Special Education: Leave No Child Behind
nals, it is time the school system accepted the fact that the responsibility for educating the children is that of the schools and the educators, not society at large, not the parents and certainly not the other school children. This responsibility is not abrogated by the existence of societal factors that make the job more difficult. When people choose to become educators, when they accept jobs in the public school system, they knew the conditions they would encounter. We shall never succeed in educating disadvantaged children if we do not face up to this responsibility.

One of the most difficult areas the schools must address is classroom disruption. Many despair of solving this problem. In a recent discussion, entitled “Trauma, Classroom Disruption – What Some Schools Are Doing About It,” led by Professor David S. Seeley, sponsored by the CUNY Center for Urban Education Policy, Greg Grecius, Director of Instructional Support Teams, CSD 10, and a team from MS 309 addressed their comprehensive approach and its effects. This school suffers from all of the contributing factors apologetists like to call on – health/poverty, language, parent/child, and community issues. Despite these external factors, fundamental to the MS 309 program is acceptance of ownership of the problem by the school community. The results sound very encouraging. If this problem can be dealt within the schools, and by the schools, so can other problems. This is not to say that it isn’t helpful if these external conditions do not exist, but they do, and it is up to the schools to work around them. And, it is up to the chancellor and the district superintendents to provide the schools with the help and leadership that they require.

One thing that cannot be accepted is continued failure. Lee Ioccoza once said, “Either lead, follow, or get out of the way.” This should be the motto of a “can do” school system.

**COMMENTARY**

A Better IDEA: Transforming “Wait to Fail” to “Start to Succeed”

By JAMES H. WENDORF

The passage and implementation of the landmark Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975 guaranteed—for the first time in history—a free and appropriate public education for children with disabilities. Since then, IDEA has helped to improve the lives of millions of children with disabilities who are now learning and achieving at levels previously thought impossible.

Up for reauthorization by Congress next year, IDEA is now the subject of considerable debate as proposed improvements are examined. A particular area in need of change is the specific learning disability (SLD) category, which serves almost half of the six million children and young people covered by IDEA.

While current approaches for identifying learning disabilities and determining eligibility for special education services have helped define and systemize programs and services, they have not fully met students’ needs. Recent breakthroughs in scientific research and teaching have demonstrated the need to update the approaches used by school officials to identify, assess and teach students who require special attention.

The heart of the problem is late identification and inaccurate assessment of students with learning disabilities. Too many students are forced to “wait to fail” before gaining access to instruction and support services that can help them achieve to their potential.

A “start to succeed” approach would screen children as young as four years old in early language and reading skill development, just as they are screened for vision and hearing. This provides adequate time to identify and address problems before they intensify, and enables more effective delivery of services based on students’ individual needs.

Currently there is no federally mandated approach to identifying children suspected of having learning disabilities. Instead, each state or local school district has the authority to determine its assessment approach, with most relying on IQ tests. The use of IQ Achievement formulae to identify learning disabilities is unreliable and cannot continue to be sanctioned.

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) advocates the use of instructionally based identification approaches that cover a broad age range and minimize cultural and linguistic bias. Furthermore, eligibility decisions should draw from information collected from a comprehensive individual evaluation using multiple sources of information, be made through an interdisciplinary team, and be based on students’ individual needs and strengths.

NCLD has proposed to federal policymakers detailed approaches to identifying learning disabilities for consideration as part of IDEA reauthorization. The recommendations have been tried and tested in states and school districts across the country and have already made a difference in the lives of thousands of children. It’s time to take these strategies to scale.

Recommending changes to a system that provides a lifetime of services and support to millions of children demands extraordinary precision and care. It also demands a willingness among teachers, other school officials, and parents to challenge the status quo. Research-based data must inform our policy recommendations as well as the new practices we seek to implement. It is only in this spirit that we can work together to deliver even greater outcomes to children with disabilities.

James H. Wendorf is the Executive Director of the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), headquartered in New York City.
We Need Mentors

By JILL S. LEVY

These are certainly not the best of times for New York City public schools. They are facing the worst of times, but for New York City school principals it is not “the age of wisdom.” For too many of our children, our schools are simply a wellspring of desperation, dependence on government and its programs. For some it boils down to a legal issue. For educators it is a matter of intellect and commitment.

For NYC principals, there are two obstacles that face them in the face of the fiscal sands shifting. On the one hand, principals have been addressing the challenge of educating students to ever higher standards that have been set by the New York State Regents. On the other hand, they have been handed a decision by the Appellate Court in the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit asserting that a sound basic education including “basic literacy, calculating, and verbal skills” is sufficient for students to eventually serve on juries and vote. As for employment, the court held that education that provided for the “lowest level of service jobs” was sufficient. The question is whether the NYS “lowest level of service jobs” was sufficient. The funding has not even kept pace with the “lowest level of service jobs” was sufficient. The question is whether the NYS “lowest level of service jobs” was sufficient. The funding has not even kept pace with the

A Tale of Two Obstacles

By MATILDA RAFFA CUOMO AND JACK M. ADRIEN

In 1987, when we established the New York State Mentoring Program (NYSMP), our vision was to provide children at risk of dropping out of school with the resources, materials and special attention they need on whom they could count. We have come far since 1987 when the NYSMP was initiated, but there is still so much work to be done.

The current New York State administration eliminated the NYSMP in 1995. However, Mentoring USA has been successful in keeping that dream alive. Unfortunately, there are still too many children who need a mentor. We have come far since 1987 when the NYSMP was initiated, but there is still so much work to be done.

David McCourt, who on September 11 lost his wife, Ruth, and daughter Juliana, four years old, has given a grant to Mentoring USA for B.R.A.V.E. (Bias Related Anti-Violence Education) an effective program to “keep Juliana’s memory alive” in order to foster harmony, peace and understanding among the children of the United States and the world. The program is now called B.R.A.V.E. Juliana and is designated to educate all children about diversity with books of ethnic heroes and demonstrate ethnic-conflict resolution.

The word is spreading as to the importance of mentoring and the impact that it has on our kids. Our work has made tremendous impact on lives. Provide your friends and acquaintances with the opportunity to also take part in a gratifying mentoring experience. The first step is often the hardest, so talk about mentoring with the members of your church, mosque, or synagoga. Involves the members of your Parent Teacher Association, Community Boards, or block associations. Support mentoring as a community service initiative to your fraternity or sorority, labor union or civic organization. The involvement in the mentoring process may take many forms. Numerous corporations have partnered with Mentoring USA and have made substantial in-kind donations of computers, books, as well as cash donations to the sites we service. Notably, Bloomingdale’s, Hasbro, Inc. and Morgan Stanley have not only actively aided with the recruitment of their employees to serve as mentors, but also have been generous supporters to providing vital resources for the Mentoring USA sites. There are always opportunities available to include someone looking for a way to become actively involved with children but who may not know how to get started. It is the role of Mentoring USA to initiate the new volunteers with training and placement. The mission is to give every child the chance to develop a strong relationship that can last a lifetime.

Matilda Raffa Cuomo is Founder and Chair of Mentoring USA. Jack M. Adrien is Mentoring USA’s Director of Volunteer Recruitment and Retention.
By LORI SKOPP

Eleven students from Solomon Schechter High School of New York participated in an innovative screech owl field trip in Central Park recently. In September 2001, 18 Eastern screech owls were released into Central Park as part of an effort to restore native species to the park. Since then, scientists from the Parks Department Wildlife Management Program and Fordham University have monitored the owls using visual tracking and radio telemetry. The field trip was led by James MacDonald, one of the urban park tracking and radio telemetry. The field trip was a rewarding experience for the students.

The goal of the field trip was to give Schechter students an opportunity to see biological field research in action. Schechter feels it is important for students to recognize that not all scientific research takes place in a traditional laboratory setting with test tubes and beakers. Rather, a great deal of biological, ecological, and geological research takes place in the field. The field trip introduced students to field research methods, with a project that is taking place literally across the street from the school. (The school is located at Central Park West and 91st Street).

Dorothy Bowser, Head of School, noted, “Our school’s proximity to major cultural institutions and to Central Park, as well as the creativity of our faculty, enables us to seamlessly integrate these outstanding resources into our exceptional curriculum.”

Schechter Students Track Screech Owls in Central Park

I.S. 318 Wins Chess Championship

Intermediate School 318 recently celebrated its third consecutive National Chess Championship. Located in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, I.S. 318 triumphed over thousands of competitors to bring the top prize back to Brooklyn.

The chess program at I.S. 318 has become a model educational partnership between the school and a non-profit organization called Chess-in-the-Schools (CIS), which is dedicated to bringing the game of chess to inner-city children.

The children at I.S. 318 are central to the success of the coeducational team, which serves students of all abilities and skill levels. The students dedicate an enormous amount of time to improving their play by attending the after-school chess club, practicing at home, playing during their lunch periods, and attending weekly tournaments across the city. The club also reflects the city’s great diversity. The team has students from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Russia, Poland, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Martinique, Haiti, Ecuador, China, and Mexico.

The success of the team would not have been possible without the support of Chess-in-the-Schools. Elizabeth Vicary coaches the club during the school day and intensive after-school sessions. World-renowned Grandmaster Miron Murnieks coordinate and chaperone the team to scores of tournaments and trips. Any educator will appreciate the special challenge of chaperoning 36 teenagers in a hotel for six days! Principal Alan Fierstein of I.S. 318 has led the way in the foundation of the team, refusing to allow any obstacle to stand in the way of the team’s success. At the District level, Superintendent Patricia Synan has generously and proudly supported the team.

The success of the team over three years has become contagious. The reputation of the school has been enhanced across the city as students have sought admission to the program. The school credits its outstanding 95 percent daily attendance rate and strong reading and math scores in part to the culture of achievement reinforced by the chess team.

The young chess champions from Brooklyn have made the entire school community proud. Miguel Borrero, one of the key players on the team summed up his feelings: “When I got off the plane from Milwaukee and my mom saw the big trophy I was carrying, she was happy. I was happy.”

I.S. 318 Wins Chess Championship

The 11 field trip participants are part of the school’s Science Research Program, which was established in February 2002 based on a model developed by the New York Academy of Sciences and SUNY Albany. Students choose a research topic in tenth grade, and spend summers and afternoons in eleventh grade working in research laboratories throughout the City. At the end of eleventh grade, students write professional quality research papers and participate in prestigious competitions. In addition to the Science Research Program, the school plans to expand its laboratory facilities, upgrade its technological resources, and add elective courses in robotics, engineering, environmental science, and Jewish ethics and science.

Lori Skopp is Director of Advanced Studies at the Solomon Schechter School. She was previously Director of Education at the NY Academy of Science.

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Helen Santiago: #1 IN #1

By JACOB M. APPEL

Helen Santiago and Community School District 1 go back a long ways. “My father jumped ship and hid out on Essex Street when he was 17 years old,” explains the district’s superintendent. “He was from what was then called the South Moluccas, which is now a part of the United Republic of Indonesia. For political reasons, when he was 14 he got on a steamer and went around the world once. He decided New York was where he wanted to be, went back and said good bye to his family—and then came to the Lower East Side.” Now Santiago, who is also French Canadian on her mother’s side and acquired the Hispanic last name through marriage, has come full circle. She is in charge of all the schools in the neighborhood where her father and millions of other immigrants first settled, the gateway to America that remains one of the most diverse school districts in the United States.

District 1 encompasses “the communities between the [Manhattan and Williamsburg] bridges” and includes Chinatown, Alphabet City and the traditional Lower East Side. It extends from the East River to First Avenue and stretches as far north as 12th Street. The district’s 24 schools are home to more than nine thousand children between kindergarten and grade eight. Santiago also shares responsibility for the district’s two collaborative high schools, the East Side Community High School and the Martha Varella School, which cover grades seven through twelve. The superintendent notes that these two schools stand at the cutting edge of “progressive middle school reform.”

According to Santiago, middle school reform was widely needed when she joined the district. “One of the things we’ve suffered from is that middle schools were begun in seventh grade,” she explains. “When you begin a middle school in grade seven in the climate that we are currently living in, you doom those children. They come in September of seventh grade and they know no one. A year later they have to fill out applications for high schools. If they’re coming in challenged already in reading or any other content area, they’re so enmeshed in making and creating relationships with each other as kids and with faculty and staff that this consumes a lot of their thinking time and their gray matter—and they never catch up.” One of Santiago’s goals is to establish more schools that begin in the fifth or sixth grades, when “much greater opportunity still exists to forge relationships with these children before they reach adolescence.” This issue is close to Santiago’s heart. She once taught at a school that transitioned from a junior high school to a middle school during her tenure.

Santiago’s original training is in elementary education. Yet after seven and a half years teaching in New York City, she moved to Biloxi, Mississippi, and then Peoria, Arizona, where she taught eighth grade language arts with an ancillary emphasis on English-Spanish bilingual education. She then returned to New York in the mid-1980s and worked as executive assistant to District 6 Superintendent Anthony Amato from 1987 to 1990. She also developed close professional relationships with now retired superintendents Maria Guasp of District 9 and Jim Mazza of District 3. These three mentors taught her the most important lesson for anybody involved in the art of education: “Always stay focused on kids.” She was also heavily influenced by the writings of social scientist Peter Senge and his emphasis on attention to small details. “The question Senge asks,” Santiago explains, “is, ‘How do you move an ocean liner?’ Not with the rudder, but with the trim tabs on the rudder. You make massive movement through paying attention to the little things. And I think that’s been part of the work that we’ve been trying to do here in District 1.” When the previous superintendent of District 1 left two years ago, Santiago was appointed acting superintendent by Chancellor Harold Levy.

One of Santiago’s first challenges as superintendent was to resolve a two million dollar budgetary shortfall. She did so by reducing her own staff and cutting back on over-expenditures. The superintendent proudly notes that even after these cutbacks, her district remains first citywide in per capita expenditures on children. New York spends approximately $11,000 per pupil in Santiago’s district. Yet she emphasizes that her primary area of interest and expertise is instruction. “Of course a successful superintendent has to be good at both,” she notes. “And a district has to be run on a day-to-day basis as well.” Her duties also include two annual visits to evaluate each school under her charge.

One area to which Santiago has devoted her energies is school choice. While she notes that she opposes the sort of voucher system that provides money for parents to send their children to private schools, she insists that parents need to have real options. “I think that we can do our own equivalent to vouchers through a choice program in our community school districts,” she explains. “And I think we can offer a wide range of wonderful schools for our parents to choose from.” As deputy superintendent in District 3, Santiago played an active role in expanding the variety of schools open to parents and their children. She now hopes to bring a similar range of options to her own district. She notes that District 1 is now an “open district of choice” where parents can choose to send their children to almost any school in the district.

The key to building a successful district, of course, involves choosing the right leadership team. Flexibility in hiring teachers and administrators, which has increased in recent years, makes this possible. So does District 1’s prime location; people want to work in Manhattan. “And with the right teachers and principals,” says Santiago, “you can do anything.” It can’t hurt to add the obvious: in a complex school system like New York’s, even the best teachers and principals can only do their jobs with the support of a strong and dedicated superintendent. Santiago seems to know this, and District 1 is already starting to reap the benefits in higher test scores, rapid school development and—just as important in a world of ever expanding choice and competition—a growing reputation for excellence. #
Profiles in Education: Sandra Priest Rose

By MARYLENA MANTAS

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Reading Reform Foundation of New York has given more than 3,000 teachers the tools necessary to bring their students closer to what the Foundation characterizes as a child's birthright “to learn to read, write and spell accurately.”

The Foundation does so through training teachers to teach “by using all four sensory channels to the mind, while imparting a systematic, phonetic approach to the language.” Teachers who “know that children could read, write and spell well, but that the teachers were not trained to teach them” established the organization, according to Sandra Priest Rose, a founding trustee of the Foundation who spent an early part of her career working as a reading consultant in Community School District 9 in the Bronx.

“I had a wonderful year,” she says of her experience in working with one student, but she realized that “the child did not learn how to read.” Rose vowed never to allow that to recur. Eager to make a change, she enrolled in a course conducted by Romalda Spalding, author of the Writing Road to Reading. She explained that the course offered her a new outlook on teaching reading, and she began encouraging their principal to bring Reading Reform personnel into the school. “Our work is intensive. We would love to please them to replicate what we do, but to do it as well as we do,” she said.

For more information visit www.readingreform.org.

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AT FIELDSTON, FOREIGN LANGUAGE GOES BEYOND HAND-OUTS

By CHRISTINA PERPIGNANO

It’s summertime at the Fieldston School in Riverdale and the campus, with its picturesque buildings and landscape, resembles that of Princeton University in New Jersey. Inside one of these buildings, foreign language teachers sit in a temperature-controlled computer room surrounded by 15 Macintoshes and 7 Dells. They are editing their own bilingual video on making guacamole. The three teachers, Esperanza Cano, Leticia Zervas-Gaytan, and Diane Ruscello, volunteered to take part in a weekend workshop designed to help them incorporate computer technology into their foreign language classrooms. Mary McFerran, the school’s Academic Technology Administrator, continued on page 32
Summer in the City: A Gift of Great Math for Gifted Students

By TOM KERTES

There’s really no reason why outstanding New York City high school students who are interested in a high quality summer program in math and science should have to be shipped all over the nation. “It was an untenable situation—but that’s exactly what the case has been for what seems like forever,” said Daniel Jaye, Assistant Principal of Mathematics at Stuyvesant High School. “So, a couple of years ago, I made a commitment to do something about it.”

In turning his dream into reality, Jaye has received invaluable help from his mentor, Alfred S. Posamentier, the Dean of the School of Education at The City College of the City University of New York. “He basically just said, “great idea, why don’t we have it right here on my campus?”,” said Jaye. “And then he helped me overcome all the obstacles, bureaucratic and otherwise. Which were, by the way, plenty. “Without AI, and his wonderful creative energy and might, I would never have been a math teacher,” added Jaye. “And without AI, this program would never have come to existence.” And that would indeed have been a great pity: 240 of New York’s finest students would have been deprived of what, in only its second year of existence, is already considered a stunningly successful effort.

“Last year we had 90 students,” said Jaye. “But the word got out—and we had to respond to the demand.” In fact, Jaye had to sort through 800 applications over “not much of a Memorial Day Weekend” before paring the crew down to the “big 240” (140 in math, 60 in science, and 40 in the new addition of 2002, theater arts).

But what kind of a high school kid would want to sit through such a demanding course of study for six long weeks smack in the middle of summer vacation? “Obviously, one who’s very focused, mature, motivated, and highly interested in the subject matter,” said Jaye. “You are with your peers—this program has allowed me to get away from the limitations of the other students, and even teachers, during the regular school year,” added Mark Xoe, a 2001 program participant, and 2002 teaching assistant, from Hunter College High School. “I’ve learned so much more math.... I feel so much better prepared for a career... I can’t even express how great this has been.”

While Jaye admits to attempting to get the “best kids in the City”, he was also careful “not to make this some kind of an elitist, just a Stuyvesant, Hunter, Bronx Science’ thing.” Thus student participants hail from all kinds of high schools—Forest Hills, Francis Lewis, Townsend Harris, Aviation, Brooklyn Tech and many more—from all over the city.

The program, completely free of charge to students, has hired Larry Zimmerman, David Hamblin, and Steven Conrad—three noted authors, and also three of the greatest math minds New York has to offer, as teachers. “It was like hiring the Three Tenors to teach opera,” gushed the enthusiastic Jaye, himself widely acknowledged as the leading light among high school math teachers in the City. “It was an unbelievable feeling to work with these gentlemen. And, obviously, wonderful for the kids.”

Besides the enormously elevated level of instruction, the students earn six college credits, get free food and free transportation, all thanks to the innovative College Now program that was born out of a rare cooperation between CCNY and the New York City Board of Education. “We wanted to make the transition to college more productive,” said Miguel Montes, Acting Director of College Now. “We wanted to connect the disconnect.”

The course is six weeks in duration, 9:30-4:30 every Monday through Friday. Along with the intensified instruction in the subject matter, it also includes a daily “Prime Time Lecture” where all the students get together at mid-day—and the subject could be anything. The deadline for application is May 10, “but, next year, we’d like to move it up,” Jaye said with a smile. “The word is out—we’re expecting an avalanche of applications.” #
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY HAS UNUSUAL SUMMER CAMP

By LENA KHIDRITSKY

Kids are running all over a dig site. A gorgeous day in a desert serves as the stunning backdrop with clear blue skies and golden sand stretching out as far as the eye can see. On stepping out of the desert you enter a lab full of equipment. Multicolored lights and pictures of scientists cover the walls, while dinosaur bones and other artifacts lie ready for eager hands. The children, each with their own field journal, are doing research on their own, making observations and learning. All this in the heart of Manhattan on a Wednesday afternoon at the American Museum of Natural History’s version of summer camp, a colorful bus parked outside the museum.

Operating as a Movable Museum, the bus also visits other boroughs. Not every day in camp has so “exotic” a setting, as most of the days are spent within the Museum building itself and not in this colorful bus. Campers are busy and learning all the time. Most campers love it, some don’t, but to paraphrase instructor Jenny Lando “you’ll never know unless you try.”

The camp runs for four weeks—July 8 to August 2—each with a different focus, including paleontology, archeology, herpetology and astrophysics. The kids are busy in the classroom, interacting with scientists and participating in hands-on activities. For the paleontology camp, those activities include a trip to the Movable Museum, the “dig site and lab.” The bus, with walls painted in a desert landscape, is equipped with different workstations in which the campers can practice hands-on all that they have learned. There is also a project to create a mini-museum with each child contributing a mini-exhibit. Many of the children chose to make a clay model of their favorite dinosaur.

For one week of museum fun the fee is $350. However, if you are interested in signing up you are going to have to wait until next year because this program is booked early. With the reviews that children and the staff give to the program, it’s not surprising. Morgan, 11, an aspiring paleontologist, says he likes camp because, “it’s interactive and I like being with people who share your thoughts.”

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With all the choices available for the summer, this camp offers a unique twist. Children aged 9 to 11 can participate for all four weeks or pick and choose what they are interested in. From 8:30 to 4:00, excluding a break for lunch, which occasionally takes place in neighboring Central Park, the camp offers them “a safe place to be with resources that should be shared,” says Lando. “The biggest difference is that it’s focused on a theme. [As opposed to a conventional camp] it has a foundation in reality. Kids who like science are aware they are part of a bigger community,” she adds of the camp’s appeal. So what have the children found out so far? “If the dinosaurs weren’t well enough to survive in their environment, we can learn from them,” says Morgan. And you thought it was just a pile of bones!#
HS Students Learn to Write at Sarah Lawrence College

BY CHRISTINA PERPIGNANO

Emily Leavitt, a 14-year-old student at Beacon High School, always had a desire to write. “I don’t have to be elated or depressed, but if an idea pops into my head I’ll write it down in my journal which I carry around with me,” she says.

This summer Emily had the opportunity to build upon the ideas she writes in her journal and to hone her writing skills as one of the 77 students who participated in the Summer Writing Workshop for high school students at Sarah Lawrence College in Westchester.

The program, which has been in existence for five years, accepts students on a first come, first serve basis, according to its Director Myra Goldberg. She added that this year approximately 60 percent of the students who were accepted received Fulbright scholarships. SLC graduate students teach the workshops and lectures that are part of the program, which runs for one week and serves high school students from grades 9 to 11 that hail from both suburban and urban areas. According to Goldberg, this year 50 percent of the participants came from urban areas.

“I’m heartened by the way in which kids from different backgrounds enrich each other’s experiences,” said Goldberg.

The workshop provides students with the opportunity to better their writing, but also to enhance their presentation skills, as they are encouraged to perform. Students are divided into smaller groups that focus on fiction, theater and poetry. Other projects included writing a script, directing and shooting. For example MTV and the Internet, these kids are particularly skilled with mixed media,” said Goldberg.

Garineh Galian, a high school student at Emerson High School and one of this year’s participants, admits to being nervous when she first arrived at the Sarah Lawrence campus where the program takes place.

“When I first got there, I turned to my mom and said ‘Why am I here?’” Garineh said, explaining that she considered herself an amateur writer. However, her fears disappeared when she discovered that her fellow students also had different levels of writing experience. The teaching style of the graduate students also helped.

“Our teachers always said ‘different isn’t bad or good, it’s just different.’ I definitely gained more confidence in my writing,” says Garineh.

“The teachers made the week fun.” Emily agreed and said that she loved the “no judgment” policy that the teachers instilled in the students. Both students recommend the program to other aspiring writers. Emily has only one suggestion. “Make the program longer!” she said.

Mayor Bloomberg Appoints Joel Klein As Schools Chancellor

On July 29th, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced the appointment of Joel I. Klein as New York City Schools Chancellor. Klein currently is the Chairman and CEO of Bertelsmann, Inc. Previously, he was Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice’s Antitrust Division, leading the prosecution against Microsoft. The appointment was recently made official upon the issuance of a waiver by the State Education Commissioner Richard P. Mills, necessary because of Klein’s lack of professional education qualifications.

“As a product of New York City’s public schools, I owe my teachers and this City’s schools more than I can ever repay,” Klein said. Klein does possess some experience in the field of education. During a leave of absence from law school in 1969, he studied at New York University’s School of Education and then taught math to sixth-graders at a public school in Queens until he was called upon by the U.S. Army Reserves for Basic Training. While in Washington, Klein served as a member of Mayor Anthony Williams’ “Kitchen Cabinet,” where they discussed improving the City’s schools through the Mayor’s plan to take over the school board.

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DIRECTIONS IN DENTAL MEDICINE: WOMEN MAKING INROADS

By JOAN BAUM

She recalls clearly what happened 30 years ago when she went to take the national dental boards for New York State. The exams were being held in an armory. Always the precise student, she showed up, information in hand, only to be met by an examiner who told her she had the wrong door. The exam for Assistant Hygienists was being held across the way. No, she insisted, she had the right door. In fact, she had the right professional credentials, being a practicing dentist for 15 years in Israel, having gone through that country’s rigorous five-year dental program, three of which were spent in Jerusalem in 1957.

Dr. Kristine Keren, a successful practitioner with a thriving practice on Central Park South, in an office she shares with her son, has known considerably more than dentistry. Her story, so bizarre, so ugly, so triumphant, of living in Jerusalem in 1957.

She recalls clearly what happened 30 years ago, her story, so bizarre, so ugly, so triumphant, living in Jerusalem in 1957.

Dr. Kristine Keren, a successful practitioner with a thriving practice on Central Park South, in an office she shares with her son, has known considerably more than dentistry. Her story, so bizarre, so ugly, so triumphant, living in Jerusalem in 1957. But what she says in the field, made an impact. #

Dr. Kristine Keren

A new study shows that students participating in the arts are 4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, and 3 times more likely to make the FITTEST summer of your life!

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Calendar of Events

August 2002

October 13 - October 29, 2002
Co-sponsored by the Museum of American Folk Art, New York. Monday-Friday, 10:30am - 4:30pm, FREE
(973) 275-2033

September 19, 2002
5pm, FREE
(937) 275-2033

Poesy in the Round Presents Marilyn Nelson
Staten Hall Gallery
September 26, 2002
7pm, FREE
(937) 761-6988

Open Houses

Although it is not specifically requested by every school, readers are strongly advised to call schools to confirm dates and times and verify if appointments are needed.

Community School District 3:
Gifted & Talented Program,
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303 West 96th St., NY 10025
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Call for appointment.

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Touro College
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Wednesday, August 14 at 6:30pm
1870 Stillwell Ave. Corner of 82nd and Brooklyn

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English Language Learners Let Down by Board of Education

By PRIYA ATHIAPPAN

Advocates for Children claims English Language Learner (ELL) students are receiving an inferior education. The organization, which provides advice and legal services in the hopes of giving all New York City students fair access to a public school education, recently released a report entitled Creating a Formula for Success. The report details the hardships faced by immigrant students in New York. According to their research, current ELLs have the highest dropout rate of any group of students in the city—31.7 percent.

According to Chancellor Harold Levy’s 2000 Report on the Education of English Language Learners, ELLs make up about 15 percent of New York public school students. These children, who are not fluent enough in English to enter mainstream classes, are often placed in the bilingual education or English as a Second Language (ESL) programs of the schools they attend. There, they are taught academic subjects in their native language (usually Spanish, Chinese or Korean), as well as receiving English instruction. ESL and bilingual education stem from the 1974 Supreme Court case Lau vs. Nicholas, where it was ruled that public schools had to adequately educate all children, regardless of their English proficiency.

According to Jill Chaifetz, Executive Director of Advocates for Children, too much pressure is placed on students who have recently immigrated to the U.S. “They are expected to meet the same standard as native students. They must master an entire new language,” as well as learn how to think from a different point of view. Chaifetz uses global studies as an example. History is often taught from the American perspective, and is especially difficult to excel in for a student who has no American background. When ELLs do not do as well as their English proficient counterparts, it is common for impatient school advisors to suggest that they “drop out and leave, and get their GED.” According to Chaifetz, for those ELLs who drop out, prospects are dim. “Many believe they will work, but end up with dead-end jobs with little upward mobility.” In fact, the average earnings of someone with a GED are roughly equivalent to those of someone who dropped out of high school.

For the 31.7 percent of ELLs who opt to leave school, the educational services of the Board of Education have failed. While they are supposed to transition into mainstream classes within four years, many ELLs stay in bilingual education or ESL for up to nine years, says Chaifetz. The struggle of ELLs toughened three years ago when New York State “completely revamped the Regents.” The new reforms require all students to pass the English Language Arts Regents, as well as a new Math Regents. While the Board of Regents raised the requirements that thousands of high schoolers needed for a graduation diploma, the corresponding level of educational support for ELLs was not raised. Although a 12-Step Action Plan to help prepare ELLs for the new Regents was passed, most of these students did not receive access to promised classes.

“Yet they still have to meet requirements,” remarks Chaifetz. “It seems as though there is a different level of accountability, for the Board of Education than there is for ELLs. You must somehow prepare themselves for the new, tougher Regents in order to graduate high school.”

Chaifetz cites several reasons as to why the New York City Board of Education has failed many ELLs. In ESL, there is no prescribed curriculum. Each teacher creates his or her own lessons, and there is “no guarantee who you get.” While bilingual education has a consistent curriculum citywide, many instructional materials such as textbooks are not translated from English to the languages of ELL instruction. Thus, there is “no proper provision of services.” Since both ESL and bilingual education are received by a fixed number of students, neither program provides a distinct advantage.

A severe shortage of teachers for ELLs is another problem—over 3,000 are needed. Uncertified teachers often fill in these spaces. Possibly, the scarcity is due to the fact that while ESL and bilingual teachers are paid the same as general education teachers, they have twice as much coursework to cover, says Chaifetz.

An anomalous finding of Advocates for Children’s report is that former ELLs actually have higher graduation rates than even English proficient students (58% vs. 52.2%). This is probably due to the fact that many of these former ELLs entered the programs when they were younger and had enough time to develop fluency. Therefore, Chaifetz reasons that “some bilingual and ESL programs are doing something right.”

One and a half years ago, the Board of Education approved a new bilingual education program, which was outlined in Chancellor Levy’s 2000 report. The new initiatives included the Dual Language/Two-Way Model, where ELLs would be taught alongside fluent English speakers; Accelerated Academic English, where subjects would be taught in English during and after regular school hours; and a higher level of parental involvement. Chaifetz views highly intensive ESL and the Dual Language program as a “tremendous boon” to the education of ELLs. “But very little happened because of budget cuts,” she says. The reforms would have cost $75 million.

Chaifetz believes that in addition to the Chancellor’s proposed reforms, the Board of Education must increase accountability in specific schools that have high levels of failing ELLs. Additionally, individual students must receive individual attention. Chaifetz recommends that in order for ELLs to be better served by the public schools, reforms should focus on improving ESL instruction, decreasing the number of uncertified teachers in the system, reforming tests and increasing parental involvement.

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FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT'S SEAT

GETTING READY TO MAKE A FRESH START

By DR. CAROLE G. HANKIN WITH RANDI T. SACHS

As we all know, the month of August means one thing: school and September are just around the corner. There’s a very amusing television commercial for a stationery store that plays that December holiday song, “It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year,” while showing parents enthusiastically stocking up on new school supplies. But our children do have the wonderful advantage of starting each school year with a clean, fresh slate. They may need you, however, to point out why this is truly to their benefit.

School plays a major role in every child’s life. Did you ever notice how consistently children link significant events in their lives with their grade level? Teachers, friends, sports teams, they all line up with the grade they were in when it occurred, or the teacher they had at the time? They will say something like, “My little sister was born when I was in third grade. I remember because Mrs. Black made me a big brother party.”

Being promoted to a new grade can provide the motivation a reluctant student may need to try a little harder this year. August is the real time for New Year’s resolutions to be made. You can use the time you have with your children on a lazy, hot day to talk about their expectations for the coming school year. Discuss very calmly any subjects that gave them difficulty before and see if together you can come up with a plan to avoid the same thing this year.

Also, talk about the areas in which your child has been most successful and how he or she can continue to grow and improve in these subjects. What about extra-curricular activities at home or in school? It’s not too early to make plans in August if your child wants to try something new in the fall.

The real magic that happens in September is that your child has the opportunity to make a new start in not only specific subject areas, but socially and emotionally as well. A new class means new classmates and a chance to make new friends. A new teacher (or teachers, for secondary school students) is also an opportunity for your child to form a new, positive relationship that may very well have an important effect on his or her life.

Moving on to the next grade may also be the right time to give your children some new responsibilities or new privileges to show that you recognize that they are growing more mature. You could consider raising their weekly allowance, extending their bedtime, or increasing travel privileges if you deem it appropriate. It will be doubly appreciated if you make the offer yourself, without any prompting or persuading from your children. Remember, it is easier to grant privileges than to revoke them, so take it slowly, one step at a time, and make sure that your children know that they will have to show they can handle the new privileges and responsibilities before they are made permanent. Most of all, enjoy each new year with your child.1

Dr. Hankin is the Superintendent of the Syosset School District in Long Island.

FROM THE BANK STREET COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The Pressure to Perform: Stressed Out in Preschool

What are the effects on children and parents?

By AMY FLYNN, M.S., M.ED.

Being the Director of the Family Center has afforded me the opportunity to get to know many children and families. I also have the responsibility of helping the children aging out of our program to move to on-going schools. These children, for the most part, are four-year-olds looking to get into pre-K or kindergarten programs in either the public or private sector.

Parents must begin collecting information about on-going schools in the spring and summer—a full year and some months before their child will actually move to a new setting. During the fall prior to the year children will enter pre-K and kindergarten, parents spend considerable time filling out applications, attending open houses and worrying. In the late fall, children interview with schools and take either the Stanford Binet and or the ERB (Educational Records Bureau—the test that is administered is the WPPSI-R, which is a standardized test). In addition, if parents are considering the gifted and talented programs in the Board of Education, they must take the Stanford Binet, which is another standardized psychological test. A licensed psychologist administers both exams. The stress and pressure on parents and children is enormous.

Many parents have told me that whether their child does well or gets into the right school will have lasting effects on their child’s entire academic career. Parents take children to places to be prepared for the tests, hire special consultants, attend meetings to prepare for school applications and work diligently with their children at home.

From my vantage point, I have seen the effects of this pressure and stress on children. Children are concerned and worried about their school placements. Some children do not understand that they visit schools that they will attend at a much later date. They become anxious that they are leaving their current school immediate-ly. Some parents have asked children to be a part of the decision making process, asking children which school they like best. These kinds of decisions and concerns should not be part of the life of a three or four-year-old child.

Some parents, out of concern, are asking preschool teachers to prepare their children for the impending tests and school visits. They now want us to formally teach handwriting, reading skills and higher level math concepts to their preschool age children, although these concepts are well out of their child’s developmental range. Most of the children are learning to write, recognize sight words and solve math problems in a developmentally appropriate manner, yet parents are still pressing for more “skills” to be imparted to their children. Letting children have fun, enjoy learning, feel good and competent in their world—essential for all young children—is being sacrificed in order to “get ready for kindergarten.”

How unfortunate and sad for children and families that parents must spend this last precious stretch of their child’s preschool years preparing their child for the “high-pressure world” rather than enjoying the amazing growth and development that their child has achieved in four short years.

I leave you with a phone conversation I had earlier this year with the father of a young infant. He was looking for a program for his nine-month-old daughter. I told him that we are a full time childcare program for children from six months to four years. He said that his wife is not planning on going back to work, but they wanted to get their daughter into a good school now so that she wouldn’t be behind the other children. I told him to relax. I said that he and his wife should enjoy their baby, take her to the park, play, read, and sing to her.

“Is that enough?” he asked. I said “yes.” @

Amy Flynn is the Director of the Bank Street Family Center.

Dr. Hankin is the Superintendent of the Syosset School District in Long Island.
Personal Stories by Parents of Children with Disabilities

By MERRI ROSENBERG

Part wannabe Chicken Soup for the Parent of a Disabled Child’s Soul, part heart-wrenching, gut-twisting narratives that are often too painful to finish reading, this compilation of mostly first-person essays by parents of what are euphemistically called ‘special needs’ children is a sobering reminder of what the other side of parenting really looks like.

Any mother-to-be who’s stroked her abdomen, daydreaming about the future for her unborn child, would be deeply unsettled by many of these stories. Some of the parents were barely in their twenties, with no sign of any problems during pregnancy, when they received the news that they had a baby with Down syndrome.

Others have had several children with disabilities, like the family whose two sons both have the fragile X syndrome. Still others were given the news about their child’s fate while undergoing routine pre-natal sonograms.

No matter when the parents found out, nearly all went through a similar process of grief, mourning the ‘normal, healthy baby they had assumed would be their birthright, worrying about the burdens and problems the disabled child would have to endure and letting go of the milestones and events that they had happily anticipated sharing with a child free of disabilities.

Imagine realizing that your child may never walk, may never talk to you and may never experience the simple, uncomplicated pleasures of performing in a school concert or athletic event. Imagine knowing that a genetic mishap means that your beloved and cherished child may never reach adulthood, or will experience it through the muffled, distorted prism of autism.

The parents whose voices are heard here don’t sugarcoat the difficulties. While they may, to, go out to dinner together.

Logos’ Children’s hour of book reading and activities continues weekly every Monday at 3:30 P.M.

For book reading suggestions this month, come visit Logos and see what the staff’s suggestions are, all lined up in one of the store windows. Inquire about the Logos Discount Club and find out why Logos is the independent bookstore that saves you money! Come on over!

Transit: #4, #5, #6 Lexington Avenue Subway to 66th St. M15 Bus (First & Second Aves.), M66 Bus (66th St.), M30 Bus (79th St.), M63 Bus (York Ave.)

Upcoming Events at Logos:

Wednesday, August 7, 2002, 7 P.M., KYTV Reading Group will discuss Howard’s End by E.M. Forster.

Wednesday, September 4, 2002, 7 P.M., KYTV Reading Group will discuss Invisible Man by Ralph Ellison.

Essential Reading for Parents & Teachers

By MERRI ROSENBERG

Here’s an absolutely essential volume that belongs in every kindergarten through third grade classroom.

With this useful, imaginative and creative book in hand, I could finally understand how those pre-school and elementary school teachers managed to come up with all those enthralling activities that had captivated my children during their early school days.

As someone who is undeniably arts-and-crafts challenged, I had always been somewhat in awe of those teachers who could read, say, Eric Carle’s The Very Hungry Caterpillar and help my daughter construct her own famished caterpillar.

Whether it’s a treasure hunt inspired by Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle, crafting a house from a shoebox from The Borrowers, or making a moon necklace triggered by a reading of Thurber’s delightful Many Moons tale, there are countless projects contained within these pages that would make a beguiling rainy-day activity at home, or a worthwhile assignment at school.

The format is simple and easy to follow. Kaye offers a plot synopsis of each book at the beginning of each section, and then provides at least three activities for each book. In the margins, Kaye thoughtfully includes the materials needed to complete the activity and a brief listing of the skills that activity will encourage.

I suspect this will probably be more useful, ultimately, to classroom teachers rather than parents. It’s a very strong addition to a teacher’s classroom bookshelf.

Games with books: 28 of the Best Children’s Books and How to Use Them to Help Your Child Learn—From Preschool to Third Grade

By Peggy Kaye.


351pp

AUGUST BOOK REVIEWS

By SELENE VASQUEZ

PICTURE BOOK: AGES 5 THRU 8

The Bagel Bug by Carol Shields.

(Candlewick, 32 pp., $15.99). Bugs with antennae, pincers and horns are winging their grue- some way to the Bugliest Bug Contest. The judges—archnids with wings tied to their backs—are evil impostors arranging the contest in hopes of snaring a meal! Kid-pleasing rhymes paired with funny cartoon illustrations.

NONFICTION: AGES 5 THRU 8

The Tide by Nik Pollard. (Millbrook, 32 pp., $15.95). Follow the rhythm of the ocean in this vibrantly colored concept book. The tide rises and falls with fishing boats, seagulls, clam diggers, and even a lighthouse illuminating the sights of water everywhere. Expressive text sweeps across the pages like rolling waves. High quality graphics will have readers truly yearning for a great “beach day.”

NONFICTION: AGES 6 THRU 10

Ice cream by Elisha Cooper. (Greenwillow, 32 pp., $15.89). From cows munching on grass to a delivery truck driver transporting tasty goods, this step-by-step description of ice cream will have readers squealing for a scoop. Watercolor and pencil sketches weave their way across the pages of this excellent tribute to summer’s most cherished dessert.

POETRY: AGES 8 THRU 12

Splash! Poems of Our Watery World by Constance Levy. Illustrated by David Sonnen. (Scholastic, 39 pp., $16.95). Thirty-four poems praising and delighting in the exquisite nature of water. Beautiful photographs capture the forms and uses of water as snowflakes, icebergs, fog, and even bath water. This unique collection of descriptive poetry is perfectly suited for classroom and library programs.

Selene S. Vasquez is a media specialist for Orange Brook Elementary School in Hollywood, Florida. She was formerly a children’s librarian for the New York Public Library.
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OWC Mercury On-The-Go

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Teachers, Students and Researchers Work Side-by-Side at Rockefeller University

BY MARIE HOLMES

Leslie Vosshall, Annenberg Assistant Professor at Rockefeller University, is delivering a lecture on the groundbreaking work done by researchers Linda Buck and Richard Axel, which opened a new chapter in our understanding of the sense of smell. An expert in this particular field of inquiry, Vosshall points out images of olfactory neurons (which are located above the eyes, not in the nose) and employs vocabulary terms that a layperson would likely not recognize, much less comprehend, as though she were delivering a lecture to colleagues—which, for all intents and purposes, she is. It just so happens that all 50 of these colleagues are teenagers.

Expertly modeling the Socratic method, Vosshall guides them through to the conclusions. One student suggests an explanation to a question raised by Buck and Axel’s discoveries, articulating what Vosshall confirms is “a very popular theory.” Another proposes a method of articulation. This is often the result of poor vision affecting their child’s learning. Call the program is literally a God send.”

A free screening may find the cause of your child’s concentration problems and these symptoms:

1) Avoids reading, incomplete work, eye strain, restless. This is often caused by focus disorder or problems with eye teaming.
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3) Slow work, poor handwriting (may even be a detailed artist). This can be the result of poor eye-hand coordination.
4) Poor word recognition, poor spelling, reverses letters, poor reading comprehension. This is often the result of poor visualization.

RELIEF FROM HOMEWORK FRUSTRATION

The Vision Improvement Program (VIP), a nationally-known program developed by an optometrist, an educator and a psychologist, corrects visual deficiencies that interfere with focusing and visualization skills” states Dr. Henry Ettinger, director of a local Vision Improvement Program. “Many of my patients have gone from failing or special ed to A’s and B’s by the 10th week of therapy.”

FREE EVALUATION

The VIP offers free testing for learning-related vision problems. It’s a wonderful opportunity for parents to determine if poor vision is affecting their child’s learning. Call the Manhattan office, (212) 265-4609.

“We were at our wits end. Our daughter was easily distracted and was at risk of failing. Handwriting was messy. Homework became an all-night burden. Now her improvement is remarkable. She loves to read and write now like never before. Her self-esteem has soared and family time together has improved. Your program is literally a God send.”

-Lillian Sanchez-Perez
WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE ADVANCES

EDITED BY HERMAN ROSEN, M.D.
Recovery of Adult Bone Marrow Stem Cells for Tissue Regeneration

Dr. Shahin Rafii and colleagues from Weill Medical College of Cornell University have discovered the mechanism by which organ-specific adult bone marrow stem cells may be recruited. Stem cells derived from embryos have been the subject of recent ethical debates. It now appears that adult stem cells derived from adult bone marrow may prove to be even more suitable for therapeutic purposes, both as the key to blood vessel formation in tumors and as an alternative source of replaceable stem cells that can be used readily for fighting disease through organ regeneration and gene therapy.

Stem cells derived from bone marrow normally rest there. When stimulated, they proliferate, self-renew, and are mobilized to the peripheral blood, where they incorporate into damaged tissue. The mechanism by which stem cells are stimulated was published in a recent issue of Cell. The research provides enormous promise for new cancer and bone therapy approaches. The newly unlocked mechanism may be the key to facilitating future treatments of countless diseases, ranging from heart disease and stroke to diabetes and Parkinson’s. By stimulating the production of stem cells from the adult bone marrow, the researchers may provide a valuable new tool for potential therapeutic uses.

Cal State University, L.A. School of Nursing Expands Baccalaureate Program

The School of Nursing at California State University, Los Angeles has received a pledge of $178,500 from Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for the education of two cohorts of 10 nursing students over three years in the Bachelor of Science Nursing program.

This support is the function of the Cedars-Sinai Institute for Professional Nurse Development, a newly-formed partnership program with Cal State L.A. specifically designed to increase the number of graduates with Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing. These nursing students will complete their clinical rotations at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

“The school of Nursing is thrilled at Cedars-Sinai’s support of Cal State L.A.’s nursing program expansion,” said Judith Paphnenhausen, the School’s director. “Our vision is to increase the numbers of baccalaureate and advanced practice nurses we can produce over the next five years. We are grateful that Cedars-Sinai’s strong commitment to our community and to professional nursing recognizes Cal State L.A.’s proven capability to prepare and graduate well-educated nurses during this severe nursing shortage,” she said.

In the forefront of nursing education, Cal State L.A.’s School of Nursing currently has approximately 200 pre-nursing majors, slightly more than 200 undergraduate nursing students, more than 100 graduate students and 24 full-time faculty. The Cal State L.A. nursing program has been a unit in the College of Health and Human Services since its inception, and was organized as a department in 1960.

take steps to protect eyes from harmful uv rays

by BETSY VAN DIE

Are you a sun worshipper who cannot wait to hit the beach once summer arrives? Do you live in a climate that is sunny year-round or does your profession necessitate being outside a great deal of time? Most people are aware of the potential damage ultraviolet (UV) rays can do to the skin, but are less aware that anyone who spends time in the sun runs the risk of developing eye damage caused by exposure to these same rays.

UV radiation, especially UV-A and UV-B, has been shown to be harmful to the eye. UV-A penetrates deep into the eye and may injure the macula, the part of the retina responsible for sight in the center field of vision. Photokeratitis, also known as sunburn of the eye, is a result of intense exposure to UV-B. It is most common among individuals that spend long hours on the beach or ski slopes without proper eye protection, and can be extremely painful and can result in temporary loss of vision.

Furthermore, UV rays may contribute to various eye diseases including age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and cataract.

The best defense for anyone going outside is to wear sunglasses that screen 99 to 100 percent of UV rays, or brimmed hats. When selecting sunglasses for children, one should choose glasses that suit children’s active lifestyles. The glasses should be made of impact resistant polycarbonate, lenses should not pop out of frames, and the frames should be bendable. In addition, a wide brimmed hat can help maximize protection for children, as it can cut the amount of UV exposure in half.

Prevent Blindness America is offering two free brochures: Ultraviolet Radiation: A Hazard to Sight, and Sunglasses: Selecting Good Protection for Your Eyes. Call 1-800-331-2020 to receive either of these free brochures.

Betsy Van Die is the director of media relations for Prevent Blindness America (PBA), the oldest voluntary eye health organization in the United States. With national headquarters located in northwest suburban Chicago, PBA has field offices in 24 states including New York.

The bee’s knees: common childhood knee injuries and their treatment

By DR. FRED CUSHNER

Beth Israel’s Instoll Scott Kelly Institute for Orthopedics

Now, in addition to all the other concerns that teachers and parents have about children, there is another cause for worry: one of the populations increasingly suffering knee ailments is children, due largely to their growing participation in sports like basketball, soccer and hockey.

Overuse injuries are the most common. These include bursitis, tendinitis, or sprains and strains. All occur with repetitive activities or repeated or prolonged pressure on the knee. Stair climbing, bicycle riding, jogging, or jumping are activities that can all lead to irritation or inflammation.

One of the most common knee overuse ailments for children, seen usually more prominently among boys aged 11-15, but now increasingly seen in girls, and at earlier ages, is Osgood-Schlatter disease.

Osgood-Schlatter disease occurs during a child’s rapid growth years. Since girls begin to “develop” before boys, Osgood-Schlatter begins in active girls between the ages of 8 and 13. The problem consists of an inflammation at the top of the shinbone where the patellar tendon attaches to a bony prominence.

Symptoms of Osgood-Schlatter disease include:

• Pain and tenderness in front of the knee
• Mild swelling just below the kneecap
• A bump at the bottom of the knee or top of the shin

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The Day Our World Changed: Children’s Art of 9/11

On view at the Museum of the City of New York
September 11, 2002 – January 19, 2002

An exhibition marking the one-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, The Day Our World Changed: Children’s Art of 9/11 presents the art of New York area children created in the days and months immediately following the tragedy.

The exhibition and accompanying publications are the result of a collaboration between the Museum of the City of New York and the New York University Child Study Center. The participating artists, all from the New York Tri-State region, range in age from 5 to 18.

The NYU Child Study Center is dedicated to the understanding, prevention and treatment of child and adolescent mental health problems.
**August In History**

Compiled By Chris Rowan

The Roman calendar year originally was 10 months and the sixth month was named Sextilis (which meant sixth). When Julius Caesar (100B.C. – 44B.C.) came to power he reformed the calendar and divided the year into 12 months. Eventually the Romans changed the name of Sextilis to Augustus, in honor of Augustus Caesar (63B.C. – 14 A.D.), the nephew and adopted son of Julius. “Augustus” means venerable and comes from a Latin verb augere, meaning, “to make greater.”

Firsts

On Aug. 6, 1945, a nuclear weapon was used for the first time in war when the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. On Aug. 9, 1974, Richard Nixon became the first U.S. President to resign. On August 6, 1945, a nuclear weapon was used for the first time in war when the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. On Aug. 9, 1974, Richard Nixon became the first U.S. President to resign.

**World History**

In 1492 (on August 3), Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain on his first Voyage to the New World. In 1806 (on August 6), the Holy Roman Empire came to an end. In 1914 (on August 1), Germany declared war on Russia during the opening days of World War I. In 1945 (on August 14) the Japanese surrendered, ending World War II. In 1990 (on August 2) Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.

**American History**

In 1814 (on August 24) the British occupied Washington and burned the White House. In 1920 (on August 18) the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, guaranteeing women the right to vote. In 1945 (on August 14) the Japanese surrendered, ending World War II. In 1990 (on August 2) Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait.

**Our Bloodiest War (the Civil War)**

In 1864 (on August 5) yelling, “Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!” Admiral Farragut led the Union Navy to victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay.

**GEOGRAPHY CORNER**

By Chris Rowan

Question: Where was Montford Point? And why was it important?

Answer: In North Carolina near Jacksonville, in Onslow County. It was a portion of the Camp Lejeune Marine Corps base – and a recruit depot where the first black recruits in Marine Corps history were trained.

Background: In the summer of 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Fair Employment Practices Act, which prohibited racial discrimination by federal agencies. This law required the Marine Corps to accept African-American recruits for the first time in its 166-year history. The order did not integrate the armed services – at that time, all branches of the armed forces were racially segregated, but a separate training facility was built to train blacks within the Camp Lejeune complex – an area that was once a tobacco farm.

The first 1,200 recruits arrived in September 1942. Initially, all drill instructors were white – many were seasoned combat veterans of the early battles of World War II – some weren’t enthusiastic about having blacks in the Corps, and were determined to make the rigors of boot camp more brutal. But over 19,000 marines were trained at Montford during the war (nearly the total number of all marines on active duty in 1938), over 12,000 were shipped overseas and many served with distinction in the battles of Saipan and Iwo Jima. (Iwo Jima was the bloodiest battle in Marine Corps history.)

On July 26, 1948 President Harry S Truman signed Executive Order 9981, ordering the full integration of the armed forces, and Montford Point ended its days as a separate training facility for black recruits in September 1949. From then on, all enlisted marine recruits from the east coast were welcomed into the Corps at Parris Island, South Carolina. Montford Point is now named Camp Johnson, after Sergeant “Hash Marks’’ Johnson, who served at Montford as one of the first black drill instructors. The base is used for combat support services schools.

Next time: Which State produced a U.S. President who served for only one day? Who was the “President,” and when did he serve?

**Homeschooling**

Art in the Curriculum

By Marcia Osterink

Leadership in education lies with those who understand the complex dual functions – verbal and visual – of the brain, and are open to making the creative process the centerpiece of education. These enlightened educators no longer regard teaching visual art as an educational afterthought. They are making it an essential part of the curriculum.

What did it take for educators to make this shift in thinking? Throwing away old misconceptions, for example that art is a mindless activity involving only the use of hands. Rudolph Arnheim, Harvard professor of the psychology of art, says that all thought processes rely on images. The belief that only those who are “gifted” in art can experience success, is another misconception. No other subject in school is approached with the idea that you need to be good in it to learn it.

Art is a skill everyone could have according to a study done by Roger Sperry at Cal Tech. It shows that all people can learn to draw, as every brain has the potential for it. It is the right side of the brain specifically that controls imagining and visualizing. By accessing this part of the brain, a person can learn to draw.

Art is not just a nice little ability, either. According to educational psychologist Howard Gardner of Harvard University, there are seven intelligences, not just the two that are now tested by the IQ and SAT tests. One of the neglected intelligences, spatial intelligence, deals directly with art.

Once convinced of the importance of art education, planning for a program begins. A program with the principles and concepts of art taught in a sequential fashion. Where line, color, shape, and texture are repeated throughout the grades with hands on lessons. Through art, students can begin to experience a new visual world.

Marcia Osterink is the publisher and CEO of ArtsAttack, an elementary school arts curriculum.

**Literary Riddles**

By Chris Rowan

(1) “Here he lies where he longed to be, home is the sailor, home from the sea, And the hunter, home from the hill.”

The writer of this poem lies buried under a tombstone bearing these words. Who was the author? Where is he buried? What is the title of the poem?

Answers to this month’s riddle:

(1) Robert Louis Stevenson. He lies buried on the Pacific island of Samoa. The title of the poem is “Requiem.”
Report Card on School Year Spending

While the majority of the city’s 1.1 million students have put away their schoolbooks for the summer, the Board of Education’s (BOE) “budget books” remain open and under scrutiny. Based on current information, the Independent Budget Office (IBO) projects that when the board’s books are closed they will show a modest $150 million increase in spending during city fiscal year 2002. This increase—1.3 percent over the previous year—was less than the rate of inflation. The 2002 spending boost stands in contrast to the previous four years, a period in which city, state and federal funding expanded the education budget by $3.5 billion—an average yearly increase of 9.4 percent.

Last year’s spending increase proved inadequate to keep up with rising costs, especially for teachers and other staff. In response, BOE imposed per-student spending cuts and took steps to reduce other costs.

The mandatory cost increases the board faced in city fiscal year 2002 were $262 million for salary increases (after the new teacher’s contract), $58 million for increased health insurance premiums and $15 million in cost-of-living allowances for pupil transportation contracts. The BOE also incurred significant expenses as a result of the attacks on the World Trade Center, including relocation costs for Lower Manhattan schools and crisis counseling expenditures throughout the system. Conversely, it is estimated that the board saved some $32 million as a result of a drop of 7,100 students system-wide and the correlated decrease in staffing needs.

IBO

Teachers Should Save Receipts for New Tax Deduction

The Internal Revenue Service recently advised teachers to save their receipts for purchases of books and classroom supplies. These out-of-pocket expenses may lower their taxes, thanks to a recent change in the law.

“Many teachers dip into their own pockets when funds for classroom supplies run out before the school year does,” said IRS Commissioner Charles O. Rossotti. “A new law gives them a tax break this year and next, and we want them to have the records they’ll need to claim it on their returns.”

The new deduction is available to eligible educators in both public and private elementary and secondary schools. They must work at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide.

Taxpayers may subtract up to $250 of qualified expenses when figuring their adjusted gross income (AGI). They will not need to itemize deductions to get this benefit. Prior to the change in the law, educators could take such expenses only as miscellaneous itemized deductions, which must be reduced by two percent of AGI.

Educators who excluded education savings bond interest or payments from qualified tuition programs, or made tax-free withdrawals from an education savings account, will be able to claim the new deduction only to the extent their qualified expenses exceed the tax-free amounts.

The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses in a folder or envelope labeled with a label such as “Educator Expenses Deduction,” noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. This will help prevent a missed deduction at tax time.

Details on this and other new tax law changes are in IRS Publication 3991, “Highlights of the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002,” available on the IRS Web site at www.irs.gov or by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

Summertime Blues: Nearly 15,000 Fewer Summer Jobs for Teens

Despite an increase of $8 million in city funds for the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), 14,848 fewer New York City teens were able to secure jobs compared to last summer. The program, which provides jobs and wages for tens of thousands of low-income youth each summer, has experienced considerable funding uncertainty since July 2000 when the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) went into effect and eliminated funds dedicated specifically to summer jobs for youth. Now, opportunities to stabilize the program are emerging—pending legislation in Albany would create a state-sponsored summer jobs program, and WIA is up for reauthorization by Congress in 2003.

 Roughly 35,000 teens started work this month under the program, which is administered by the city’s Department of Employment (DOE). The department budgeted $44 million for this summer’s program, including $11 million in federal WIA dollars, $15 million in state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) dollars, and $18 million in city tax-levy dollars. Funding for last summer’s program totaled $60 million.

The youth are placed in jobs at day camps, senior centers, hospitals, and other community service centers, as well as at some city agencies. Each youth employment slot is budgeted at $1,257 this year. Participants are expected to work six hours per day, four days per week for seven weeks, and are paid the minimum wage ($5.15 per hour). The youth earn about $865 each for the summer.

Legislation has been introduced in Albany to establish a permanent and stand-alone New York State summer youth employment program.

Independent Budget Office (IBO)
In schools across the country, special education facilities have the ignominious distinction of being housed in basements, trailers, and various other tucked away locations. These subpar facilities reflect, in many ways, the ongoing belief about special education, according to Nicky Nichtern, Director of Development at The Churchill School and Center, a private special education institution which offers an elementary, middle, and high school program.

“special education was pushed aside because there wasn’t an awareness that not everybody learns the same way.”

Both Nichtern and Karalyne D. Sperling, school coordinator for the West End Day School (a K-6 special education school), emphasize that most students at these schools have normal to high IQs but process information in a non-traditional manner.

Parents tend to seek out diagnostic testing for as model lesson plans in bilingual early education.

“One makes NYL’s Clearview program so successful is that it not only helps a unique group of children, but it also benefits parents,” said Hilary Tischenkel, Clearview’s principal.

As she works with students, the parents can understand forms and notices in their family’s home language, the parents can correct those records if they are inaccurate. The law was enacted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.” This law has meaning out-

- The Rehabilitation Act: Section 504 states that “No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States, as defined in section 706(6) of this title, shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.” This law has meaning out-

- NYL’s Clearview New York, which serves children of Asian descent. The program consists of one half-day, bilingual Chinese classroom and a full-day classroom. The six bilingual staff members work closely with the children coming from diverse regions of China and, combined, speak five dialects.

The Clearview School recently received the New York City Chancellor’s Child Development Program Award. The lesson plans designed by the teacher of the half-day classrooms, Hsuan-Mei Chien (Mei), were recognized in conjunction with this award and were recommended when their child’s progress in school slows. Usually happy children, curricula increase in difficulty (kindergarten, third grade, fifth grade, and seventh grade). After testing, some parents find that their child needs outside help (e.g. a tutor) but continue to struggle on their own.

In some cases, however, a child’s learning disability requires greater intervention and parents start looking into different private schools.

“Through the celebration of Chinese traditions and art projects making lanterns and puppets, or singing folk songs in Mandarin, the children learn about their cultural heritage.”

Churchill School

NYL is a member of the YAI/National Activities to Improve Special Education, and IV. National Activities to Improve Special Education. It has four sections: I. General Provisions, II. Discretionary Assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service.” This law has meaning out-

Legal Aspects of Special Education

By HOPE GLASSBERG

Special education is not only a legal issue as it is an educational one. Several federal laws delineate the ways in which schools handle children with special needs.

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): FERPA states that parents have the right to inspect all of their child’s school records and to correct those records if they are inaccurate. The law also maintains that in most cases, a school cannot disclose information about a child (e.g. academic records) unless the school has express permission from the parents. The school does have the right, however, to disclose directory information about the child, provided the parent is notified. This act has had great legal implications for special education, as parents of children with special needs previously could be kept in the dark if schools made a mistake with their child. Since the passage of FERPA, parents can now vigilantly monitor their child’s progress and the way in which schools deal with their child’s disability.

Sources:

- www.ed.gov/offices/OM/ferpa.html;
- www.redmartin.com

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): IDEA was restructured in 1997. The act has been expanded to include, among others, the special education teacher, and the regular education teachers.

- “Teaching proper social skills is also part of the package. West End Day School has several after-school programs with other schools and also has activities such as ‘girl’s lunch,’ when a group of girls in the school get together to socialize. These activities, Sperling says, are designed to ‘teach a child how to handle a larger classroom.’”

Churchill is the only private special education school that offers an elementary, middle, and high school program; significantly more have K-6 programs and assist in placing graduating students in appropriate programs.

Regardless of the size of the school and program parameters, all emphasize that they do not want a child to stay in special education schooling longer than they need to. Most special education schools emphasize that they want to return their students to the mainstream. Indeed, a healthy return to the mainstream seems to be the goal of most private school special educators.

“Our hope,” said Nichtern, “is that we can give the children the understanding, the educational strategies they need to be able to return to the mainstream at whatever time is the right time for them to do that.”

Hope Glassberg is the summer editor-in-chief of the Columbia Spectator.
Individuals with severe disabilities in New York City’s five boroughs were often developmentally delayed. As a result, three students were fully included in the educational process of

By MARIE HOLMES
For the past decade, colleges, universities, and other institutions have been required, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, to provide “reasonable accommodation” for the persons with disabilities whom they employ and serve. Most schools comply with the federal legislation through an office of disability services charged with providing everything from texts in Braille to a note-taking assistant for a student with a broken arm. The recent spat over the College Board’s decision not to flag the SAT scores of students who take the exam under accommodated circumstances—extra time—is evidence of the breadth of the field of special education and the diversity of students served.

The concerns of a college-bound dyslexic student, after all, are vastly different from those of the parents of an autistic child.

“Disabled children do not graduate at age 18,” says Carol Kasmin of the League School. “Typically,” says Ilysa Kramer, Clinical Director of the Morgan-Stanley Day Treatment Program at the League Center, “this population says in high school until they’re 21 or 22. They age out rather than graduating.”

And when these more severely disabled special education students do leave the system, where do they go?

Not as long ago as one would like to think, developmentally disabled persons were often institutionalized in places such as the infamous Willowbrook School in Staten Island, which today, thanks to Jon Kyl’s television vision cameras caught inside its doors that sparked a public outcry across the nation, forcing politicians and policy makers to take action.

In 1983, Gov. Mario Cuomo stated that Willowbrook, where living conditions amounted to human rights violations, must close its doors. In 1975, the State passed the Willowbrook Consent Decree, sparking a wave of reforms in the education programs for the developmentally disabled in New York City.

While change could not come quickly enough for persons trapped in these inhume conditions, today, less than two decades after Willowbrook’s closure, deinstitutionalization has taken a firm hold in the field.

Despite shrinking education budgets, developmentally disabled persons and their families can now choose from a variety of programs to suit their individual needs. Increasingly, the goal of social workers, clinicians and counselors is not only to bring these persons to the greatest level of independence that they can reach, but also to help them become active members of their communities.

For lower-functioning persons who need constant supervision in a more structured environment, a day treatment program is usually the best option. Terri Ross, of the Queens Center for Progress (QCP), formerly United Cerebral Palsy of Queens, explains that many of these consumers need “hand-over-hand assistance in completing the most rudimentary daily tasks. Because their disabilities have left them physically contracted, special attention is paid to the act of eating. “One of the problems,” says Ross, “is that people aspirate food and get food in their lungs and get pneumonia. The staff does not, however, devote entire days of instruction to chewing and swallowing.”

“We want to do it creatively,” says Ross. Physical and speech therapy sessions are supplemented with music, art and even horseback riding, all activities designed to benefit physical and emotional comfort.

“It’s amazing to watch people who have severe contraction get on the horse and watch their limbs loosen up with the movement of the horse,” comments Ross.

Problems not solved by these services might also benefit from the highly structured environment of a day treatment program. The League Center runs a program for adults, ages 18-65, who have a dual-diagnosis of a developmental disability and a psychiatric condition—autism and depression, or retardation and schizophrenia, for example.

“We get the people who don’t make it in other programs,” says Kramer. “We focus on the behavior that comes out of that (diagnosis).” Consumers work on daily living skills, such as personal hygiene and cooking, at the same time that they learn the ropes of basic social interaction. When one man politely shook hands and introduced himself, the staff praised him profusely.

Although now out-of-vogue in the field, the League Center continues to make use of time-out rooms, where consumers can take out their aggression on the padded walls before their behavior escalates to the point that they might hurt themselves or others. Constant supervision and meticulous documentation assures that the type of isolation and abuses that occurred at Willowbrook will not be repeated.

While such emotional difficulties are inherent to their conditions, some of this aggressive behavior has been learned in institutional settings. Among the consumers that the League Center serves, several are former Willowbrook residents.

One consumer, recalls Kramer, was working with a staff person, naming different objects depicted on flashcards. When shown picture of a ruler, he quickly identified the item: “That’s what you use to hit me.”

Undoing such damage can be a lengthy process, and “success” is a relative term. Many day-treatment program participants are eventually able to move on to less restrictive settings, while others remain in the program for years.

“The ultimate goal,” says Kramer, “is to get them out into the community.”

The next step is often a day habilitation program, in which consumers, supervised by trained staff, spend more time outside their treatment centers, using public transportation and doing volunteer work, such as gardening or sorting clothes for the homeless.

“People who are unemployed, next to unsupervised competitive employment, is a supported work program. A staff person accompanies a consumer to the workplace and provides the necessary support while he or she adapts to the new working environment. Supported work might also take place in a group, with one staff person supervising several consumers in the stockroom of a clothing store, for example.

“The whole vocational rehabilitation movement started after the Second World War, to rehabilitate veterans,” explains Charles Houston of QCP. In the last twenty years, it has become the dominant model in programs for disabled adults. “What most agencies like us are doing right now,” says Ross, “is done through a supported work model.”

“The government agencies that fund and supervise us are encouraging supported employment,” she adds, “because it’s a more integrated model.”

Vocational Training consumers at the Queens Center for Progress

While the great majority of these consumers live in residences run by organizations such as the League Center, QCP and others, gone are the days of cloistered institutional life. Even seriously handicapped individuals can find programs that allow them to get out into the city and perform some kind of work.

Medicaid funding covers the cost of these programs for the consumers, who are also usually eligible for SSI benefits. Families who are looking for help in transitioning a young adult from a special education program or occupational training center can contact the office of Vocational Education and Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID). Because the State Department of Education is responsible for both special education in the schools as well as services for adults, the transition from the schools into an adult program is a fairly established process.

Waiting lists can be long, but the good news, according to Ross, is that “metropolitan New York is a very service-rich environment,” enabling many people to find a good fit with a program in their own neighborhoods.

Integrating the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) into Inclusion

By SHERRYL BERTI
The inclusion program at Chelsea Vocational High School concluded its fourth year in June 2002 with eleven students, five paraprofessionals, and a District 75 special education teacher. (District 75, services students with moderate to severe disabilities in New York City’s five boroughs.) Having a variety of strengths and areas of concern, three students were fully included in general classes and eight received the support of one study period per day; all received full or part time paraprofessional assistance in their general education classes and the help of the special education teacher during study and/or as needed.

District 75 provided paraprofessionals with individualized support and weekly group meetings for training in observation, strategies and adaptations. The role of the inclusion paraprofessionals was many-faceted; they encouraged all learners in the class, helped the special education student do his or her work, taught other students’ needs, and monitored the process-oriented goals of each inclusion student’s Individual Education Program (IEP).

The inclusion program at Chelsea Vocational High School was established at the behest of the students’ parents. Observers state that the IEP is a dead document because it is isolated from the realities of the classroom. Breathing life into the IEP is the responsibility of a committed educator. The IEP should be a living document that serves as an accountability tool for the student’s progress so that student’s strengths and needs are identified, built upon and addressed.

To fulfill that aim, the inclusion teacher listed abbreviated short-term IEP goals on the student’s Priority Goal (PG) sheet; these were distributed to the student, paraprofessionals and classroom teachers at the beginning of each semester and after an annual review. General education teachers were encouraged to incorporate these goals into their daily lessons (this is easier to write than to see actualized), thus creating a curriculum within a curriculum. Twice a week, paraprofessionals observed and graded their students’ progress in reaching their IEP goals; some students learned to self-monitor their targets.

The District 75 inclusion teacher maintained study groups connected to the classroom to provide an area where a student’s comfort with a particular objective. These statistics also allowed a comparison of the mastery of an aim in different settings, thus clarifying the educator to question causes of success/failure in a particular environment. A two-semester average of six insured that the student mastered that goal and no longer needed continual reinforcement.

Process oriented IEP goals and the ongoing assessment of these skills can encourage the teacher to review how (s)he approaches her or his work, give the student a rubric for success, and encourage self-mastery. Incorporating the goal into our lessons provides all classroom participants with the sense that the difficult is indeed manageable.

Sherryl Berti is a special education teacher at PS721M at Chelsea HS. She recently received a Phi Delta Kappa award for excellence in inclusion teaching.
The College Board and Disabilities Rights Advocates Announce Agreement to Drop ‘Flagging’ From Standardized Tests

The College Board and Disabilities Rights Advocates (DRA) announced recently that as of October 1, 2003 the College Board would discontinue the practice of identifying score reports on standardized tests taken by students who require extended test-taking time due to documented disabilities. Such special testing accommodations have been identified on the score report by the words “nonstandard administration,” a practice commonly referred to as “flagging.”

The decision to discontinue flagging stems from a 1999 lawsuit against the Educational Testing Service (ETS) that resulted in ETS’s agreement to remove all flags from the score reports of ETS-administered tests that are not owned by the College Board. ETS develops the test items, and administered tests that are not owned by the College Board. ETS develops the test items, and administered tests that are not owned by the College Board. ETS administers and scores the SAT and several other College Board tests, and the College Board had agreed to convene a Blue Ribbon Panel of jointly selected experts to consider issues related to the flagging of score reports. That panel recommended, by a vote of four to two, that the College Board discontinue flagging the score reports of tests taken with extended time.

The majority of the panel believed that flagging discourages students from applying for needed accommodations and represents a barrier to equal access to college, and we have agreed to abide by their decision,” said College Board President Gaston Caperton. “While agreeing that the rights of disabled persons should prevail over other considerations, we also recognize the ongoing concerns by guidance counselors and admission directors that the College Board must uphold a rigorous review process to ensure that extended test-taking time is not granted to students who do not require this accommodation.”

To help ensure that accommodations are given only to test takers whose disabilities require them, the College Board will continue its process of routine documentation reviews. These reviews ensure that the eligibility requirements are being consistently and fairly applied to all students. Additionally, the College Board will continue to improve its communication of expectations to ensure equity of access for all test-takers.

Disability Rights Advocates, a non-profit law center headquartered in Oakland, California, represented two disability organizations, California for Disability Rights and the International Dyslexia Association, along with an individual, Mark Breimhorst, in the case that led to the settlement.

“The College Board’s decision to end the practice of flagging marks a major achievement for people with disabilities. Other testing agencies that continue to flag should reexamine their policies and follow the College Board’s example,” states Alison Aubrejuan, an attorney from DRA involved in the case. DRA’s clients were extremely pleased with the settlement. Chris E印尼, President of CDPR, states, “This settlement is a victory for all persons with disabilities seeking to attend college or graduate school because it makes higher education much more accessible to persons with disabilities.” President of IDA Harley A. Tomey, III added, “While IDA wishes the agreement could have been reached sooner and without litigation, we congratulate ETS and the College Board for coming to the understanding that this is the right thing to do.”

### College Choices for Students With Special Needs

**By ZAHER KARP**

College is the anticipated fork in the road for many students, but for those with special needs, this shift is far more uncertain. For students who suffer from attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), dyslexia, or another learning disability, what are their postsecondary education options? Several programs and schools have been established to cater specifically to students with disabilities, including Gallaudet University, Landmark College, and the SALT program at the University of Arizona.

Founded in 1864 by an act of Congress, Gallaudet University (www.gallaudet.edu) in Washington D.C. has been dedicated to the education of the deaf and hard of hearing. The bill was signed by Abraham Lincoln, and Gallaudet College was born. It remained Gallaudet College until 1986, where another act of Congress approved university status. “Gallaudet University remains the only liberal arts university for the deaf in the entire world,” said Mercy Coogan, a university spokesperson. This institution teaches approximately 2000 undergraduate and graduate students; numbers that were previously unimaginable from its initial enrollment of eight students. This upcoming semester, for the second time in the history of Gallaudet, hearing students will be admitted. These students have expressed a good deal of interest and are, of course, fluent in sign language. They are often the children of deaf adults.

Landmark College, in Vermont, is the only recognized college within the US designed solely for the purpose of educating “students with average to superior intellectual potential” suffering from dyslexia, AD/HD or other specific learning disabilities. Founded in 1983, Landmark College first welcomed 77 students in 1985, and now, in 2002, enrolls over 350. The motto of this school seems to be, “At Landmark College, students learn how to learn.” From their website (www.landmarkcollege.org), one can see that the college focuses upon the individual, changing its approach to fit the person. In this two-year college, “We address skill deficits—that is, reinforcing reading skills and critical thinking...making it easier for them to become independent students,” says Leatrice Johnson, Dean of Admissions at Landmark.

Within the sprawling campus of the University of Arizona at Tucson, lies the SALT (Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques) Center (salt.arizona.edu), which has enabled thousands of disabled students to graduate with degrees. Founded in the 1980-1981 school year as part of the University Learning Center, it all began with a core of three students that eventually expanded to the 520 students in 2002. Diane Perreira, Director of the SALT Center, spoke with great conviction about the level of support that it provides to the students. “One of the things that makes the SALT center unique [about the SALT center], is that it provides students with a number of options for support. This is, unfortunately, often ignored in an academic environment.” The SALT Center is not subsidized by the state, but, rather, by private donations and SALT students. Unlike many programs for disabled students, SALT has been widely accepted and is highly praised by the President of the University.

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- **Multisensory Reading Instruction: Part I**
  - Dates: Saturdays
  - Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
  - Fee: $675
  - Instructor: Phyllis Berlin, M.S.

**Workshops**

- **A Way with Words: Vocabulary Development in the Classroom**
  - Date: Tuesday Oct. 15
  - Time: 4:00 - 5:30 PM
  - Fee: $550
  - Instructor: Lynn Bolter, Ph.D.

- **Making Sense of a Psychological Report**
  - Date: Wednesday Nov. 13
  - Time: 4:00 - 5:30 PM
  - Fee: $550
  - Instructor: David Gottsfeld, Psy.D.

- **Words Add Up: Writing in Middle School Math**
  - Date: Thursday Oct. 17
  - Time: 4:00 - 5:30 PM
  - Fee: $550
  - Instructor: Beverly Plaskett

- **Preparing for Electronic Research**
  - Date: Saturday Nov. 16
  - Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
  - Fee: $575
  - Instructor: Anne Marie Rowley

**Community Lecture**

- **Raising A B+ Child in an A+ World**
  - Date: Oct. 23
  - Time: 7:30 PM
  - Lecturer: Elisabeth B. Gutierez, M.D.

For further information call 914-949-1279. www.windwardtti.org

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**SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES**

- [Learning Disabilities Association of America](http://www.ldaa.org)
- [Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (CHADD)](http://www.chadd.org)
- [www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org)
- [www.ldonline.com](http://www.ldonline.com)
- [www.ldaanatl.org](http://www.ldaanatl.org)
Homeschooling Resources

Higher Aim for Homeschooling
http://members.aol.com/lpetr14886/
This website offers clear cut information to the public. It covers approaches to learning, a section on how homeschooling works with the federal government and even includes a kid’s corner and a recommended book list.

Home Education & Family Services/Royal Academy has partnered with the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) to provide online training for Homeschoolers who would like to learn how to start and operate their own small business and write a business plan. “BizTech” is an internet based curriculum designed to teach simplified “MBA” concepts to middle school and high school age students. High school credit can be earned from the Royal Academy and college credit from the State University of New York is available to those who pass an online college level exam at the completion of BizTech. Email royala@securespeed.net to order BizTech.

Home School Legal Defense Association
P.O. Box 3000 · Purcellville, VA 20134-9000
Phone: (540) 338-5600 · Fax: (540) 338-2733 · E-mail: info@hslda.org
This website provides tons of current information on all the legal aspects of homeschooling in all fifty states.

Home School World
http://www.homeschool.com
A website offering a hodgepodge of information on home-schooling, including a calendar of events, articles and organizations.

National Home Education Research Institute
www.nheri.org
A website of information on home-schooling, but better yet one that has a lot of links to other home-schooling sources on the web.

Home Educator.com
www.HomeEducator.com
A website for all those using an educational alternative, be it home-schooling, independent learning or otherwise.

Apricotpie.com
www.apricotpie.com
This is a website targeting Homeschooling students. The website contains submitted poetry, lists of favorite movies and books, as well as a chat and message boards.

Home School Corner.com
www.homeschoolcorner.com
A collection of all applicable information to homeschooling, including links for homeschooling for children with special needs.

Home Education Exchange of the Southern Tier
www.alert.com/homebooks/hs_exchange.html
An activity and support group for homeschoolers and for those exploring educational alternatives.

PICC
(www.about.comhttp://www.amanway.com/picc/)
This is a network of parents home schooling, or thinking about home schooling, their handicapped child. The parents of any child who would be labeled by the Committee on Special Education of the public school system would be invited to join PICC. Members have children with a wide range of handicapping conditions such as learning disabilities, attention deficit, cerebral palsy, blindness, and Down Syndrome. There is a PICC Directory and a bi-monthly newsletter. If a family joins PICC ($75.00 annual membership - check made out to PICC), they get a copy of the (completely confidential) Directory. Then, when families need help or encouragement, they can call someone with a similar circumstance for encouragement or information. PICC also has a lending library containing a wide variety of books, audio tapes and video tapes which can be borrowed for a small fee by its members. PICC is a source of legal information and an advocate for these families. PICC makes available information concerning current NYS regulations, curriculum, and resources for special needs children in New York State. They have representatives on the Home Instruction Advisory Group in Albany advising the State Education Department about home schoolng regulation and policy.

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CottageSchool.net
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-Library Journal
HOMESCHOOL CURRICULUM

By ZAHER KARP

From the Rochester Area Homeschoolers Association, a mother who subscribes to the ‘Unschool’ philosophy allowed her son to study with the Clonlara School. He would work daily under the supervision of a contact teacher via electronic mail and telephone. By leaving her son in the hands of a Clonlara teacher, she did not have to go through the growing pains of working out a curriculum.

She spoke of the experiences she has heard from others in her association. “When parents are just beginning, they tend to purchase a curriculum pieced together from various choices or created from others in her association. “When parents are just beginning, they tend to purchase a curriculum from others in her association. “When parents are just beginning, they tend to purchase a curriculum.

A correspondence school allows the breathing room of homeschooling combined with the supervision and credentials of a private school. With the bonus of a transcript, the Clonlara School cinches the knot between homeschooling and correspondence schools. Her son followed the “unschooler” program, which, staying true to its name, redefines the alternative learning aspect within homeschooling. For example, instead of adhering to a curriculum, one could focus on subjects by interest, such as attending a nearby museum lecture.

Her son, now 20, learned under Clonlara until he was 16, at which point he chose to attend community college, where he followed the 24 Credit Hour Program. As the New York State Education Department has dictated, “A student who has not earned a high school diploma may be issued a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma if satisfactory evidence is provided documenting successful completion of 24 credits or the equivalent as a recognized candidate for a college-level degree or certificate at an accredited institution.”

Correspondence schools are only one option within the array of education choices available outside of the formal school systems. For homeschoolers, curriculum choices span from pre-packaged “canned” programs to rag doll-esque curriculums. They seem to use vague programs [found on the Internet] that allow lots of breathing room.”

Holzbaur stressed that homeschooling’s greatest strength is its ability to be completely under the control of the parent. She spoke of the great resources of the Internet and how much of a vital tool it is for homeschoolers.

Pam from Long Island Family Teachers United in Prayer (L.I.F.T.U.P.) reinforced the importance of changing a curriculum to fit the child. “Whether the child is an auditory or visual learner, decides the curriculum, but many choose purchased curriculums and then change them along the way.”

Homeschooling is a trend that seems to be growing. Within the United States, approximately two million children are homeschooled, according to Homeschool Legal Defense Association. In addition, Governor Pataki named the week of May 27-June 2 Home Education Week. To accommodate the demands of a curriculum, parents often look to outside resources. One such option would be the “Homeschool Days” at the Liberty Science Center. According to Julia Kane, coordinator of the program, “Homeschool Days” occur three times a year—twice in September and once in February. The Center is closed to school groups on these days. The homeschool families pay the lowest entrance fee, the “school group” price. Within the Center itself, homeschoolers can experience the laser show, the massive IMAX Theater, on-site demonstrations and Discovery Challenges. This is also a valuable time to network with other families and discuss one of the more difficult curriculums to design: science.

Although many families participate in “Homeschool Days,” most belong to the Education Network of Christian Homeschoolers of New Jersey (www.cnochnj.org) or New York City Home Educators Alliance (www.nychea.com).
Every day countless families wrestle with whether to homeschool. When making this important decision for your family, consider the following factors.

Homeschooling takes from 2.5 to 5 hours a day. Successful homeschooling families structure their days around their lessons. By creating a "schoolroom" within the home, families often quickly establish an atmosphere for learning.

Additionally, homeschooling families find that educational opportunities abound in everyday life—such as using math skills while shopping. Still, these families enjoy the freedom to pursue other interests, including travel, performance and athletics.

Home teachers come from all walks of life and education levels. A curriculum prepared specifically for homeschoolers with detailed lesson plans, incorporating activities, assignments and discussion questions, helps make sure families teach the right lessons in the best sequence.

Finding appropriate textbooks, workbooks and other materials can be time consuming and complicated. Although some families gather their own lessons, many families opt for a complete curriculum to ensure there are no gaps in their children's instruction. Relying on education professionals to find the best educational materials and guide home instruction maximizes teaching time and gives families the peace of mind that comes when their children excel.

Selecting the right curriculum is critical. Completing a pre-enrollment assessment and working closely with a curriculum provider's educational experts for suggestions on accelerated or remedial work help guarantee a child's success in homeschooling.

Homeschooling is legal throughout the U.S., although state regulations differ. Contact the Home School Legal Defense Association at www.hslda.org or call them at 540-338-5600 to learn more about the state homeschooling laws. And homeschooling has proven benefits. A recent Fraser Institute study found that educating a public school student costs about $5,325 per year, with the average student scoring in the 50th percentile on standardized tests. The same study found that children schooled at home cost $549 each per year and scored on average in the 85th percentile nationally.
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For more info on “Teach Me Some Greek!” www.greeknstuff.com
Greek ‘n’ Stuff also makes a similar program for teaching Latin: “Latin’s Not So Tough!”

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THE BASIC COZY GRAMMAR COURSE
The Basic Cozy Grammar Course, a series of lessons on two videotapes with an accompanying reproducible workbook, was released in March by Splashes from the River Multimedia Entertainment. Marie Rackham, an exuberant retired English teacher, coaches her audience through 27 lessons from her idyllic beach cottage “classroom.” Rackham softens the instruction of what, for many, is a frightening subject by delivering the lessons in her slippers while enjoying a cup of tea. The materials are formatted for a student to watch a lesson and then complete corresponding workbook exercises. Drawn from the curriculum Rackham used in the Canadian Public Schools, each video contains 14 different lessons, including Kinds of Sentences, Agreement of Verbs, Comparison of Adjectives, Misplaced Phrases and Common Errors. At the back of the workbook are answer keys for all exercises as well as four Grammar Tests. “Live” examples of the concepts being taught as well as Rackham’s colorful personality keep students’ attention during the lessons, while a classical soundtrack stimulates their thinking. Suitable for ages nine-and up for use at home or in the classroom. Contact Splashes from the River at 1-800-201-2280 or visit www.splashesfromtheriver.com for more information.

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For Growing Knowledge and Understanding
**Become a Rock Detective!**

By JOAN K. FERGUSON

Oh, no!!! Rocks! It’s time to study rocks! I’ve always loved rocks, but the children are all going to bring in their rock collections, display them all over the room, and they’re going to expect me to identify them! Auggghh!!! That was how it was when I started teaching in 1965. We’ve come a long way!

Today Earth Science is taught at all levels. The curricula are sophisticated and integrated into the entire educational experience, but challenges remain for the teacher who hasn’t had a sufficiently rigorous course in geology. Available materials often rely on text and media, not tactile experience. We teach good hard and hopefully relevant science, but where is the tactile experience that most children need? There is a huge gap between the curriculum and the rocks! Rock Detective Geoscience Education is a lifetime. It mentors the teacher, and it is the hands-on segue to earth science concepts.

Rock Detective was written and developed by Ruth Deike. Now retired, she spent her career as a geologist with the US Geological Survey. She is a scientist. The scientific information is first rate and aimed at expanding the students’ and teachers’ understanding, not just learning facts for a test. Ruth, using her own enthusiasm as a vehicle for presenting earth science information, lets the rocks tell their own stories as the students solve mysteries while examining the rock samples.

Rock Detective is hands-on. The samples are a good size, big enough to provide heft in the hand! No longer do we have to rely on the boxes of rock samples from museum shops. The Rock Detective samples, often more than one to a mystery, are “real” rocks!

The Rock Detective program is flexible. It can be used with the entire class, as is suggested in the manual, individually as a warm up as students enter the classroom, and in small groups with the teacher or an aide. I usually used it in small groups with parent aids. The parents panicked when I first asked them to work with a geology activity, but by the time they had finished working with the children, they were so excited about what they had learned, they begged to do it again on their next visit to the classroom!

Are you teaching in Spanish? Professionally translated by South American and Puerto Rican geologists, the Rock Detective program (both mysteries and resource materials) is now available in Spanish through eighth grade. Field tested in Puerto Rico, both students and teachers were delighted!

The Rock Detective program is exciting for both teachers and students of all ages. Try it! You’ll like it, and you’ll certainly learn to love earth science. The children will, too!

Joan K. Ferguson is President of Rock Detective Geoscience Education, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. A retired teacher, she receives no payment from the organization and, in fact, helps support it. She is involved with Rock Detective because she used it extensively in her classroom and knows how effective and child-friendly and teacher-friendly it is! For more information see the Rock Detective web site at www.rockdetective.org, or call Ruth at (207)737-4612.

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**Do your homeschool children need help with writing?**

Mine did. Now writing is easy for them!

They used to stare at blank sheets of paper, not knowing how to start. Then I developed fill-in-the-blank writing forms and a writer’s reference guide that they could keep in their binder with all the information they would need to pass the state writing proficiency test. I’ve now made Ten Minutes to Better Study Skills and the Writers Easy Reference Guide, the two books I developed for my own children, available to other teachers, parents, and students!

- Bonnie Terry, M. Ed.
Interns Immersed In Coral Research at The New York Aquarium

By TOM KERTES

“The Osborne Laboratories of Marine Sciences is a very special place,” said Ariana Chan, a junior at Midwood High School and one of students who have the opportunity to work as interns at the Wildlife Conservation Society’s New York Aquarium at Coney Island this summer. “You learn so much. And that’s not all: I believe that the coral research program I participate in is accomplishing something very important.”

Coral reefs are indeed ecosystems of enormous biodiversity. They are also in enormous trouble, so the research conducted at OLMS—one of the very few labs in the world capable of conducting controlled experiments on reef-building corals—have the potential to make a great difference.

“One of the professors we work with—John Williams from Columbia University—is currently researching coral’s potential cancer-curing properties,” Chan said.

“Corals could also be used for bone grafts,” added Juan Carlos Velez, another high school intern. “But, besides their medicinal qualities, they are important in feeding some third world countries, saving the seashore from erosion and, due to their beauty, general tourism as well.”

“Did you know?” asked Velez, of the over 1 million different species on the coral reef, only 10 per cent is presently known to science.”

Chan and Velez are both conducting research projects for the INTEL National Talent Search in Science. Still, they heard of OLMS by mere word of mouth.

“We have no organized tie-ins with schools”, Lab Manager for the Coral Research Laboratory Sam Jones said. “But we have 20 applications every summer for five spots. And you don’t necessarily have to be a science major. In fact, you don’t just want to look at the pretty things in the water. I’m the kind of person who wants to know what they are and what makes them tick. Still, I would have never achieved this level of interest without the inspiration of Orne (his retired oceanography teacher) and my Earth Science teacher Tufano.”

“They encouraged me to get engaged in research,” Velez said. “They told me that if I’m really interested in something, I could do anything I want to do.”

Music, Art and Dance in the City

Events in Central Park

Harlem Meer Performance Festival

The Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, inside the park at 110th Street between Fifth and Lenox Avenues. Every Sun. through Sept. 1st, 4:00 – 6:00 pm The rich culture of the city is reflected through jazz, blues, Latin and gospel performances.

Dancing on the Plaza

The Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, inside the park at 11th Street between Fifth and Lenox Avenues Thursday evenings in August, 7:00 – 8:30 pm Learn to swing, salsa, ballroom or disco dance from a professional instructor in an outdoor ballroom.

Events at Lincoln Center

Alice Farley Dance Theater

North Plaza August 7th, 10:30 am Especially for kids: puppets, masks, dance, and spectacle

Diablo Dance Theater

Josie Robertson Plaza August 7th, 6:00 pm Young dancers from Taiwan juggle, balance and perform karate to traditional Chinese music

A-Quo Danza Contemporanea

Josie Robertson Plaza August 8th, 5:30 pm An exciting new work set to an original composition by Carlo Nicolau

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An Ongoing Series of Interviews with Deans of Education

Dean David Hodges: Hunter College

By Lena Khidritsky

“If I were a teacher in those schools and I were presiding over the lives of children, I would try to teach them that those streets, those neighborhoods and those dangers by which they are surrounded are criminal and if they are going to be adults who function well in society, they should never make their peace with those conditions.” Dean David Hodges quoted these lines from author James Baldwin’s speech to the teachers of the elementary school in Harlem that Baldwin attended as a child. Dean Hodges’ main goal for teacher education students at Hunter College; to be well-prepared to teach in inner city schools.

“We are not preparing teachers for teaching in areas of “comfort and convenience,” but for teaching in areas of “challenge and controversy”, stressed the Dean, as he paraphrased the famous lines of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Though a dean at Hunter College’s School of Education since September 2001, Hodges has been a member of the faculty for three decades. Times have changed since he first began his career in education and so has the focus of the teacher education program.

During the 1970s the issue of urban education first began to surface. Originally, it was urban education as opposed to rural education. Now urban education has taken on its own meaning: the education needs of the inner city. It is this that Hunter, and Dean Hodges pay special attention to. “We have made a pronounced commitment to urban education and have done a lot more to refine and expand that vision. There are more stakeholders now than before and fewer persons who would devalue it,” the Dean comments. In fact, of the approximately 3,000 students enrolled in the School of Education, most of them do go on to teach in the New York City public schools.

“If you prepare teachers just in content then you are not addressing the real needs of the inner city child; content without commitment does not yield positive results,” says Hodges. Therefore, when Hunter College constructed a conceptual framework for the process of accreditation, social justice was a key feature. It became “a bedrock on which our program rests”. A passion for social justice, in turn, has become an important criterion for recruiting both students and staff.

The theme of social justice permeates all of the course work and can be seen most clearly in the mandatory class for graduate students “Diversity in American Education.” This is but one example of what is available at Hunter. Programs at Hunter, to name a few, include TESOL, a literacy program, an early childhood program, a special education program, a social studies program, a school counseling program, a program in administration and supervision, and a math program. The college places a particular emphasis on mathematics education, holding regular workshops during the school year for principals and assistant principals of Schools Under Registration Review (SURR). These workshops have received such positive feedback from those who participated that the School of Education is starting a special Mathematics Center to expand its offerings.

Hunter participates with other colleges of the City University of New York in the TOP program to increase the number of math and science teachers in New York City public schools. The program targets career changers, offering them full tuition toward an MA in education.

The College participates also in a Teaching Fellows program. This fall, at Hunter, a second cohort of about 70 fellows will start. “I am very supportive of the Fellows because it is a collaboration between the Board of Higher Education and the Board of Education. I’m a bridge builder and I would like to see cooperation whenever possible,” said Hodges. The “dire” need for certified teachers in urban education makes the Dean a strong proponent of the Fellows Program. This program, run jointly by the Board of Education and several colleges, offers concentrated free courses for qualified individuals. There are flaws however, the Dean carefully explained, but they were not insurmountable. Fellows may not receive all the assistance that they need to be successful teachers in this concentrated program. There is also the problem of other teacher education students who have struggled to pay for their education and have not been in a Fellows Program who do not get concentrated attention and sometimes cannot finish their degrees because of economic hardships. As of now these students remain unanswered, but research is currently underway by CUNY.

As to the Dean himself, he takes pride in the college. “When we confer a Hunter degree we are giving a wonderful gift to the City of New York and to the world,” he says. He mentions the two women Nobel Prize winners to graduate from Hunter—Rosalyn Yalow who graduated from Hunter in 1941 won the Nobel prize in 1977 for the development of radioimmunoassay, a pioneer technique to measure concentrations of insulin, hormones, and other substances; and Gertrude B. Elion who graduated Hunter in 1937 and was awarded the Nobel prize in 1988 for fundamental research that led to the development of AZT and other drugs.

During his tenure as faculty member and currently dean, Hodges remembers the enthusiasm and idealism of all the students. As to the change in the attitudes of the student body he observed, “The changes I see are not as much in the students themselves but in what they can expect to get when they come here...the students who come here now are getting more to work with as they prepare to teach in inner city schools.” With all the improvements the Dean is still not satisfied. “[In five years] I’d like the School of Education to have the name of being the very best school of education in New York City—public or private—for persons interested in careers serving children within the inner city. I’d like us to have the name for doing that better than anyone else. And, I think that is attainable”.

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Word Watchers Weigh In At MMC Writers’ Conference

By JOAN BAUM, Ph.D.

Capping a four-day seminar series on writing and publishing, led concurrently by Ben Cheever, Grace Mirabella and Meg Wolitzer - Marymount Manhattan College recently held its biggest ever 12th Writers’ Conference proving that “words, words, words,” as Hamlet would say, have not lost their compelling appeal in the age of mixed media. After a breakfast registration of lively chatter and collegial reunions, the existential crisis set in: which panel to attend? Everyone wanted to be everywhere – sessions on literary agents, editors, books, magazines, special genre. Each panel boasted a diverse group of name-draw pros. Asked in advance to note the highlights of his own presentation for the Memoir/Biography panel, the ever-mischievous Malachy McCourt, who seems to have promised his session moderator Mickey Pearlman “to behave,” had scrawled, “it’s all highlighted.” The expression served for the day.

While Elfrieda Abbe, editor of The Writer magazine was delivering the goods about what writers should do before sending off a book proposal (“know your market”), at the Editors’ Panel, Lloyd Moss, from WQXR, was wowing Children’s Panel attendees with a dry-humored account on how he went from playing trombone to authoring the hugely successful Zin! Zin a Violin, noting, incidentally, that it never hurts to have a relative in publishing. Meanwhile, down the hall, Susan Orlean from The New Yorker was allaying fears of writing throw themselves on the mercy of those they are interviewing. Joining Abbe on the Editors Panel were Pamela Fiori, Jill Lamar, and Enid Nemy. Sharing the Children’s session were Louise Borden, Sally Cook, Karen Riskin, Mary Ann MacDonald, Cat Bowman Smith.

Roy Blount, Jr., Bel Kaufman and Toni Sciarra Poynter also delighted the crowd at the Non-fiction panel, while Memoir/Biography also hosted Daphne Merkin, Stanley H. Kaplan, and Judy Light Aygildiz. Ben Cheever, Patricia Volk, John Scarels, Donna Hill, and Arthur Bradford, cum guitar filled out the panel on Fiction writing. Could there be a writers’ conference without a Publicity panel? Impossible, as evidenced by panelists Tina Flaherty, Susan Shapiro Barash, Miriam Silverberg, and Jimmy Franco. By late morning, everyone came together for a Plenary session in MMC’s Theresa Lang Theatre to hear keynote Jane Isay, editor in chief at Harcourt and former publisher of Grossel Books (Putnam). Focused, articulate, with a conversational charm, Isay interwove anecdotes and information as she talked about how writers can best advance themselves with agents and editors. A book has to be “positioned” for marketing, and authors must be prepared for the “social part” of promotion, she emphasized. Approximately 40,000 books come out each year with an average shelf-life of six weeks. “Passion, character, and overcoming barriers” was Isay’s overarching theme. She noted in particular that books that make it are books that consider their readers. “My story” has to have universal resonance.

Non-fiction writing generates no followers so writers have to consider their choice of subject. In any case, pursue what you’re passionate about, she concluded. “Passion,” in fact, seemed to be on everyone’s mind – in the sense of love rather than suffering, though Nancy Kelton at the afternoon Magazine Writing Panel confessed to getting 156 rejections before she succeeded with her first book.

At lunch, a moveable feast greeted the crowd in two senses: a great buffet followed by a great Alan Furst, master spy thriller novelist who gave the afternoon keynote address. Inadvertently recalling advice given to Dustin Hoffman in “The Graduate” Furst said the key word to successful book publishing is “titles” -70% of getting there.” He proceeded to give a humorous, self-mocking account of how he found his own titles, an entertaining account of trial, error, and accident. What really emerged, however, was the impression of a widely read and imaginative author whose curiosity drove him to pursue subjects in WW II historical espionage that had not been written to death.

Afternoon sessions continued to pack ‘em in: one Literary Agents panel featured the heads of the Karen Zahler, Joanne Wang, Harriet Wasserman and Richard Curtis agencies, along with Bill Banks, director of the Harlem Writer’s Guild. Those who came to the later session on Literary Agents heard more wise words from Fifi Oscard, Ken Aitchy, Lois Wallace, and Marianne Strong. Those interested in acquiring session tapes should call Writing Center director Lewis B. Frumkes at (212) 774-4811.

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Dean Posamentier Heads CCNY Pilot: Immersion Helps Math Teacher Shortage

By TOM KERES

Thumbs up for lunch. New York City Schools Chancellor Harold Levy and City College Dean of the School of Education Alfred S. Posamentier were enjoying the midday meal one day, talking about — what else? — the shortage of teachers, particularly in science and mathematics. “I think that, with just a little preparation, I could have been a math teacher myself,” Levy muses. “But I was not a math major in college. So I would never have had the chance.”

“Wait a minute,” Posamentier replied. “We may have ourselves the germ of an idea here.”

And it was a great idea, too. What if people with an interest in teaching math who were non-math majors with a mathematics-related background in their business lives, like Levy, got a chance to receive the type of math immersion that would qualify them to teach? “We needed to do something in order to jump-start the process,” Levy said. “We had to get qualified teachers somewhere. Investment bankers, bond traders, CPA’s and other professionals who show proficiency in math and choose to become teachers need training to know how to teach teenagers. But they shouldn’t have to become math majors to do that.”

A seemingly radical step, yes. But the number of college math majors—a requirement to qualify as a math teacher in New York City public schools—has been dropping steadily. In fact, these days, only about 1 percent of all graduates major in math.

In May, the State Board of Regents approved the pilot program. The question, whether you must be a math major to be a top-notch math teacher, continues to be debated within the academic community, “I don’t believe that,” said Posamentier. “Experience tells me that you could certainly achieve the required depth and level of knowledge in other ways. And your delivery — the enthusiasm, the inspiration, the creativity you show your students — is equally important.”

The City College pilot looked at the pool of 2000 potential career-changers who applied for Teaching Fellows program with the Board of Education and chose the 120 it felt was best-qualified for its Immersion Program. “We wanted to see what one summer of intensive work could accomplish,” Posamentier said. “The entire alternative certification program is free of charge. The State, wisely, is providing us with a special allowance.” Eventually, 57 candidates were selected, 50 of whom saw the program through to its conclusion “By and large, they’ve done really well on their test,” said Posamentier. “And, most importantly, these people want to teach. They are showing a unique enthusiasm for communicating with kids.”

It’s early, but the signs of success for the pilot program have already been remarkable. “These people are getting jobs,” said Posamentier. “And not just so-so jobs, either. They have high quality jobs in some of the better high schools all over the city.”

Columbia Libraries Receive Nearly $1 Million in Grants

Columbia University Libraries have received nearly $1 million in grants to support a range of library activities, including research, preservation and the expansion of oral history archives. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded a $542,000 grant to support a new Computational Linguistics for Metadata Building (CLiMB) project, which will bring together the most recent developments in natural language processing to make digital library collections, including images, easier to search.

A $207,289 NEH grant will enable the preservation of 240 three-dimensional stage models created by Joseph Urban for New York theaters between 1914-1933, including productions for the Ziegfeld Follies and the Metropolitan Opera. The extremely fragile set models will be stabilized and reset so that researchers can examine them safely. Digital images of related stage design documents and drawings will be created and linked to the existing online finding aid as a part of the project.

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**Dean Posamentier Heads CCNY Pilot: Immersion Helps Math Teacher Shortage**

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guides the teachers and shows them how to create a homepage and a class discussion board, how to use Power Point and how to evaluate web resources. “This course provides a useful tool for projects,” said Diane Ruscel, who teaches French at the Fieldston Upper School. Using a program called iMovie, the teachers edited their video using software that allowed them to enhance it with voice-over, music and visual elements. The teachers hope to master the program, so that they can create similar videos during the school year and enhance their foreign language curriculum and teaching techniques. “You have to practice a lot so you don’t forget the steps,” said Leticia Zervas-Gaytan to another teacher as she tries to learn how to edit a portion of the tape. Despite the difficulties they encounter, the teachers appeared willing and determined to learn and to meet the goals of the week, which, as outlined by McFerran, include: improving computer skills with Microsoft Office applications, learning how to make a grade book with Excel, increasing their knowledge of PowerPoint, and learning how to use PowerPoint as an assessment tool. According to Cano, who has been teaching Spanish at Fieldston for 15 years and considers the method “a valuable new tool”, the iMovie method has the potential to enhance the cultural reports, which require students to focus on and study a specific country, an assignment she gives every year. “The kids are always fascinated by visuals. This will capture them,” she said. Ruscel agreed. “Students love to work in this medium,” she said. “We will use these tools to learn language and hone our skills,” said Cano. The teachers also learned how to post assignments up on the web so students could access assignments from home. They also learned how to make forums where students could discuss different topics. “We are moving away from handouts to web-based instruction,” said McFerran.

Fieldston

Continued from page 5

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MUSEUMS AS EDUCATORS

By MARYLENA MANTAS

Enter Liberty Science Center (LSC) on a typical day and expect to find some atypical activity at every corner. While one student-visitor has the opportunity to get a close, hands-on look at the vestiges of our city’s early residents, others walk through 100 feet of total darkness—the room of touch mechanoreception—and learn what it’s like to use all senses except vision. For the past several months, more than 10,000 students had the opportunity to see cardiac surgery as it was being performed at Morristown Memorial Hospital through live video conferencing. If you don’t get to see Stoffee, a six-foot tall, stuffed animal—whose belly opens with a zipper to reveal replicas of human organs, such as intestines shaped like a carrot—don’t be disappointed. As Liberty Science Center (LSC) President Emlyn Koster points out, visitors can enjoy over 100 exhibits.

“Our job is to nurture interest, enhance conversation in the family and classroom and inspire students to be more interested in what they are doing in the formal curriculum,” says Koster, adding that the Center remains committed to a hands-on approach to science.

“The hands-on approach is more attractive to children and arguably, according to what teachers say, more impactful on learning than is looking and reading. Learning by doing is better than learning by reading,” he said.

According to Koster, since the late 1990s LSC, located in Liberty State Park in Jersey City, has “stretched its walls” and has extended “a helping hand” to the New Jersey public schools.

“We found ourselves in the position to be a single-source contract for the Department of Education in New Jersey and be of service to all the at-risk districts,” says Koster. “We have a rich menu of programs for the teachers, the students and the community.

The $6.6 million contract, which was established to provide New Jersey public schools with access to the educational facilities and programs of the LSC, has yielded positive results. When the initiative began in 1997, LSC worked only with three school districts—Jersey City, Paterson and Newark. Today that number has expanded to 30 and LSC reaches about 170,000 students annually. According to Koster, prior to the Legislation with the State Education Department only 500-600 students from Jersey City’s 32,000 visited or worked with LSC annually. Today, that number amounts to 24,000.

The interaction between LSC and the schools usually takes place through LSC’s traveling program. New Jersey schools use Title I Funds to take advantage of the traveling program, which brings science exhibits and workshops to the schools in the hopes that they will enhance the curriculum.

“If you are a collection based museum you don’t necessarily approach the medium of exhibition with a sense of how that is going to align itself with the curriculum of the schools that are going to visit you,” said Koster. Here, the terms Discovery Trail, Discovery Challenges have been interwoven in the exhibits. Thus exhibits and the IMAX films and the 3D Laser Shows are all packaged for the teachers in ways that help them help them address the educational standards of NJ and NY.

Teachers can access curriculum guides and workbooks on the Center’s website to prepare for a visit to LSC, which also provides teachers with professional development workshops and continuing education credit.

Tenement Museum: Public Education and Immigrants

By SYBIL MAIMIN

A celebration of public education was the theme of this year’s benefit dinner for the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, and abundant school spirit was evident as guests found chalk wrapped in festive ribbon and an apple at their dinner place, as well as displays featuring old photos and records from nearby PS 42.

One of the City’s major educational facilities, the museum hosted over 30,000 school children this past year, fulfilling its program to promote tolerance and historical perspective through the presentation and interpretation of the variety of immigrant and migrant experiences on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, a gateway to America.

Constructed in 1863 and home to about 7,000 people from over 20 nations until boarded up in 1935, the empty tenement building was discovered and turned into a museum in 1958 by meticulous recreation of apartments of several families who actually lived there. The homes of the German-Jewish Gumpertz family (1870’s) and the Sicilian-Catholic Baldizzi (1930’s) can be visited. Small garment factories often operated out of tenement homes and the newest restoration, the Levine apartment of 1897, allows visitors to explore issues of labor conditions and the importance of “needle trades” to immigrants.

Programs for students include use of original sources such as census lists, artifacts, oral histories, and death certificates to piece together lives in apartments being visited; questioning and interacting with a costumed educator assuming the identity of an early-century 14-year old; learning about changing housing codes while conducting “inspections” of the building for violations. College students are involved as interns, and a newly launched Urban Museum Studies Program in collaboration with City College will award graduate students (mostly immigrants or children of immigrants) certificates for work in museums. Inner city youth are given the opportunity to work with theater professionals and write and perform an original production based on Museum research.

Highlight of the evening’s celebration was the presentation by Matthew Goldstein, Chancellor of the City University of New York, of Urban Pioneer Awards to “three important players in the public education system.” Dr. Charlotte K. Frank, Jeffrey S. Wiesenfeld, and Chancellor Harold O. Levy.

All are very successful products of City public schools and nostalgic reminiscences and expressions of gratitude were warmly shared. Chancellor Goldstein said, “We depended on public education to improve our lives.”

Dr. Frank, who is Vice President, Research and Development for McGraw-Hill Education of the McGraw-Hill Companies and a tireless advocate for “best practices” and the importance of education to the business community, said she “learned integrity, responsibility, and trust at CUNY.”

Weisenfeld, a trustee of CUNY who has served in government and currently works in the private sector, spoke of paying back “this debt to the people and system who subsidized his education.”

Reviewing the city’s educational history, Chancellor Levy remarked that under the new governance legislation we “have come full circle...The public school system is the fruit of the tree of democracy. We as Americans understand that better than anyone, especially after 9/11. We take pride in diversity.” Summing it all up, a proud Ruth J. Abram, museum founder, inspiration, and president, told Education Update, “public education is the single most important avenue through which immigrants enter the American mainstream and these three honorees have made a difference in that area.”

“Technologies and the IMAX films and the 3D Laser Shows are all packaged for the teachers in ways that help them help them address the educational standards of NJ and NY. Teachers can access curriculum guides and workbooks on the Center’s website to prepare for a visit to LSC, which also provides teachers with professional development workshops and continuing education credit.” Koster said.

“‘Hopes and dreams are in the air for schools this year,’ said Koster. “But better than anyone, especially after 9/11. We remember that, ‘We depended on public education to improve our lives.’”

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AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL EDUCATORS AND ALL PARENTS

Summer vacation is almost over. So now is the time to seriously consider doing something to help a silent minority attain their rights to an equal educational opportunity. Who knows, you might belong to this unusually silent minority, and not even know it.

This fall all across our country our community schools will open with special adult community education classes for all kinds of minorities. There will be classes for such minorities as those who want to learn to program computers, arrange flowers, speak a foreign language, train their dog, improve their keyboarding skills, decorate cakes, play duplicate bridge, etc.

But there is one minority that is being completely ignored. That is, the small minority of adults who would like to know what they can do to help their child (or their spouse) learn to read or spell.

Now don’t you think that this minority has as much right to help as other minorities? Why is that there isn’t? Good question. Tough to answer.

We talk about the literacy movement and the need for volunteers to help. We have local literacy programs. We have national groups such as Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of America, and the AVKO Dyslexia Research Foundation who train tutors. But the largest pool of potential volunteers lies untapped—those in the immediate family who can read.

HOME SCHOOLING IN THE UNITED STATES: A LEGAL ANALYSIS

By CHRISTOPHER J. KLIEKA, J.D.

New York State

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Teacher Qualifications: Instruction need only be given by a competent teachers. N.Y. Educ. Law § 3204 The parent does not need to be certified. In re Franz, 55 A.D. 2d 424, 427, and 390 NYS 2d 940 (1977). A parent is deemed "competent" if the regulations above are followed.

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Memo to Chancellor: Get into the Middle of Education

BY ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN SANDERS

Chancellor-select Joel Klein, a person of extraordinary accomplishment, will have his hands full if approved by State Education Commissioner Richard Mills. Mr. Klein’s credentials as a manager and as a person able to oversee a large government bureaucracy are without question, but his appointment by Mayor Bloomberg nevertheless requires a waiver by Mills (as did the designation of outgoing Chancellor Harold Levy) because he lacks the legal requisite educational credentials.

Assuming Commissioner Mills does grant the waiver, Mr. Klein can then take charge as the first Mayor-designated Chancellor of the New York City public schools. Once in office, the new Chancellor will have to tackle many difficult issues, but here are a few that he cannot wait on, if he is to be successful:

First, he must recruit the finest and most experienced educational minds into his administration, especially in the key roles of his top deputies. Education isn’t just another business; obviously he understands this. But he needs the right people around him who can work as a team to assist him in developing an education vision and a strategy to move this system forward.

Additionally, the new Chancellor must heed the meaning of the fourth- and eighth-grade test scores in English and math. Without any question, the middle school grades—sixth, seventh and eighth—must be the focus.

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Art and Education: the Links are Critical

By TOM KERTES

According to Critical Links, a compendium of 62 research studies and interpretative essays published by the Art Education Partnership (AEP), arts in education enhance a student’s ability to learn and think.

The study, which carefully reviews various forms of art including dance, music, multi-arts, drama, and visual arts “reveals a very strong interrelationship between learning and the arts,” said Richard J. Deasey, the Director of AEP. “And this interrelation turned out to be arts,” added Deasey. “There was the teamwork aspect to this, of course. But the drama also became a bridge to whatever gaps existed socially; it served to teach the kids to tolerate and enjoy their differences.”

According to Deasey, “Economically disadvantaged students appeared to have a particular enjoyment of the arts and the art-forms as a form of expression not previously available to them.” Special ed students, who had trouble with social engagement in the classroom previously, found another avenue to express themselves. In both instances, the arts somehow served to lower the social barriers.

Perhaps the most dramatic results concern younger students, especially those in pre-K and grade school. Art instruction appeared to enhance a young child’s ability to “break the phonetic code” that unlocks written language by associating letters, words, and phrases with sounds, sentences, and meanings. Young children who engaged in dramatic enactments of stories also improved their reading comprehension and ability to read materials that they have not seen before. Critical Links also makes several recommendations regarding the future of arts education research, which includes studies that track students over a period of time and examine the impact of the arts on a child’s ability to learn; studies that clarify the nature of learning in the arts forms and the appropriate methods for assessing that learning; and studies that determine the optimum contexts and conditions for learning in the arts and the enabling school policies, practices, and resources.

For a copy of the report visit http://aep-arts.org.

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