

United Federation of Teachers
260 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10020
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Data Collection: Bill Harju, Interviewer
Data Source: David Sherman, Vice President
Joseph Colletti, Special Representative

A. Demographics

Number of Schools: 1146

Elementary 675

Middle/Junior High 197

High School 213

Other 60 Special Education Schools, 1 adult education site.

Total number of employees by classification:

Certified: 75,471

Classified: 44,383

Management/supervisory: 11,367 (Includes Principals, Ass't Principals, Counselors, Psychologists, Social Workers and School Secretaries.)

Current enrollment by level: (1,093,679)

Elementary 566,111

Middle/Junior High: 200,135

High School: 307,596

Special Education: 19,837

Current enrollment by race/ethnicity

Caucasian: 15.7%

Hispanic: 37.5%

Black/African American: 35.9%

Other: 10.9%

Current enrollment-Language 155,859

Average Class Size by level:

The class sizes listed herein are contractual maximums that may be exceeded in accordance with written contractual exceptions. These class size limits apply to academic classes, and the contract contains language for classes such as music, physical education, industrial arts and others.

Primary: Kindergarten: 25, 1-3: 32

Upper: 32

Middle 30 & 33, depending upon school classification.

High School: 34

Private School enrollments in area/trends: No information

School District Budget

Total expenditures \$9,700,000,000

Expenditures per student: \$8,330

A. Significant Background Information:

. Union Structure/Roles

Officers (Names, longevity)

Randi Weingarten, President, (2 -years - previously an attorney, counsel to president since 1987)

Tom Pappas, Secretary (14 years)

Mel Aaronson, Treasurer (3 years)

Mona Romain, Assistant Secretary (3 years)

Michelle Bodden, Assistant Treasurer (3 years)

Carmen Alvarez, Vice President for Special Education (12 years)

Frank Carucci, Vice President for Vocational and Technical Education (Partial release)

Ronald C. Jones, Vice President for Elementary (8 years)

Richard Miller, Vice President, Middle School (6 years) (Partial release)

John Soldini, Vice President, High School (15 years) (Partial Release)

David Sherman, Vice President at Large (11 years)

Executive Board:

UFT has an executive board composed of approximately 70 members including the officers, and representatives from elementary, middle and high schools who are elected by those constituencies, representatives from functional chapters (i.e., nurses, counselors, etc.), and at large members elected at large by all members. The executive board meets twice per month, and the role includes recommending policy to the delegate assembly.

Representative Body

The UFT has a delegate assembly composed of the chapter leader (steward or faculty representative) and additional representation from schools based on a ratio of one per 60 members. Site membership includes teachers, secretaries, paraprofessionals and other certificated staff (non-supervisory). The delegate assembly, which includes approximately 4,000 members, meets monthly during the school year, and is the policy making body for the union.

Committees-Union:

1. Negotiations Committee A committee composed of all officers, five borough representatives, and six elected members elected from the executive board - they advise the actual negotiations team. The negotiations team is composed of the President, Vice President at large, a Representative of a retained law firm, a staff person familiar with numbers, a staff person identified as the coordinator of negotiations, and, depending upon the issue being negotiated, others may be called.
1. Grievance UFT has no formal grievance committee. Instead, UFT staff in the grievance department makes recommendations to a subcommittee of three officers who then make the decisions regarding which grievances to pursue to arbitration.
1. Political activity The UFT has a large political action department

UFT has a large number of ad hoc task forces that are appointed from time to time to deal with various issues. An appointed task force will research an issue and make a report to the officers, the executive board, and to the delegate assembly. Policies approved by the delegate assembly are then implemented by the elected leadership and the appointed staff. Accordingly, UFT does not have a large number of standing committees. Examples of recent task forces include a task forces on school governance, a task force to review how political endorsements are handled, and a task force to deal with non-traditional school structures, staffing and seniority.

Committee-Joint:

1. Consultation Committee - A monthly meeting between the President, Vice President at Large, the Chancellor and his top staff and including others based upon topics to be discussed. Normally, the Union sets the agenda, and topics include major issues related to the school district, and the relationship between the union and the district.
1. Professional Development Committee - A contractually mandated committee including three or four representatives from each party, to discuss professional development issues.
1. Labor Management Committee A joint committee charged with implementation of a contractual provision regarding the elimination of administrative duties for teachers. The committee is composed of 3 or 4 appointees each from the Union and the District.
1. Personnel Committee - A joint UFT-District committee that meets monthly to deal with issues of payroll, salary and salary placement in an effort to avoid grievances.

In addition, the parties utilize adhoc committees when issues arise.

Permanent Union Staff (Names, positions, tenure)

The UFT has five borough offices that are staffed and handle primarily grievances and pension issues within the borough, and to coordinate activities within the borough - including monthly meetings with the district representatives (each borough contains a number of the School District's 40 community districts)

The UFT employs approximately 140 union staff in several major departments including:

1. Grievance
1. Pension
1. Safety and Victim Support
1. Communications and Publications
1. Political activity

Term limits

The UFT has no Term Limits

Union Partnerships

1. New York City Partnership - A partnership between UFT, the NYC Chamber of Commerce, and the District which sponsors a "Breakthrough Initiative" in two community school districts. The initiative provides funding for individual teacher bonuses based upon a target of performance on standardized tests, as well as financial support for national board certification.
1. Coalition for Essential Schools - Center for Collaborative Education - This partnership sponsors several schools in the City in cooperation with UFT. The sponsored schools operate under the program of the Coalition for Essential Schools.
1. New Visions for Public Schools - A not for profit organization that has started several public schools that have small enrollments, are theme based, and operate through a board of directors. The UFT has a seat on the Board of Directors, and the schools all operate under the UFT Contract.
1. Annenburg Grant - A large grant operated by a coalition that includes the UFT as full partner. The Annenberg Grant in NYC is being used primarily to create small, non traditional schools within the city, some in partnership with universities, or businesses in the community - all operated as public schools under the Union Contract.

Principal means of communication with members:

1. New York Teacher - 20 to 22 issues per year, tabloid format distributed via US Mail to every member's home.
1. Website: www.uft.org
1. Telephone hotline
1. Monthly mailing to chapter leaders - called "The Leader"
1. Functional chapters (Paraprofessionals, Guidance Counselors, Secretaries, Nurses, etc) have their own newsletters.
1. Large number of publications - subject specific (see attachments)

Membership Engagement

1. Membership surveys.
1. Site Visits: Significant numbers of site visits by leadership and staff, based on site needs.

Significant recent budget developments (cutbacks, infusions) if any:

None recently

In order to understand this district, what is it necessary to know/understand?

The size of the district is extremely large - with over 1 million students. The district contains 32 community school districts, 5 high school superintendencies based on the 5 boroughs, 1 high school superintendency for alternative high schools, District 75 for special education, and the Chancellor's District which includes the low performing schools. Each district has its own superintendent. Additionally, the overall school board is appointed. The school board includes one member for each borough, two mayoral appointees, and the Chancellor. The Chancellor is in overall charge of the district, and is appointed by the Board. Because the mayor controls a minimum of 2 votes, and may control more depending upon the politics of the boroughs, the mayor exerts substantial influence over the appointment of the Chancellor. These politics obviously affect the relationship between UFT and the District, making these relationships subject to New York City politics.

Labor-management relationship:

Historically, the labor management relationship swings, dependent upon the economy, and the ravages of city politics. The relationship with the Board (which means the central administration) has been generally collaborative in recent years and a large number of collaborative programs and projects have been and continue to be created and implemented.

Key crises:

Recently, the School Board decreed an end to social promotion, resulting in 300,000 students who would fail to be promoted in June of 2000. The Board's approach to resolving what to do with this large number of students was summer school. There appears to be no plan for how to handle students who are unable to pass after having attended summer school.

Retirements - it is estimated that up to 54,000 teachers will retire over the next five years, and there is no current program designed to determine how these teachers will be replaced. Salaries in NYC are 25% lower than surrounding areas, and the number of non-certified teachers is growing larger and larger.

Measured outcomes - test scores, college acceptance rates (1997-98 & 1998-99)

NYC is in the process, over the next several years, of implementing a new series of both state and local tests. There have been test declines in reading, and more serious declines in math scores. Discussions around the decline have included concerns that a new test creates the decline, and a large number of uncertified teachers - particularly in the areas of math and science - are contributing to the decline.

Current Superintendency:

Name:

In New York City, the title of the head of the school district is "Chancellor" The current chancellor is Harold Levy, whose appointment as Interim Chancellor has recently been converted to permanent.

Background Investment Banker - was a member of the New York State Board of Regents

Tenure:

Levy is considered an Interim Chancellor, having been appointed to replace outgoing Chancellor Rudy Crew in December of 1999 on an interim basis until June 30, 2000. It is anticipated that Levy will receive the permanent appointment prior to June 30.

Management team:

Generally, a new chancellor will bring in a few of his close associates and place them in key positions. The management team tends to change with each new chancellor. Levy represents the 7th chancellor in the 1990's

Other employee unions (Name, approximate unit membership, relationship to teachers)

Noninstructional Teacher Aides and Food Services, Secretarial/Clerical staff:

These employees are represented by District Council 37, which is an umbrella group for several individual AFL-CIO unions

Up to 11 other unions represent various employees of the Board, including the Communications Workers of America representing some clerical employees, and the Teamsters who represent Bus Drivers and some additional categories of employees.

Principals: Administrators are represented by the Council of Supervisors and Administrators (CSA). Affiliated with the AFL/CIO. The relationship with the UFT is not particularly positive.

Security Staff School security officers or police officers are represented by the City's Police Officers Union

Status of contract:

Expiration of current agreement: November 15, 2000

Agency fee: yes

Binding arbitration: yes

Strikes: Several strikes, the last one in 1975.

Unfair labor practices:

No major current charges - the UFT is currently threatening a ULP based on the District's current stance at the bargaining table.

Significant litigation:

About 2 years ago, UFT won a suit in court regarding the issue of school site maintenance, with the court ruling that the district must devote additional expenditures for school maintenance. Funding for the court settlement was specifically not to be taken from the instructional program.

Approximate number of grievances per year:

Step 1 and 2 grievances are filed at the site level, and are not precedential, thus are not recorded in the UFT office. Grievances actually filed at the Chancellor's level approximate 1000 per year.

Union role in community:

Political endorsements:

UFT endorses candidates based on their education, labor and human rights record. Candidates for Mayor, City Council are endorsed locally by UFT. Candidates for state and federal officer are endorsed by the UFT through the state organization. UFT attempts to endorse incumbents, unless they perform egregiously.

Community engagement

For the past fifteen years, UFT has worked extensively with many community organizations within the city. The Union is now highly respected, and on a friendly basis with an amazing array of community groups.

1. The UFT works with the URBAN league provide training for parents who serve on the school site council. At the request of the Urban League, parent training is being provided through the UFT Teacher Center.
1. The UFT has a relationship with a large number of community based organizations around a NYC small school initiative taking place in New York. UFT has worked with these groups to help maneuver through the district bureaucracy to obtain approval for a variety of community based small schools. There are approximately 150 of these small schools, normally with fewer than 500 students, and they are located in nontraditional buildings that have been initially obtained by the school, and are now owned by the district.
1. UFT has an ongoing relationship with the United Parents Association (PTA).
1. The UFT sponsors a "dial a teacher" program, similar to homework hotline for students and parents. The program has been in place for over 20 years. Annually, thousands of parents contact dial a teacher to receive help on how to assist their students. Dial a teacher is paid for through funds provided by the New York City Council. Originally, the program was paid through a grant obtained by the Union.
1. Parent workshops. Generated by questions raised by parents who have contacted the dial a teacher program, UFT has sponsored a variety of parent workshops on how to help students be effective in school. Many of the workshops are conducted at the school sites with parents from the particular site, while others are offered at the union office.
1. Annual Parent Conference - In partnership with the United Parents Association, the UFT sponsors an annual conference with workshops, exhibits, cultural groups, keynote speakers, etc. The attendance is cut at 3000 parents, because of the capacity of the available sites.

A. Education Reform

Union posture:

Pro/anti reform

UFT is the number one entity in New York City to advocate the use of collective bargaining for instructional and educational advocacy and change. As a result, the contract has extensive language dealing with reform. UFT has proposed, begun, and/or supported all of the major reform initiatives that have taken place in the city.

Membership attitudes

On membership surveys, UFT has discovered that the number one priority for members in terms of what they want from their union is help in the classroom. When asked follow-up questions regarding bread and butter issues, members say - of course, we want higher salaries, benefits, etc., that's what a union does - but we want help in our classrooms.

In cases where membership support could be questionable, UFT works, in an educational mode, to create open and free discussion within the union, and a position becomes formulated out of these discussions.

Financial commitment:

The Union makes a major financial/dues commitment to reform. One small example is a current \$2 million project to create a k-12 curriculum in math, English, Science and social studies since no district commitment exists.

Reform elements in contract:

1. Joint Intentions and Commitments - Lists the parties' intentions regarding improved student achievement.
1. Article 8 - Education Reform - Establishes school based management and shared decisionmaking, provides for waivers from the agreement for innovative programs, and details a staff development program for new teachers.
1. Article 18 - Transfers & Staffing, Section F - School Based Option - Establishes a process for school sites, through a staffing committee, and permits selection of less senior applicants if the committee can demonstrate superior qualifications.
1. Article 21 - Due Process & Review Procedures, Section G - Peer Intervention Program - Establishes a peer intervention program.

Organization/structure for reform:

Central coordinating structure:

No overall coordinating structure, though there are individual programs such as peer intervention program and staff development that have joint union/board oversight committees for the individual program.

District office structure:

None

Union structure:

None

Responsibility (within union - leaders? Staff?)

The UFT Vice President at large has the major responsibility for union instructional initiatives and joint programs with the district.

Organization around standards

Development of standards:

The New York City Board of Education adopted the New Standards from the University of Pittsburgh Center for Teaching and Learning. Initially, during the mid-90's, the standards were implemented in District 2. Ultimately, these standards were then adopted for the entire district by the Chancellor. There has been no effort to create a local set of standards/curriculum in New York, thus the UFT is engaged in an effort to develop a k-12 curriculum related to the standards, and intends to present the curriculum, once developed, to New York City teachers for implementation.

Implementation

The implementation has been very spotty. The district has developed no organized coherent method of implementation citywide. Each of the 32 community districts is handling standards on its own, and in many cases, each school within the district is creating its own approach.

Role of union:

Through the UFT Teacher Center, the Union sponsors a variety of workshops or seminars on standards based instruction. In addition, the Union is, on its own, developing a k-12 core curriculum in math, science, English and social studies which is related to the adopted standards in the district as described above.

Training/Staff Development

See above.

Professional Development

Program description & operation:

There is a UFT Teacher Center governed by a joint union-management Board, with the union holding a majority of seats on the board. The teacher center is funded by the state as well as by funding from the Board. The teacher center screens, interviews and selects "Teacher Center Specialists" to serve as staff development resources at the site. Currently, there are 283 staff developers in place at the sites.

The Union has negotiated a joint new teacher-training program which is implemented during the teacher's first year of employment. The program begins with a week in August, and extends throughout the first year.

Relationship to union:

The staff development program is fully negotiated between the union and the board.

Relationship to colleges/universities:

Many of the staff members assigned to the teacher center are adjunct professors at local colleges or universities. Professors from local colleges are recruited to offer masters degree programs, bachelor degree programs, and courses that provide credits that teachers need to advance on the salary schedule. These programs are offered to members at reduced tuition rates

Union structure/organization:

The UFT works very closely with the teacher center, and in fact, members identify it as the "UFT Teacher Center." The center is actually located in the UFT headquarters, and many of the activities are centered at the union office.

Low performing Schools

Program description

The State identifies low performing schools through the statewide testing program. Such schools are identified as "Schools Under Registration Review" or SURR schools. Once a school is identified, the school is required to develop a plan to improve. Through the UFT Teacher Center, the school is provided staff development and facilitation to assist in developing the plan. The school is given time to implement the plan. If improvement is not sufficient, additional sanctions can be put in place including placement in the Chancellor's District which triggers more intensive, focussed emphasis on literacy and math; redesign of the school, or closing the school.

There have been school closures of low performing schools in New York. The parties have utilized several measures to avoid the stigma normally attached to closing a school. In some cases, the closed schools have become new sites for alternative schools that draw students from throughout the district. In the fall of 1999, UFT and the district implemented a negotiated process in the forty lowest performing district schools. The process included a fifteen percent salary additive, an extra week of staff development in the summer, and a forty minute longer school day throughout the school year. Despite these measures, however, it continues to be difficult to attract teachers to these schools.

Relationship to union:

UFT negotiated all of the local implementation provision of the program.

Personnel - Transfers

In the first year of implementation, there was no contract language to deal with transfers. Subsequently, however, contractual language in Article 18, G was modified to provide rights in transfer and reassignment due to closing or redesign. The contractual process is implemented through a joint presentation by the union and management to the affected school.

Evaluation of program (formal, informal)

The SURR schools have been identified annually since 1989, and during several of the earlier years, the schools were listed, but nothing else was done. The implementation of the program has evolved over the years. There has been no evaluation of the success of the program or lack thereof.

Incentives for school improvement - measures to raise student achievement or teacher quality:

The 15% salary additive mentioned above is an attempt to incentivize teachers to move to the low performing schools. Other incentives include tuition reimbursement or loan forgiveness program for teachers serving in low performing schools.

Peer review:

Program description:

There is a contractual item regarding teacher observations where a teacher can opt for an optional performance review model which can include a peer review component. In addition, there is a contractual peer intervention program where a teacher with an unsatisfactory rating can voluntarily ask for the services of an intervenor. The program is governed by a joint union-management governing board. If the peer intervention program agrees to work with the teacher, there is a six-month period when the teacher cannot be formally reviewed by a line supervisor. Peer intervenors are selected by a joint board-union committee that also includes representation for the university. The peer intervenors are released from teaching for four years, after which time they must reapply.

Issues:

The Union has not negotiated a full peer review program, due to the feeling that the union membership is not ready to move in that direction.

School based management/decisionmaking related to school improvement

Program structure:

There is a contractual provision defining school-based management. There is a mandated school leadership team at each site, with representatives of teachers and parents elected by their constituency. The majority of the leadership team is to be composed of parents. The UFT Teacher Center provides training for school leadership teams. There is virtually no district support for the program, thus in many cases; the program is dying on the vine. Where schools had earlier developed a history of working together on shared decisionmaking, the process will continue to work.

Role of site teams:

The role of the SLT is to develop and implement a comprehensive educational plan for the school. There are some statutory duties established in New York State law, but much of the language is unclear causing controversy about roles and relationships.

Site budgets:

Information about the site budget is a statutory right of these site teams, however the teams do not have control of site budgets. Again, depending upon the leadership of the school, the site team will have more or less control over the site budget.

Contract/rule waivers:

The contract contains a waiver provision called "School Based Option" which permits schools to waive certain provisions of the contract. Waivers must be renewed annually. Waivers are approved by the local district union representative and the district superintendent (not the Chancellor).

Pay for Performance

Program Structure

Negotiations over an extensive summer school program included a proposal from the Mayor for Merit Pay. The union and management worked out a program which would have paid an up front amount of \$1000 for any teacher willing to teach in the summer program, and \$1500 if willing to teach in a hard to staff school. Additionally, the parties had agreed to a program where every teacher in every school that reached an agreed upon target would receive a free airplane ticket to any city in the US. The mayor vetoed the idea; thus the summer school program is proceeding under existing contract language.

The program described under "partnerships" above is a pilot with the Chamber of Commerce that pays teachers in the pilot schools a "bonus," based upon a target of performance on standardized tests.

Other major reform efforts (Description, scope, relationship to union)

Mentor Program

The Mentor Program responds to an unfunded state mandate that requires a training program for uncertified teachers. The program is implemented through each of the 32 districts using a committee with a majority of teachers. Mentors are selected by the committee, must have five years of experience and must be willing to participate in additional training. The term of a mentorship is one year, and mentors receive no compensation. Released time is available to permit mentors to work with new uncertified teachers. Mentors are assigned to uncertified teachers in their own schools, and are matched based upon subject area and grade level to the extent possible.

Attachments

1. Collective Bargaining Agreement, 1995-2000
1. Auditor's Report for the United Federation of Teachers, 1998-99
1. New York Teacher, May 3, 2000
1. "Power Tools for Professionals" (Description of UFT programs and services)
1. UFT "Questions and Answers on Implementing Standards."
1. UFT Midpoints, Spring, 2000 - a newsletter for middle level teachers.
1. Elementary Matters, April, 2000 - a newsletter for elementary teachers.
1. Nuzleder, April, 2000 - a newsletter for speech improvement members.
1. "Peer Intervention Program: teacher to teacher help."
1. "UFT Teacher Center: A Model Network for Professional Development"
1. "What's the difference?" a UFT voter guide.
1. The New Teacher - A UFT newsletter for new teachers.
1. "How to run a Chapter Meeting."
1. The Home Team - Fall, 1999 - a UFT Newsletter for parents.
1. The Parent Math Book A UFT handbook for parents on helping students with math.
1. "A Parents' guide to student conduct" - a UFT publication for parents.
1. "Dial a Teacher" - a brochure describing the program.
1. "Welcome to Open School Week" a UFT Brochure for distribution to parents.

