AFT Praises Federal Budget’s Investments in Education

AFT LeaderNet News - May 7, 2009

“President Obama’s proposed 2010 budget provides important investments in public schools, high-quality early education, other supports for disadvantaged children, and expanded access to higher education,” AFT president Randi Weingarten says.

“The proposed budget reflects the president’s goal of ensuring that all students receive a rich, rigorous education that prepares them for college or the workforce after high school,” she says. “It also provides additional funding for early education programs that make a tremendous difference in children’s lives. And, by making Pell Grants mandatory instead of discretionary, the budget gives more Americans the opportunity to attend college.”

“The budget also reaffirms the president’s commitment to undertaking healthcare reform by seeking to control costs to expand coverage for more Americans. As Congress prepares to address this issue, the AFT will fight for the establishment of an effective public plan, and will oppose proposals that would require workers to pay taxes on their employer-provided health insurance.”

“While there is much to applaud in the president’s budget, we are disappointed that it includes continued public funding for private school vouchers in Washington, D.C. The foundations that have championed vouchers all these years easily could have raised the funds to ensure the children already participating in this program would not have their education disrupted. What is equally disappointing is that they are using these children, who are blameless, as pawns in their ideological battle.”
Feel like you are in a teaching rut? Do you wonder why you do, what you do? Are you up for a rigorous, rewarding challenge? Interested in examining your teaching practice?

These questions and more can be answered through the process of National Board Certification. Discuss the process with anyone who has experienced it and you will hear the words “rigorous,” “rewarding,” “reflective,” and “time-consuming.”

Discuss the process with anyone who has not been through it and you will hear “cost,” “isolation,” and “like a Master’s.” These are some of the misconceptions about the certification and the process that need to be “busted.”

MYTH # 1: The National Board process will cost me $2,500.00 and in this time of economic crisis, I can’t dole out that kind of money. MYTH BUSTER: All candidates must submit a $65.00 processing charge at the time of application. Then candidates submit a $500.00 initial fee payment to receive the verification packet and portfolio materials. However, at this same time candidates submit a New York State Albert Shanker Grant application (http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/restteachers/AlbertShanker.html) and the federally-funded Candidate Fee Subsidy Program application. The Shanker Grant will pay the $2,500.00 fee directly to National Board by December 31st and the Candidate Subsidy Program will reimburse the candidate $435.00 once the portfolio and assessment center exercises are completed. Final cost to candidate: $65.00.

MYTH # 2: I have a Master’s Degree; National Board isn’t any different. MYTH BUSTER: Many teachers have expressed disappointment in their various Master’s programs and felt that it was thousands of dollars of “payment” for permanent NYS teacher certification. A Master’s program measures “how you learn;” the National Board process is about “how you teach.” As you select the lessons, the classes, and the areas to develop, it is professional development, your way. It is a process of growth through analysis and reflection.

MYTH # 3: National Board Certification is a lonely, isolated process without any support. MYTH BUSTER: It can be, but only if you choose to go it alone. However, the most successful candidates choose to collaborate and work with colleagues by joining a candidate support group. Once working with colleagues the candidates must be willing to open up their work and pedagogy for others to inspect. They must allow others to look within their classroom both “virtually” through their writing and “technologically” through video of their classroom practice. I have made lifelong friends from my participation in a NYSUT Education and Learning Trust (ELT) support group (2002-2003) and new friends from my facilitation of a 2008-2009 ELT National Board Lab Class. To learn more about joining a support group and receiving 45 hours of inservice credit look for the fall, 2009 ELT courses on the NYSUT website (http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/elt_10600.html).

MYTH # 4: There isn’t any economic incentive for me to invest this huge amount of time into the process. MYTH BUSTER: In many districts this is true; however, as a WCSD teacher there is an economic incentive. It is one of the best contractually negotiated benefits for National Board Certification in the state. Successful completion of the National Board process, plus that original $65.00, and 200-400 hours of time reaps the WCSD teacher an additional $50,000.00 over 10 years. Furthermore, WCSD NBCTs mentor new teachers; thereby, earning either 45 inservice hours or receiving an additional $1,000.00 per year. NBCTs who choose not to mentor will receive a yearly stipend of $2,500.00. Spoiler Alert: While the financial incentive may be the initial impetus for many teachers, once knee-deep in the process, it is not unusual for it to be lost and to hear candidates say, “While the money got me into the process, I don’t even care about it now; I can’t believe how my teaching has changed” or “The money is secondary; I can’t believe I didn’t know, what I didn’t know!”

MYTH # 5: I did not achieve certification. I’m done; I’m not a good teacher. MYTH BUSTER: You are not done. While all candidates desire to achieve certification after the first year, the process should be considered a one to three year endeavor. The candidate retakes only areas of unsuccessful achievement and the Shanker Grant will fund the retake of two entries. There are three types of writing involved in the entry process: descriptive, analytical, and reflective. For many candidates, the analytical and reflective writings are the most challenging and require the largest investment of time. As the assessors need to “see” into the candidate’s classroom and mind, the writing is the “key” to achievement.

The only way to really know about National Board Certification is to go through the process. The certification process can, also, be used as a Professional Growth Plan for the 2009-2010 school year. So, why not make 2009-2010 the year you “throw down the gauntlet” and challenge yourself with the certification process?
Short sleeve tees, long sleeve tees, and lanyards are available for purchase at the WCT Office. Shirts range in size from small through 3X. Please stop by the office to make your purchases. Payment for these items must be a check made out to WCT - cash will not be accepted.

WCT Gear is available at the WCT Office:
√ $9 for short sleeve tee
√ $12 for long sleeve tee
√ $2 for lanyards

Your candidate journey can begin today! Learn about certificate areas, standards, core propositions, application process, grants, and 45 hours inservice credit. Please call Linda at the WCT Office 227-5065 to reserve your spot.

Norma Najjar, June May, and James DeNitto, members of the 2009 Ralph and Janet Capasso Scholarship Committee, are proud to announce the recipients of this year’s scholarship. They are: **Gloriann Langva** (JJHS), **Richard Rose** (JJHS) and **Nicole Sheremeta** (RCKHS).

The Wappingers Congress of Teachers and the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers award three scholarships to high school seniors whose parent or guardian is a member of the WCT. Each student will receive a scholarship of $1500.00.

A reception will be held on Tuesday, May 26th at 7:00 p.m. in the library of Van Wyck JHS.

**Is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process for you?**

Come to a National Board Information Session
**John Jay High School, room 128**
**Wednesday, May 20th**
**4:15 - 5:15**

Your candidate journey can begin today! Learn about certificate areas, standards, core propositions, application process, grants, and 45 hours inservice credit. Please call Linda at the WCT Office 227-5065 to reserve your spot.

**REMEMBER TO VOTE ON MAY 19TH! VOTE YES FOR THE BUDGET AND PLEASE CONSIDER VOTING FOR LEVERS 3, 4, & 5**

*if you live in the Wappingers Central School District*

**Get Your WCT Gear**

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FOR SALE: (by owner) Why rent when you can own? Spacious 3-bedroom condominium located on Rt.9W, Town of Newburgh, 3.5 miles north of Newburgh-Beacon Bridge in Parr Valley East, in Marlboro Schools. Excellent commuting location, close to train station, Stewart Airport and both I-84 or NYS Thruway. 1100 sq. ft., with a one-year old central heating, venting, air conditioning unit and condenser and a newly installed water heater, dishwasher, clothes washer/dryer in the condo, with a recently renovated bathroom. Ceiling fans in every room, and quiet surroundings for this ground level end unit. In-ground pool and child’s playground area on premises. Asking $159,000. Please call Joe at 845-590-2344.

FOR SALE: Candel Country Kitchen Table with leaf and 6 chairs (40x60 inches without leaf) - brown table with green back and chair legs - $800.00. 3 White Halcyon Serenity standard piano swivel chair with floral cushions. Call 845-471-3193.

WCT telephone number: 845-227-5065
Daniel H. Cook telephone number: 1-800-342-6651

Important information for all members:

√ You must let the WTF know of any change in your personal information as soon as possible

√ Student verification forms must be sent to Daniel H. Cook every semester

√ Dental and prescription reimbursement forms are on line at the WTF website

√ Please direct all concerns or questions to Linda at the WCT office or directly to Daniel H. Cook

Trustees:
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Betty Seifert, Treasurer
Erin Mulligan, Secretary
Philip Gertler, Trustee
Pasquale Delli Carpini, Trustee
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FOR SALE: Verizon LG enV2 cell phone. No need to extend your contract just to upgrade your phone! Used three months; in perfect condition. Includes leather case, lucite cover, wall charger, 2 car chargers, 2 data cables/chargers, owner’s manual. $125 for everything. 845/297-6529.


FOR SALE: Interior Painting
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May 15, 2009
WCTTeachers.org
THINK SUMMER! FOR RENT: 4 bedroom beach house in Charlestown, RI, only 2 1/2 hrs from Dutchess Co. 1 1/2 baths, large screened-in porch, newly remodeled fully equipped kitchen, large rec room in finished basement with pool table, and outdoor shower. Sleeps 8 comfortably. Just bring your bathing suit! It is less than 1 mile to lovely beach with private beachside parking. It also is within 1/2 mile of stores and casual restaurant. Newport, Mystic, Foxwoods, and Block Island ferry are a short drive away. If interested, call Roberta at 221-9872.

FOR SALE: Large updated 1 BR end unit in Beechwood South Condo complex, Poughkeepsie. Located on the ground floor with walkout patio. Patio is great for eating or sitting outdoors. New windows and front door. Updated appliances and newer bath. Plenty of closet space, including a large walk-in closet located in the hallway. Heat and hot water included in HOA fees. Convenient to shopping, colleges, IBM and trains located on route 9. Pool and laundry on premises. Ideal parking space. A MUST SEE! Asking $130,000. Please call and leave a message, 845-454-1428.

THINK SUMMER! FOR RENT: 2 BR, 2 BA Condo in OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND. Bayside, beautiful sunsets, fishing. Right next to the pool. Centrally located, close to all the amenities. Just cross the street to the ocean. Call Sandy at 896-1678 for more information or to reserve a week.