



THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT OF '76

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From The
President's Desk

MANY QUESTIONS, FEW ANSWERS

Happy New Year to everyone.

During the week of January 10th, I spent quite a bit of time at North Catholic. On Tuesday, January 12, I made my school visit. I found the atmosphere extremely positive both in the interaction between faculty and students and among the faculty themselves, even if, at times, there was a bit of "galows humor."

On Thursday, January 14, Irene and I attended the meeting at the school sponsored by the alumni to explore the establishment of a Cristo Rey school at the North site.

The mood in the school auditorium among the attendees, a high percentage of whom were alumni, was very much that of a pep rally. The faculty with whom we were sitting, however, became increasingly more concerned and angry as the meeting progressed.

The audience was told that the school would be operated in the Cristo Rey model but it would still be North Catholic, the Falcons, red and white, part of the Catholic League, for about 1/2 of the tuition. The alumni were urged to contribute heavily so that the school could be successful. As more than one faculty member remarked, "where were the alumni when they had the opportunity to keep the real North Catholic open?"

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FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

Interestingly enough, at the time that the closing of the school was announced, the word that had come from the Archdiocese was that North Catholic would cease to exist on June 18, 2010. If a new school opened on the site, it would be just that - new. No Falcons, no Catholic League, no red and white.

The Association is certainly not against the Cristo Rey concept as it pertains to students. There have been extremely positive results that have been achieved in over 20 schools throughout the country.

However, the Association of Catholic Teachers is a teachers' union - that is our primary focus. So far as I know, Cristo Rey schools are non-union. I can't find a listing of salaries, benefits or working conditions; nor, can I find any mention of negotiated contracts, job security or due process. I would venture a calculated guess that these issues are not high on the Cristo Rey Board's agenda.

I could not, in good conscience, recommend that any of the teachers presently at North sign on at the new school because of all they stand to lose. To go from a union contract with negotiated rights and benefits to being employees-at-will hired year to year with no say over their work lives and no protection, is a lose-lose situation.

At the present time, there is a feasibility study in progress to see if "North Catholic Cristo Rey" will be a go in September, 2010. It is vitally important that the true nature of the school proposed for Kensington and Torrance be presented to parents of prospective students as well as the North Catholic alumni.

The Archdiocese must make it clear whether or not what we now know as North Catholic will be continuing under the Cristo Rey banner. Will the school name, mascot, colors and place in the Catholic League carry over to NCCR? Only when these questions are answered can faculty, parents, students and alumni make any kind of decision.

ACT will be watching very closely and carefully as the entity being called "North Catholic Cristo Rey" moves forward.



CHRISTMAS PAYCHECK PROBLEM

Any teacher who incurred a late fee or a charge for insufficient funds due to the Christmas paycheck problem, please forward all documentation to the ACT Office so that it can be submitted for payment. Call ACT with any questions.

FAX # 215-568-8270

National Association of Catholic School Teachers John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship

The National Association of Catholic School Teachers established the John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship to help defray the cost of a college education for outstanding children of NACST members. During their senior year of High school, \$4,000 awards are made to three students, \$1,000 in each of their four years of college study.

All sons, daughters and stepchildren of all active NACST members are eligible to participate in this scholarship provided they are in good standing in their senior year of high school. Application forms are available from the Senior Delegate of each high school. Deadline for submission of all applications is March 1st.

NOTICE

It's time to start thinking sabbatical!

Applications for sabbatical leave must be submitted no later than
March 1st.

It's time to start thinking about your decision to possibly apply.
Forms for application will be posted in each school in February.

Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to Holy Cross H. S. (Delran N.J.)

**Tax Information: Union Dues for the Year 2009 are
\$493.36.**

Archdiocesan High Schools

TAX INFORMATION

2009 DUES

\$484.86

(13 pays x \$23.97 + 7 pays x \$24.75)

Teacher in the News

Joy Kots is a Science teacher at Father Judge. A brief article about her appeared in the *Teacher Spotlight* section on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's web site.



Second Career

Frank McCall is a retired teacher from Cardinal O'Hara High School. The following advertisement describes his second career.

Bus transportation for high school trips offered at substantially reduced rates for ACT members or NACST members.

GMP Tours and Travel will take teachers and students in new, reliable and insured coaches to all destinations.

For more information or to book a coach, please contact
Frank McCall
610-675-6426

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SHINGLES VACCINE INFORMATION

As reported earlier, the shingles vaccine is covered under the medical plan for individuals age 60 or older. However, the process for getting the vaccine covered is not a smooth one. Because the vaccine is a frozen vaccine and must be stored at a specific temperature, doctors do not keep the vaccine on hand in their office. Patients are given a prescription to take to their pharmacy with instructions to return to the physician's office within a 1/2 hour of picking up the vaccine. The doctor then administers the vaccine.

The problem with this is that the prescription plan does not cover the cost of the shingles vaccine which is approximately \$250.00. The teacher must pay for this vaccine out of pocket and then submit a Personal Choice Out-of-Network claim form to be reimbursed for the cost. (This form can be downloaded from the ACT webpage).

The Out-of-Network claim for the vaccine will initially be denied. When the teacher receives the denial, they must contact Personal Choice and the claim will be reprocessed manually. Once Blue Cross sees the doctor's claim in the system, a manager's exception will be made and reimbursement for the vaccine cost will be sent to the member.

INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Did you know that you can logon to Independence Blue Cross web site at www.ibxpress.com and get all kinds of information at your finger-tips? You can make sure all your family members are active on your policy, you can order identification cards for them and/or print temporary ID cards, you can check recent and past claims, find a provider, view the details of your benefits, and so much more.

In the same way, you can logon to the United Concordia web site at www.ucci.com and check the status of dental claims, find a provider, order a dental card, etc.

DENTAL BENEFITS

As of January 1, 2010, each teacher and their family members will have \$1,000 in dental benefits available to them for the 2010 calendar year. If you do not have a dental card or need an additional card, call or e-mail the ACT and one will be ordered for you.

VISION BENEFITS

Benefits are now available for teachers who signed up for the Davis Vision Plan. If you did not receive your vision card to date, please call or email the ACT Office. Teachers who were on the plan last year will keep the same card. The card should say *DAVIS VISION*. To locate a Davis Vision participating provider near you, call 1-888-393-2583 or go to the www.ibx.com web site.

MEDICAL CARDS

If you are in need of additional medical cards, please call the Office of Catholic Education at 715-587-4520 or contact the ACT Office.

FLU SHOT REIMBURSEMENT FORMS

Flu shot reimbursement forms can be obtained by calling the ACT Office or can be downloaded from the ACT web page.

MONTHLY GROUP MEDICAL RATES FOR RETIREES AGE 65+
(Effective January 1, 2010)

SECURITY 65 PLAN C with Major Medical:

Employee Only: \$441.89
Employee & Spouse: \$883.78

PERSONAL CHOICE 65:

Employee Only: \$593.30
Employee & Spouse: \$1186.60

KEYSTONE 65 HMO:

Employee Only: \$533.30
Employee & Spouse: \$1066.60

Retired teachers who are enrolled in any of the above plans are automatically enrolled in Medicare Part D. **You DO NOT need to enroll in an individual Medicare Part D plan, if you are enrolled in one of the above medical plans with the Archdiocese.** In fact, if you do, you will lose your Archdiocese medical and prescription drug coverage because the Archdiocese plans are now considered Medicare Part D plans, and you may not be enrolled in two Medicare Part D plans at the same time.

FOR TAX PURPOSES and/or FSA REIMBURSEMENT

DENTAL BENEFITS: If you are retired and/or on an Extended Leave of Absence beyond three semesters and paid for your dental benefits, the amount paid in 2009 is as follows: Individual Coverage = \$246.36, 2-Person or Family Coverage = \$627.84.

VISION BENEFITS: If you participated in the Voluntary Vision Program in 2009, the amount you paid for this benefit is as follows: Individual Coverage = \$78.72, 2-Person Coverage = \$157.56 and Family Coverage = \$236.40.