

Membership
Update



April 3, 2013

From the President...

Providence Teachers To Address School Board Regarding the Lack of Educational Materials

The district's failure — specifically Teaching & Learning — to provide teachers with adequate student educational materials has resulted in teachers being overwhelmed with the burden of duplicating materials. This school year, the problem was compounded by the district's failure to provide Math assessments at the Elementary level. Teachers are required to create and duplicate their own Math assessments for their students.

A recent survey conducted indicates that the majority of teachers spend excessive amounts of time duplicating required educational materials. At minimum, five hours per week.

Providence teachers continue to be held accountable for student achievement in our classrooms. It is time that we also hold Teaching & Learning accountable for not providing teachers with the materials that we need to implement the curriculum with fidelity. The district's responsibility to provide adequate student materials is not only their contractual obligation but also a requirement under the RI Basic Education Plan.

On **Monday, April 8, 2013**, several Providence teachers will address the Providence School Board to voice our concerns. Members are highly encouraged to attend the school board meeting to support our colleagues.

The meeting will be held at **6:30 p.m.** at the administration building.

Dress Down Day to Support "The Rhody Girls"



A dress down day will be held on **Friday, April 12, 2013** in support of the four Providence female students who recently won the seventh annual robotic state championship.

The PCTA team will compete against 125 other teams at the Tech Challenge Robotics World Championship on April 24-27 in St. Louis. The students need \$13,000 to make the trip to St. Louis.

Please help the "Rhody Girls" achieve their goal by participating in the dress down day on April 12th!

See your building delegate for more details.



From the President...

Board of Education Hearing — Graduation Requirements

On Monday April 8th, the newly formed RI Board of Education will hold a meeting at Rhode Island College in the Student Union Ballroom at 5:30 p.m. The PTU is joining with several other organizations such as the Providence Students Union to voice concern over the 2014 NECAP graduation requirement. Several PTU Board members will be speaking during public comment and we are inviting the membership to join and voice their concerns.

The Providence Teachers Union recently passed a resolution against the graduation requirement (below). The Providence School Board and Providence City Council have also passed resolutions to oppose this graduation requirement. If you have any questions feel free to contact Alex Lucini at 401-440-2549.

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The Providence Teachers Union is an organization of professional educators that strives to create schools that promote high level student achievement. The executive board of the Providence Teachers Union strongly opposes the use of the NECAP test as a requirement for high school graduation.

NECAP is an instrument designed to provide data and inform educational decisions. When used properly, NECAP and other standardized tests are valuable tools that may greatly enhance and inform teaching methods and curriculum. However, it is inappropriate to use this assessment as a determinant or as a qualification for the acquisition of a high school diploma. NECAP was never designed or intended to be used for this purpose. The task of improving student learning is an important charge. Evaluating student performance is a critical component of this task. However, we must not allow our urgency to force us to make impetuous decisions with extreme consequences for the very students we seek to help. Instead, we call for:

- ◆ Systematic assessment policies aligned to high academic standards be put in place. Accountability measures should be consistent throughout a student's education. This will help to build a culture of high standards and accountability that spans from elementary through high school.
- ◆ The practice of social promotion to come to an end. Pushing students from one grade to another before they have attained the requisite skills places them at risk academically. It is not reasonable to expect students to master high level skills without an understanding of basic foundational skills. Furthermore, social promotion sends our students the wrong message by invalidating the legitimacy of our academic standards.
- ◆ Multiple measures of student learning taken into consideration when determining high school graduation. Standardized tests could be one measure. However, they should not outweigh or overrule other indicators. Important measures like teacher assessments, class grades, student demonstrations and senior projects need to be part of this equation.

Our schools should endeavor to produce well rounded graduates. They should be prepared for fulfilling lives and careers. They rightly should demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, math and science. However, it is also important for our students to demonstrate both creativity and intellectual curiosity. Those qualities are engendered by being exposed to a wide variety of subjects. An overreliance on standardized tests will only serve to countermand these efforts by narrowing educational focus. Our students, our future leaders, deserve better.



From the President...

Criterion Based Hiring & Transfer Update

Any teacher who needs assistance with creating a profile on PATS should make an appointment with a field representative at the Union office.

The first round of Hiring Fairs will be held at Central High School on the following dates/times:

Tuesday, April 23, 2013 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 27, 2013 9:00 a.m. – Noon / 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

PTU staff will be present during each Hiring Fair.

Reminders....

♦ **Next Membership Meeting:**

April 10, 2013
4:00 p.m.
Union Office

♦ **Certification Renewals:**

Anyone who has a certificate that is scheduled to expire August 31, 2013, should begin the renewal process. Teachers may access the certification renewal application on RIDE's website, www.ride.ri.gov.