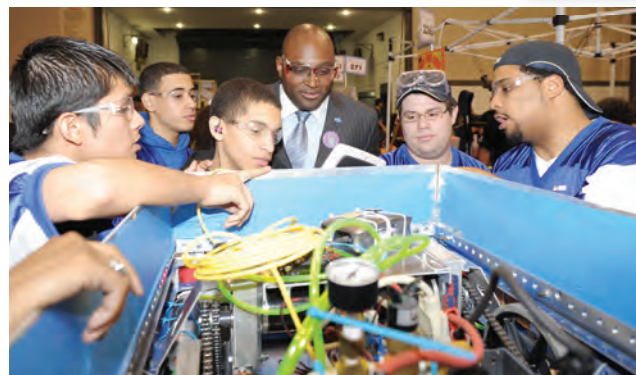
In addition, in its role as patient advocate, the Federation won the right for the public to know the nurse-patient ratio in hospitals. This should help people make informed decisions about where to seek treatment, and it should make hospitals be more accountable for staffing levels. And in January, 99 percent of the registered nurses at the Visiting Nurse Service ratified a new two-year contract with wage increases, no givebacks and full employer pension-and-benefits funds.

Furthermore: At the UFT’s 50th anniversary celebration in March, former President Bill Clinton accepted a check for \$100,000 representing members’ contributions to support his foundation’s work in earthquake-devastated Haiti. Elementary VP Karen Alford headed the charity drive ... In June, VP Carmen Alvarez attacked the Regents for considering three cost-cutting proposals that would undermine special education – allowing more than 12 students in integrated co-teaching classes; eliminating minimum service requirements for speech services; and no longer requiring schools to give teachers and service providers paper or electronic copies of students’ Individualized Education Programs. The Regents instead should force the DOE to provide the services required by the IEPs, she said ... The union’s Albert Shanker Scholarship Fund awarded four-year, \$5,000-a-year scholarships to 250 public school students, as it had done for 41 years. So far, the union has awarded \$41 million in scholarships to 8,000 public high school graduates ... Dial-A-Teacher fielded 85,042 phone calls in 2009-

Anne Goldman

Sterling Roberson at the robotics competition

MUNICIPAL LABOR COMMITTEE
**UNION & COMMUNITY MEMBERS
 STANDING TOGETHER** 



2010, up 17,000 from the year before. Now with Internet capability, the program's 46 teachers can download students' essays, instead of listening to them being read on the phone. They also have a hand-over-hand feature, so teachers can remotely point to things on the student's computer screens ... Retired Teachers Chapter Leader Tom Murphy thanked retirees for their vigorous political action to secure the Health Care Reform Act of 2010, "the biggest victory for Americans since the Medicare Act of 1965 and the Social Security Act of 1935" ... In the September primary, the union waged a fierce and victorious campaign to protect several endorsed candidates who had been targeted by hedge-fund millionaires who opposed reforms for charter schools. "The idea that ... you're going to send a candidate in with buckets full of money into a community where they have no relationships and tell them what the agenda should be – I thought it was very arrogant," Mulgrew said ... Longtime UFT chapter leader Greg Lundahl ran a grassroots campaign against Manhattan Assemblyman Jonathan Bing after Bing introduced legislation that would create incentives for principals to get rid of veteran teachers, but Lundahl did not prevail ...

••••



Throughout its history, the UFT has held true to the vision of quality public education that it embraced in its earliest days and which the founders of the teacher union movement almost 100 years ago would recognize easily: qualified teachers, small classes, rich support services, consistent funding, a faculty voice in decisions and strong alliances with parents.

This program isn't magic; it is time-tested and proven, yet the UFT – the one constant in the ever-shifting constellation of city and state government – has to fight the same battles and make the same arguments again and again. The great wheel of history keeps turning, as the union perseveres for the sake of its ever-growing membership and its continually knowledgeable- and service-hungry students and clients.

The coming years will be a test, with an uncertain economy and polarized political discourse. Regardless, the UFT intends to keep working at the community level, with parents and elected officials who want schools to continue to offer a path to equal opportunity and upward mobility.

On the first day of school in September 2010, Michael Mulgrew visited two schools, one where 23 percent of the children were from homeless shelters and another where 40 percent of students were English language

learners. The union's goal is to get those students and all of the UFT staff who work with them – and with all of the other students citywide – the resources they need to succeed.

The broad coalitions that the union has built over the past decade should help, for now it is no longer the UFT alone that presses for smaller classes, more seats, better health care, better nutrition and more. It is parents and community leaders from across the city – and business leaders and philanthropists, as well – who have come to trust the union as the true voice for reform.

When the next chapter of the history of the United Federation of Teachers is written, the union hopes that it will say that the conversation shifted on our watch, that the needs of students became paramount, and that teachers gained the respect they deserve.

And, the union fully anticipates, some future historian will write about the amazing work done day in and day out by the 200,000 inspiring members of the United Federation of Teachers – their dedication, their commitment, their professionalism in schools, health care, home child care settings and more.



L to R: **Evelyn DeJesus**, Manhattan Borough Rep., **Karen Alford**, Vice President of Elementary Schools, **Amina Gentile**, Vice President at-large, **Leo Casey**, Vice President of Academic High Schools, **Mona Romain**, Assistant Treasurer, **Anthony Harmon**, Director of Parent and Community Outreach, **Richard Farkas**, Vice President of Middle Schools, **Sterling Roberson**, Vice President of Career and Technical Education High Schools, **Michael Mulgrew**, President, **Leroy Barr**, Staff Director, **Howard Schoor**, Brooklyn Borough Rep., **Mel Aaronson**, Treasurer, **Rona Freiser**, Queens Borough Rep., **Robert Astrowsky**, Assistant Secretary, **Carmen Alvarez**, Vice President of Special Education



Karen Alford and Anthony Harmon

It is now 50 years since the UFT was born on March 16, 1960. Our union's founders were trade unionists and educators dedicated to the idea that teachers deserve to have the respect of education officials as well as the public.

Our founders had a strong belief in public education and the value of our public schools in a democratic society. Our early slogan, "Democracy in Education and Education for Democracy," was a true expression of their beliefs.

It goes without saying that our leaders and members over these past 50 years made huge sacrifices to build the union we know today. Our first strike on November 7, 1960, for collective bargaining rights is a demonstration of the will and desire of those who came before us to make every sacrifice to build a viable union that would truly represent the concerns and interests of our members, as well as their beliefs in trade unionism and public education.

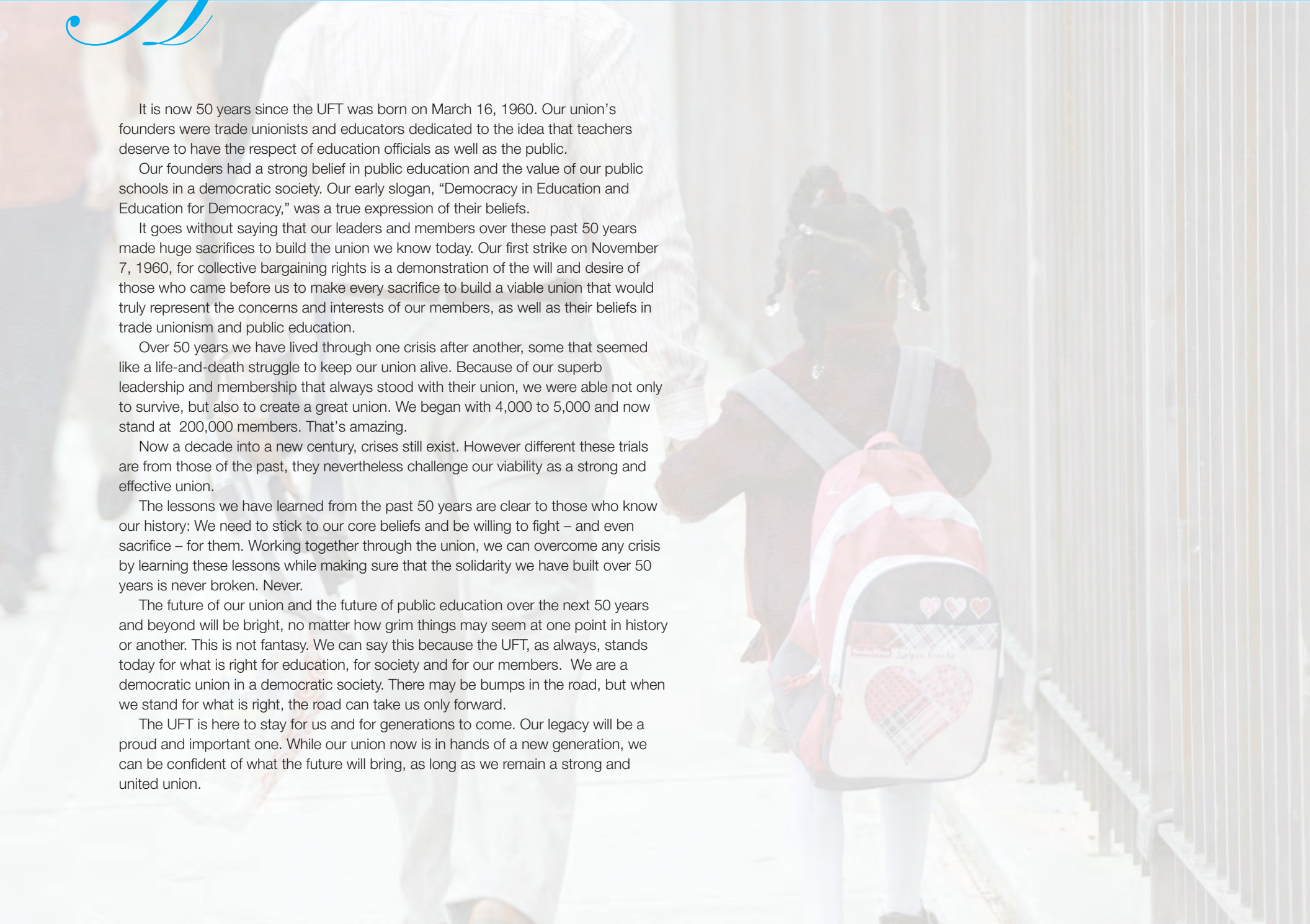
Over 50 years we have lived through one crisis after another, some that seemed like a life-and-death struggle to keep our union alive. Because of our superb leadership and membership that always stood with their union, we were able not only to survive, but also to create a great union. We began with 4,000 to 5,000 and now stand at 200,000 members. That's amazing.

Now a decade into a new century, crises still exist. However different these trials are from those of the past, they nevertheless challenge our viability as a strong and effective union.

The lessons we have learned from the past 50 years are clear to those who know our history: We need to stick to our core beliefs and be willing to fight – and even sacrifice – for them. Working together through the union, we can overcome any crisis by learning these lessons while making sure that the solidarity we have built over 50 years is never broken. Never.

The future of our union and the future of public education over the next 50 years and beyond will be bright, no matter how grim things may seem at one point in history or another. This is not fantasy. We can say this because the UFT, as always, stands today for what is right for education, for society and for our members. We are a democratic union in a democratic society. There may be bumps in the road, but when we stand for what is right, the road can take us only forward.

The UFT is here to stay for us and for generations to come. Our legacy will be a proud and important one. While our union now is in hands of a new generation, we can be confident of what the future will bring, as long as we remain a strong and united union.



Wall of Honor

The UFT was built by countless heroes and heroines who fought for the rights and dignity of all union members. In 2010, the UFT began honoring some of these outstanding leaders on a Wall of Fame at union headquarters. Here are the first 50:

MEL AARONSON began teaching high school biology more than 50 years ago. He chaired the Bronx strike network and now serves as both UFT treasurer and as an elected member of the New York City Teachers' Retirement System. His insight and ideas have been crucial in securing numerous legal changes that have improved TRS pensions.

GEORGE ALTOMARE wants to be remembered for: Creating the Committee for Action Through Unity, which drew high school teachers and merged with the elementary-dominated Teachers Guild to create the UFT. He created and ran the strike network that led to successful UFT strikes; he chaired all strike committees except in 1975. He helped negotiate contracts through 1985. And he worked extensively with other unions, particularly the United Farm Workers, for which he went to jail with César Chávez. He is now the UFT's director of professional committees and worker education.

JOHN BAILEY, a leader of the High School Teachers Association and the wildcat strike of evening school teachers in 1959, knew an opportunity when he saw one. Working undercover with George Altomare of the Teachers Guild, he fostered the merger that created the UFT. He became a vice president for vocational high schools and a legislative assistant.

SI BEAGLE, a member of the Guild and UFT executive boards, helped shape the union's More Effective Schools concept (smaller classes, more resources). He was an essential bridge between senior and new teachers in the

1950s and 1960s and helped build consensus on big issues. He suggested that the union provide continuing education programs for retirees, and the Retired Teachers Chapter learning center bears his name.

EUGENE BLUM worked for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union before becoming a teacher. After the UFT's founding, he was an assistant legislative representative and served on the Executive Board and the strike and organizing network.

CHARLES COGEN was the UFT's first president after leading the Teachers Guild in the 1950s. He taught elementary school in Brooklyn while attending law school at night. After practicing for a few years, he returned to teaching, first at Grover Cleveland High School and later at Bronx High School of Science. He was the ultimate democrat, insisting that everyone's word be listened to equally, and when a decision was made, even if he opposed it, he carried it out as if it had been his own. He led the first strike on November 7, 1960, to win the right to collective bargaining and a second strike in 1962 to win our first contract, which contained the nation's first contractual class-size limits.

THERESA "TESS" COHEN was an elementary school teacher and a member of the Teacher's Guild before becoming the UFT's first treasurer. She saw to it that the union's finances were beyond reproach, while playing a huge role in the production of union publications.

GOLDIE COLODNY, Jules Kolodny's sister, was a school secretary and staunch union supporter

while working at the Bronx's PS 66 in the 1950s and 1960s. She helped launch the UFT School Secretaries Chapter, in 1962 winning a contested representation election against AF-SCME; she secured secretaries' first contract in 1965. The union honors her with the Goldie Colodny Award for powerful advocates of secretaries' rights.

VITO DELEONARDIS was chapter leader of Sheepshead Bay High School during the UFT's first strike. He was the first UFT staff director, the first Welfare Fund director (designing bedrock programs in the 1960s), and later NY-SUT's staff director. He put together unprecedented benefits packages which still serve UFT members.

JEANNETTE DILORENZO and her husband, John, had organized professional staff at the city Department of Finance for AFSCME before going into teaching. After her second day in school, they showed up at Guild headquarters asking how they could help. Within a year they had signed up nearly all of the teachers at their school, JHS 142 in Brooklyn. She later served as a district rep, a borough rep, treasurer and head of the Retired Teachers Chapter.

SANDRA FELDMAN, a teacher at PS 34 in Manhattan, was a field rep in the battles of the 1960s, the union's director of staff and the third president. She believed that all children deserved a good public school education and that public institutions have an obligation to fulfill that mission. She was never afraid to challenge mayors, governors and chancellors on such issues as class size, unsafe working conditions and budget cuts. A firm believer in professional development and parent outreach, she expanded the Teacher Centers and Dial-A-Teacher and launched an annual parent conference. She later was president of the American Federation of Teachers.

RAY FRANKEL was one of only five people from her school to risk her job and walk the picket line in the 1960 strike, but her tenacity and recruiting skills helped the movement grow. She served on the Guild's and the UFT's Executive Boards and remains the UFT's Election Committee chair, responsible for all of the minutiae of running union elections.

ANNE GOLDMAN was a registered nurse at Lutheran Medical Center who led the effort to create the Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals. She has continued to organize and bargain for private-sector RNs, bringing new strength to the union.

ALLEN GRIGGS played a pivotal role in organizing the early strikes in Brooklyn. He served as junior high school vice president, but was best known for his work in the Grievance Department. His encyclopedic compendium of arbitration decisions guided union grievance reps for decades.

JOHN HAGAN was the union's first assistant secretary and chair of the Guild's organizing committee. He helped pave the way for the Committee for Action Through Unity to merge with the Teachers Guild as part of a committee (with George Altomare, Jules Kolodny, David Selden and Rebecca Simonson) which called for a "promotional differential" for all teachers with master's degrees, regardless of which grade level they taught. He also co-chaired the first Bronx network, helping to organize members in that borough.

SIDNEY HARRIS, the union's first secretary, taught at Manhattan's Junior High School 13. A pioneer in special education, he was a tireless champion of children with special needs; a union award in his name recognizes outstanding special educators. He also was active in civil rights and Al Shanker once described

him as “a vital force in human decency.”

VELMA HILL, a protégé of civil rights leaders Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph, was instrumental in organizing paraprofessionals. As the chapter’s first chair, she negotiated their first contract and helped create the career ladder program, which paved the way to higher salaries and careers in teaching and other fields. A civil rights activist and an AFT vice president, she later was director of human rights and international affairs for the Service Employees International Union and became a psychotherapist.

PONSIE HILLMAN embodied union solidarity during many years as a UFT officer and Executive Board member, especially during the 1968 strike. She also served on NYSUT’s Board of Directors. But she stood out for her commitment to education, social justice and civil rights. A lifelong NAACP member, she received an AFT award for her work in Freedom Schools in the segregated South.

SAMUEL HOCHBERG participated in the evening high school teacher walkout in 1959 and was a key player in the merger that created the UFT. He taught math at Bayside High School and was the UFT’s deputy president to Charles Cogen when the union formed.

SOL JAFFE came out of junior high schools and was the union’s first elected secretary before becoming the vice president for junior high schools. A chapter leader and a strong organizer, he chaired the collective bargaining committee and helped negotiate early contracts.

VINCENT KASSENBRÖCK was a teacher at Fort Hamilton High School and one of the original legislative reps. He was a liaison to the AFL-CIO and helped organize the first pension and legislative committees.

ANN KESSLER, a longtime member of the Guild and UFT Executive Boards, was a classroom teacher and a chapter leader before serving as a district rep and borough rep in Brooklyn. She focused her energies on getting members involved in the union, especially in political action. She was a legislative assistant for the union, served as a union administrator and gave more than 50 years to the cause of education.

JULES KOLODNY, one of the first UFT secretaries, devoted 50 years to the teacher union movement. A high school social studies teacher during the Depression, he assisted Presidents Cogen and Shanker and was often at the center of decision-making, including contract negotiations, actions and strikes. A member of the state bar, he argued teacher rights cases before the courts and the state education commissioner.

ISRAEL KUGLER was the union’s first vice president for colleges. Teaching at what is now the New York City College of Technology, he founded the United Federation of College Teachers, which won one of the nation’s earliest collectively bargained college contracts. Through a merger, the UFCT became the Professional Staff Congress, which represents City University of New York faculty.

NEIL LEFKOWITZ was the first vice president for junior high schools. He was a leader and a stalwart when it came to union solidarity, serving on the organizing and strike network as well as the Executive Board.

ABE LEVINE, the first vice president of elementary schools, helped lead the tumultuous strikes of the 1960s that solidified the UFT as a strong and vital union. With more than 50 years on the executive boards of the Teachers Guild and the UFT, he often rose to offer a principled opinion filtered through experience. Abe remains an officer of the retiree chapter.

ALAN LUBIN has a saying: “If you are doing it alone, you are doing it wrong.” He has spent his life teaching members how to stand up and be heard, first as a UFT district and borough rep, then as NYSUT’s executive vice president. His commitment and his success in the legislative and political arenas were essential to the growth of our union and the state organization.

HERB MAGIDSON was a high school chapter chairman and one of the original borough reps. He was also an assistant to Al Shanker before going to work at NYSUT. And when he retired from NYSUT, he went to the AFT to once again work with Al. Now retired, he continues to work on behalf of independent and free trade unions around the world.

JACK MANDEL was a Teachers Guild leader and a strong advocate for public education, particularly for students with special needs. He was a founding officer, a legislative representative and as a member of the first Executive Board.

ALICE MARSH was an elementary and junior high school teacher whose support was crucial for the merger that formed the UFT. She came into her own after retirement, when she was free to become the union’s first Albany representative. There, she fought to protect teachers and schools from bad legislation and promoted forward-thinking policies.

BENJAMIN MAZEN taught at Walton High School, served as one of the union’s first vice presidents, chaired the first Grievance Committee and, as a licensed lawyer, represented the union in major cases without charge. Considered a problem-solver whom members could depend on, he authored the union’s first handbook on teachers’ rights.

REUBEN MITCHELL made a name in the Teachers Guild with his knowledge about pensions and

other financial matters. Outspoken in his views on teacher rights and benefits, he was elected a trustee of the New York City Teachers’ Retirement System. He also headed the UFT pension committee and was a union legislative representative.

FRED NAUMAN drew on strength he didn’t know he had as chapter leader of PS 271 during the Ocean Hill-Brownsville turmoil; he played a crucial role in protecting due process when he and other teachers were arbitrarily dismissed in 1968. He was the first director of the UFT Scholarship Fund and later became secretary-treasurer of NYSUT.

TOM PAPPAS, whom Randi Weingarten once called the heart and soul of the UFT, served 50 years as a member, borough rep, staff director and the Retired Teachers Chapter leader. He took on big jobs, from spearheading the union’s response to the school system’s asbestos crisis, to enforcing city compliance with a union-won mandate to maintain schools, to green-lighting a cancer-education program. Relentless in his commitment, Tom never let us forget that “the bad guys never go away.”

ROGER PARENTE, an English teacher at Grace Dodge Vocational High School, was a High School Teachers Association activist who supported the merger between the Guild and the Committee for Action Through Unity (which Teachers Guild activists created to lure high school teachers) which created the UFT. He served on the first UFT Executive Board and was a union officer. His lifelong pursuit was to elevate teaching as a profession and teachers as professionals.

MARIA PORTALATIN was a leader in the union’s paraprofessional chapter, leading that chapter for many years. She made sure that civil, social, economic and human rights were always at the

top of the union's agenda. She served as an AFT vice president and won the AFT's Women's Rights Award in 2006.

MARIO RAIMO was a vocal advocate of public education and workplace equity. He taught at Evander Childs High School and rose through the UFT ranks to serve as the Bronx borough representative, director of legislation and, for 20 years, as chairman of the COPE political action fund. A lifelong unionist, he even met his wife, Delores, on a picket line.

DAN SANDERS was a principal architect of the teacher labor movement, working in the 1950s to organize Astoria Junior High School with colleagues Al Shanker and George Altomare. He became one of the Young Turks who pushed the Guild into merger and rebirth as the United Federation of Teachers. He was Shanker's assistant and later became NYSUT's executive vice president.

BILL SCOTT, a finance and pension expert, never sought credit for his achievements, but made a huge impact as a key staff member under Presidents Shanker and Feldman. Earlier, while working for the city comptroller, he helped engineer the UFT's valuable contributions to the city during the 1970s fiscal crisis. He also served as executive director of the Teachers' Retirement System, where he created some of the financial programs and services that members still enjoy today.

DAVID SELDEN started the teachers union in Dearborn, Michigan, and was the AFT's east-of-the-Mississippi organizer after World War II. With AFT financing, he and two secretaries were the Teachers Guild's only paid staff in the early 1950s. From the start he pressed the Guild's Old Guard to seek collective bargaining, while working with the Young Turks to organize schools. Central to the merger which created the

UFT, he worked both publicly and behind the scenes to advance the profession. He mentored many of the union's founders and became AFT president.

ALBERT SHANKER, our union's second president and later president of the American Federation of Teachers, blazed the trail for teacher unionism throughout the country and helped the UFT grow into the largest teachers union local. He said his proudest achievement was organizing paraprofessionals. He was known for his civil rights work, his *New York Times* column and helping to save New York City from bankruptcy in the 1970s. But his legacy may lie in his embrace of higher academic standards and helping to transform public schools for the 21st century.

DAVID SHERMAN, who joined the picket lines in the 1960s, put together the original proposal for Teacher Centers. As President Sandy Feldman's top educational aide, he worked with the school system and districts to ensure that programs were implemented responsibly – and raised a stink when they weren't. As the union's first vice president for educational issues and programs, he was instrumental in developing educational policies and strategy.

REBECCA SIMONSON was ahead of her time. An outspoken elementary school teacher who strongly believed in workers' rights, she served as Teachers Guild president from 1941 to 1952. She worked many years more to bring teachers into the union movement and also was a long-time AFT vice president.

ALBERT SMALLHEISER started teaching at Boys High School in 1913 and remained there his entire career. He saw the union's mission as about social justice and the road to higher salaries. He was president of the Teachers Guild during difficult times and persevered in helping to organize teachers into the union.

JOHN SOLDINI taught social studies at Tottenville High School and was Staten Island district rep. As the UFT's vice president for academic high schools, he helped create the collaborative chapter/administrator provision in our contract. He is now a vice chair of the union's Retired Teachers Chapter.

LUCILLE SWAIM, with a doctorate in economics and college teaching experience, was lent to the fledgling UFT in 1961 by Walter Reuther's AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department. She worked in the election in which teachers chose the UFT as bargaining representative and helped fashion the first contract along industrial union lines by including grievance machinery, working conditions and the nation's first contractual class-size limits. The IUD sent her to help Boston teachers win collective bargaining rights. She then aided Long Island AFT locals win bargaining rights and negotiate contracts. She returned to the UFT in 1969 and became coordinator of negotiations, a post she still holds. Today, the UFT has more than 40 bargaining units.

ELI TRACHTENBERG, who worked on an automobile assembly line as a UAW member before becoming a junior high school teacher, favored school-based organizing: Each school chapter would elect a chair, hold weekly meetings and work to improve school conditions – and meetings were open to nonmembers. The chapter life which evolved drew nonmembers into the union fold. The UFT remembers him with annual Trachtenberg Awards for chapter-building.

PHYLLIS WALLACH was a junior high school math teacher at IS 246 in Brooklyn. She was a delegate, chapter leader and an officer. But her greatest contribution came as a teacher-member of the Teachers' Retirement Board, where she provided crucial leadership in the development of pension investment policies.

RANDI WEINGARTEN arrived at the UFT as Sandy Feldman's legal counsel, but she became an appointed teacher. When she succeeded Sandy as president, her mantra was simple: Every school should be a place where teachers want to work and where parents want to send their kids. Under her leadership, the UFT and the profession took huge leaps forward. She helped boost salaries, secured key pension improvements and expanded Teacher Centers. A signal achievement was organizing 28,000 home day care providers.

DAVID WITTES, an accountant during the Depression, found his calling in teaching. His lasting contributions were as UFT treasurer and as a trustee of both the Welfare Fund and the Teachers' Retirement System. He was the architect of the modern pension system, dramatically lowering the service and age requirements so teachers could retire after 20 years of service and at age 55 in what later was called Tier I. Today's teachers owe their retirement security to his foresight.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This history would not have been possible without the vision of the committee which planned the UFT's 50th anniversary celebration, chaired by Sandra March. Among the committee members who helped were UFT founders George Altomare and Abe Levine.

Former Director of Policy Research Susan Amlung provided thoughtful editing. Special Assistant to the President Brian Gibbons, UFT research librarian Lorrie-Ann Gheraldi and UFT archivist Tom Dickson were relentless in their pursuit of facts and documents. Micah Landau of the *New York Teacher* helped with research. Melinda Daniels, a student intern, did endless photocopying. AFT archivist Dan Golodner of the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University was particularly helpful with information on the start of the Teachers League and Teachers Union.

The manuscript was carefully reviewed by a diverse group including, alphabetically, UFT Treasurer and TRS Trustee Mel Aaronson; Elementary VP Karen Alford; former High School VP George Altomare; former Vocational High School VP Frank Carucci; High School VP Leo Casey; Special Representative for Educational Programs Joseph Colletti; Thomas Dickson; Staff Director Ellie Engler; Vice President for Educational Issues Aminda Gentile; Counsel to the President Carol Gerstl; Brian Gibbons; Lorrie-Ann Gheraldi; UFT Director of Parent and Community Outreach Anthony Harmon; General Manager David Hickey; former Elementary VP Abe Levine; UFT / RTC Liaison and TRS Trustee Sandra March; Retired

Teachers Chapter Leader and former UFT Political Action Director Tom Murphy; former Staff Director Tom Pappas; UFT Special Representative and certification expert Ann Rosen; and former High School VP John Soldini.

Two histories are essential to understanding the UFT and the forces that shaped it. The first is Diane Ravitch's "The Great School Wars: New York City, 1805-1973," which mostly focuses on the evolution of the school system, rather than on teachers or their unions. The second is Richard D. Kahlenberg's "Tough Liberal," a biography of Albert Shanker.

For information on the struggles of women teachers in the early 20th century, see "Becoming the 'New Women': The Equal Rights Campaigns of New York City School teachers, 1900-1920," by Patricia Carter, in "The Teacher's Voice: A Social History of Teaching in 20th Century America," edited by Richard J. Altenbaugh, 1992, The Falmer Press.

This work would not have been possible without the earlier UFT history by Jack Schierenbeck, "Class Struggles: The UFT Story." This magisterial nine-part series ran in the *New York Teacher*, where Jack was a reporter. It provides insight, personal stories and social context that this work could not hope to duplicate. It is posted on the UFT website and remains essential reading for anyone interested in the union's history.

Schierenbeck's articles – and by extension, this history – drew heavily on the UFT Oral History Project, which George Altomare produced between 1984 and 1986. The tapes and transcripts of the oral history interviews are in the UFT collection at NYU's Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

Writer: Neill S. Rosenfeld
UFT deputy director of communications and then director of internal communications, 1986-2003.

Designer: Christine Mathews
The UFT's graphics director since 1985.

We both lived a great deal of this history and are thrilled to pass it on.

Photography: This publication draws on the union archive, which does not always identify the photographers. The majority of the earlier photographs used in this book are courtesy of the UFT Collection of the Robert F. Wagner Archives at New York University. The UFT thanks all of the people, known and unknown, who have made photographs over the years, including these individuals:

Pat Arnow, Maria Bastone, Bruce Cotler, Andy Feldman, Adam Fernandez, Bob Gomel, Susan Lerner, Miller Photography, Ted Neuhoff, David Renatas, Gary Schoichet, Jonathan Smith, Jim Sulley, Larry Tallis

Printer: Jon Da Printing

Note on Internal Politics

Because of its complexity and the space it would have taken to detail, this history consciously omits the union's vibrant internal political life with two exceptions – the struggle with communists in the 1930s and the 1962 strike.

Jack Schierenbeck's seminal UFT history, "Class Struggles," touches on some of the figures and ideas that shaped the UFT experience which are not mentioned here; written for the *New York Teacher*, it is available at www.uft.org. But a true history of the philosophical differences and political caucuses that have flourished within the UFT remains to be written.

The contest of ideas has always been part of UFT culture, for the union encourages open debate. Hallmarks of the UFT's democratic protections include: all candidates for union office can get a list of chapter leaders, so they can seek avenues to disseminate their literature; all candidates and caucuses are guaranteed space in the *New York Teacher* to present their case to all members at election time; and, to avoid any question about the integrity of the vote, UFT elections are tallied by an independent organization, such as the American Arbitration Association.



United Federation of Teachers

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