

Educational Concerns 4th Quarter 2016

10-04-2016 - SCHOOL OFFICIALS IN WHITESBORO ARE DEALING WITH THE AFTERMATH OF YESTERDAY'S FATAL CRASH THAT CLAIMED THE LIFE OF ONE STUDENT AND LEFT ANOTHER CRITICALLY INJURED. 16 YEAR OLD SEAN JEWETT WAS KILLED WHEN A CAR DRIVEN BY HIS FRIEND KAMERON EVANS WAS INVOLVED IN A MULTI CAR COLLISION JUST OUTSIDE OF SYRACUSE. EVANS IS CURRENTLY FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE AT SUNY UPSTATE. TODAY GRIEF COUNSELORS WILL BE ON HAND TO HELP STUDENTS DEVASTATED BY THE INCIDENT, AND STAFF ARE REACHING OUT TO HELP THE SCHOOL BODY DEAL WITH THE TRAUMA.

10-06-2016

NEW YORK NEEDS TO COUGH UP MORE MONEY TO POOR SCHOOLS. THAT'S WHY UTICA AND SEVEN OTHER MUNICIPALITIES ARE APPEALING A JUDGES DECISION THAT TOSSED OUT THEIR LAWSUIT AGAINST THE STATE LAST MONTH. THEY'RE ARGUING NEW YORK IS FAILING IN ITS CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE A SOUND PUBLIC EDUCATION BY UNDERFUNDING POOR DISTRICTS. BUT THE JUDGE SAID THE LEGISLATURE IS FREE TO ADJUST THE EDUCATION BUDGET EITHER UP OR DOWN, AND THAT THE FOUNDATION AID AGREEMENT ADOPTED DURING THE PATAKI ADMINISTRATION ISN'T A LEGALLY BINDING MINIMUM. AT STAKE ARE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS THE SCHOOLS SAY THEY'RE OWED FOR PAST UNDERPAYMENTS.

10-12-2016

NEW YORK NEEDS TO PAY UP. THAT WAS THE MESSAGE FROM EDUCATION ACTIVISTS ACROSS THE STATE YESTERDAY. THEY'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET NEW YORK TO COUGH UP MONEY IT OWES SMALL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS UNDER A FINANCING FORMULA PUT IN PLACE OVER A DECADE AGO. IN ALL PROTESTERS SAY THE STATE OWES BILLIONS IN OVERDUE AID. BUT THE CUOMO ADMINISTRATION SAYS NEW YORK IS ALREADY SPENDING OVER 20-THOUSAND DOLLARS PER PUPIL. THAT'S MORE THAN ANY OTHER STATE AND 87 PERCENT ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

10-13-2016

SHOULD SUNY POLYTECHNIC BE HEADQUARTERED IN MARCY? THAT'S WHAT LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE PUSHING FOR AFTER THE RESIGNATION OF SUNY'S C-E-O ALAIN KALOYEROS. LAST MONTH HE WAS INDICTED ON FEDERAL AND STATE CORRUPTION CHARGES. ON TUESDAY HE NOTIFIED STATE OFFICIALS HE WAS LEAVING. STATE SENATOR JOE BRIFFO AND ASSEMBLYMAN ANTHONY BRINDISI SAY HIS REPLACEMENT SHOULD CALL THE SUNY POLY CAMPUS IN MARCY HOME. OVER TWO THOUSAND STUDENTS ARE IN MARCY, WHILE JUST 51 ATTEND CLASSES AT THE CURRENT HEADQUARTERS IN ALBANY.

10-20-2016

POLAND IS THE LATEST SCHOOL DISTRICT TO DISCOVER SOME OF IT'S WATER SUPPLY HAS DANGEROUS LEVELS OF LEAD. TESTING REVEALED THAT 35 WATER SOURCES EXCEEDED THE FEDERAL STANDARDS FOR CONTAMINATION. WHILE A REMEDIATION PLAN IS BEING DEVELOPED THE DISTRICT IS SUPPLYING STUDENTS WITH ALTERNATE WATER SOURCES INCLUDING BOTTLED WATER. IN MOST CASES HIGH LEAD LEVELS CAN BE FIXED BY REPLACING AN OUTLETS FIXTURES OR INSTALLING A NEW WATER FOUNTAIN. EARLIER THIS YEAR THE STATE MANDATED THAT EVERY SCHOOL TEST IT'S WATER SUPPLY BY OCTOBER 31ST.

10-21-2016

HERKIMER HAS JOINED THE LIST OF LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS DEALING WITH CONTAMINATED WATER. TESTING AT HERKIMER ELEMENTARY DISCOVERED SIXTEEN WATER SOURCES WITH HIGH LEVELS OF LEAD, INCLUDING BOTH SINKS AND WATER FOUNTAINS. THE DISTRICT WILL NOW PUT TOGETHER A REMEDIATION PLAN, WHICH IN MOST CASES INVOLVES REPLACING THE FIXTURES

WITH LEAD FREE ALTERNATIVES. HERKIMER JOINS THE CLINTON AND POLAND SCHOOL DISTRICTS ON THE LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH LEAD ISSUES BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY THE STATE'S MANDATORY TESTING.

10-26-2016

M-V-C-C IS GETTING A 25-THOUSAND DOLLAR GRANT TO FUND TRAINING FOR VETERANS. THE MONEY FROM THE DOMINION FOUNDATION WILL PAY FOR CLASSES IN ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY, INCLUDING COURSES ON LEAD ABATEMENT AND BROWNFIELDS. THAT WILL ALLOW LOW INCOME VETERANS TO GET CERTIFIED FOR JOBS REMEDIATING ENVIRONMENTALLY CONTAMINATED SITES.

11-04-2016

SUNY POLYTECHNIC HAS A NEW HEAD. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HAVE APPOINTED DOCTOR BAGHAT SAMMAKIA AS THE INTERIM C-E-O OF THE SCHOOL. HE'S SERVED AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY FOR NEARLY TWO DECADES, BUILDING THE SCHOOL'S RESEARCH FACILITIES INTO A MAJOR ASSET. BUT SOME LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE UPSET THAT HE'LL BE SPLITTING HIS TIME BETWEEN ALBANY AND SUNY POLYTECHNIC'S MARCY CAMPUS, WHERE THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE SCHOOL'S STUDENTS ACTUALLY ATTEND CLASSES.

11-10-2016

ROME CITY SCHOOLS WILL BE GETTING OVER A MILLION DOLLARS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO PRE-KINDERGARTEN CLASSES. THE MONEY IS PART OF OVER TEN MILLION DOLLARS IN FUNDS DEDICATED TO HELPING HIGH NEEDS DISTRICTS PROVIDE ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. NEW YORK IS DEDICATING AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF MONEY TO PRE-KINDERGARTEN CLASSES IN AN EFFORT TO GIVE STUDENTS A HEAD START IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

11-30-2016

CYBERBULLYING IS A GROWING PROBLEM IN AREA SCHOOLS. THAT'S ACCORDING TO A NEW STUDY FROM SIENA COLLEGE THAT FOUND ONE IN FOUR STUDENTS HAD BEEN THE TARGET OF ONLINE HARASSMENT, RANGING FROM SNARKY COMMENTS ON FACEBOOK TO FULL BLOWN STALKING. BUT THOSE NUMBERS ARE AT ODDS WITH THE ACTUAL INCIDENTS REPORTED BY SCHOOLS. UNDER STATE LAW OFFICIALS HAVE TO REPORT CYBERBULLYING TO THE STATE, AND MOST SCHOOLS FOUND ONLY A HANDFUL OF ONLINE HARASSMENT CASES.

12-03-2016

STUDENT LOAN DEBT HAS EXPLODED IN NEW YORK, WITH THE AVERAGE STUDENT NOW OWING OVER 32-THOUSAND DOLLARS. THAT WAS THE FOCUS OF A HEARING IN ALBANY YESTERDAY AS ELECTED OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES WITH SUNY LOOKED AT WAYS TO CUT THE DEBT. SCHOOL OFFICIALS WANT TO SEE MORE STATE AID COVER THOSE COSTS. AND MORE THAN EDUCATION IS AT STAKE. HIGH DEBT LEVELS ARE KEEPING RECENT GRADUATES FROM BUYING HOMES AND MAKING INVESTMENTS, A MAJOR DRAG ON THE STATE'S ECONOMY.

12-09-2016

LOCAL LEGISLATORS ARE LIVID THAT THE UTICA SCHOOL DISTRICT WAS BARRED FROM A MEETING WITH GOVERNOR CUOMO'S STAFF, SAYING IT TURNS THE DISTRICTS STUDENTS INTO PAWNS IN A POLITICAL GAME. THE INCIDENT HAPPENED MONDAY DURING WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A ROUTINE DISCUSSION ABOUT SCHOOL FUNDING. UTICA OFFICIALS WERE TOLD TO SKIP THE EVENT, REPORTEDLY BECAUSE OF THE LONG RUNNING SMALL CITIES LAWSUIT. BUT THAT CASE WAS BROUGHT BY PARENTS, AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS AREN'T INVOLVED IN THE LITIGATION.

12-13-2016

TWO BILLION DOLLARS. THAT'S HOW MUCH NEW YORK'S EDUCATION BUDGET SHOULD BE INCREASED, ACCORDING TO THE STATE BOARD OF REGENTS. THEIR RECOMMENDATION INCLUDES AN ANNUAL SEVEN PERCENT INCREASE OVER THREE YEARS, WITH ANOTHER 300 MILLION DEDICATED TO EXPANDING PRE-KINDERGARTEN. BUT SOME EDUCATION ADVOCATES WANT THAT TWO BILLION DOLLARS TO JUST BE A STARTING POINT, SAYING THE STATE NEEDS TO MAKE UP FOR YEARS OF UNDERFUNDING POOR DISTRICTS LIKE UTICA.

12-15-2016

NO MORE NUMBER TWO PENCILS. THAT'S THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGY FOR NEXT YEAR'S MANDATORY TESTING. THE BOARD OF REGENTS HAVE APPROVED A PLAN THAT WOULD GET RID OF PRINTED TEST SHEETS AND USE COMPUTERS TO ADMINISTER EXAMS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS. OFFICIALS SAY COMPUTERIZED TESTING IS NOT ONLY FASTER TO GRADE AND EVALUATE, BUT ACTUALLY MAKES IT EASIER FOR STUDENTS TO FINISH THE EXAMS WITHIN THE ALLOTTED TIME.

12-29-2016

ROME HAS JOINED THE LIST OF LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS DEALING WITH CONTAMINATED WATER. TESTING AT THE FORMER ROME CATHOLIC SCHOOL BUILDING FOUND SEVENTEEN SINKS WITH HIGH LEVELS OF LEAD. THE DISTRICT WILL NOW PUT TOGETHER A REMEDIATION PLAN, WHICH IN MOST CASES INVOLVES REPLACING THE FIXTURES WITH LEAD FREE ALTERNATIVES. ROME JOINS THE HERKIMER, CLINTON AND POLAND SCHOOL DISTRICTS ON THE LIST OF SCHOOLS WITH LEAD ISSUES BROUGHT TO LIGHT BY THE STATE'S MANDATORY TESTING.