

ON THE *EDGE*

Electronic Gradebook Meltdown

UTD has filed three Level 3 grievances regarding the M-DCPS implementation of the Web-based Electronic Gradebook.

UTD believes M-DCPS administration has violated several portions of the contract and has done our students a disservice by radically changing how teachers assign and average student grades. M-DCPS administrators are putting technical considerations before the proper scoring and averaging of student assignments, and in the process, harming the students because of the district's inability to properly implement a grading system.

UTD President Karen Aronowitz wants to hear how the Electronic gradebook has impacted you.

Go to www.UTD.org and participate in a short web survey.

Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER 2006

- 7 **ELECTION DAY!** Be sure to vote.
- 16 Council of Stewards Meeting
- 20 Nominations Period Open for UTD Officer Elections - Info will be mailed to members and posted on utd.org on Nov. 17
- 21 UTD Prof. Issues Comm. Meeting

DECEMBER

- 4 Nominations Period Closes for UTD Officer Elections.
Jewish Educators Comm. Meeting
- 6 Black Caucus Meeting
- 14 Council of Stewards Meeting
- 22 UTD Hispanic Coalition invites teachers to start their holiday with a FREE educational cruise.

Members Rally for Raises!



Independent Auditors Say the District Has the Funds

More than 7,000 Miami-Dade County teachers and support personnel marched together last week in support of a much-awaited salary increase, crowding street corners and holding signs that read: "More Than Praise, We Need a Raise!"

Three months into the school year, employees of Miami-Dade County schools continue to wait for the School Board to offer acceptable salaries. The Superintendent and the School Board have not budgeted since proposing salary levels far below those of neighboring counties, such as Broward and Monroe.

"I do not hear the Superintendent or the Board arguing about the light bill or about the gasoline bill," United Teachers of Dade President and Chief Negotiator Karen Aronowitz said. "They pay them because they must. Otherwise, the lights go out and the buses won't run.

Employee salaries need to be a priority."

UTD has mounted an aggressive campaign, spreading its message throughout the county via a mobile billboard and in ads in local English, Spanish and Creole community newspapers. The union will be holding a community forum Oct. 30 for parents, teachers and the community to get involved.

UTD is asking for fair and competitive salaries that will at least match Broward's and financially enable teachers to remain in Dade County. It isn't a question of affordability, the union believes. Independent auditors studying the MDCPS budget found additional funds that could be used to boost flagging teacher salaries, a discovery which UTD addressed at a recent bargaining session. School district representatives asked for time to review the numbers and related UTD findings.

**United Teachers of Dade
ENDORSEMENTS
November 7, 2006**

Cut out this card and take to the polls.

United States Senate PUNCH #

Bill Nelson 11

United States Representative

17—Kendrick Meek 18
18—Ileana Ros-Lehtinen 20
21—Lincoln Diaz-Balart 23
25—Mario Diaz-Balart 26

Governor

Jim Davis/Daryl Jones 30

Attorney General

Walter "Skip" Campbell 37

Chief Financial Officer

Alex Sink 40

Commissioner of Agriculture

Eric Copeland 43

State Senate

Alex Villalobos 47

State House

104—Yolly Roberson 52
107—Luis Garcia 55
108—Ronald Brise 58
109—Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall 60
110—Rene Garcia 62
120—Ron Saunders 73

Circuit Judge

78—Valerie Manno Schurr 93
80—Marisa Tinkler Mendez 96

County Judge

43—Jose L. Fernandez 101

School Board

2—Solomon Stinson 104

Constitutional Amendments

#1—State Planning & Budget Process (NO)
#3—Requiring Broader Public Support for Constitutional Amendments or Revisions (NO)
#4—Protect People, Especially Youth, From Addiction... (YES)

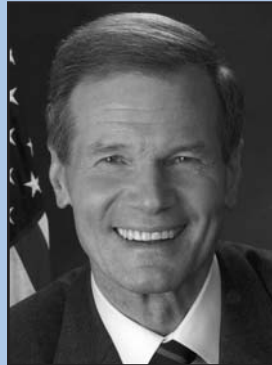
City of Miami RESIDENTS ONLY

Dist. 22 Mark Sarnoff (133)
or Seth Sklarey (134)

Vote Tuesday, Nov. 7.

Support Candidates Who Support Us

Candidates want our votes, but not all of them deserve it. UTD examined all the candidates on the issues important to educators. These recommended candidates demonstrate a commitment to public education and to educators.



U.S. Senate
Bill Nelson



Governor and Lt. Governor
Jim Davis and Daryl Jones



U.S. Rep. Dist. 17
Kendrick Meek



U.S. Rep. Dist. 18
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen



U.S. Rep. Dist. 21
Lincoln Diaz-Balart



U.S. Rep. Dist. 25
Mario Diaz-Balart



Attorney General
Walter "Skip" Campbell



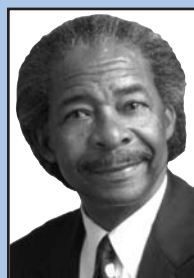
Chief Financial Officer
Alex Sink



Commissioner of Agriculture
Eric Copeland



State Senator
Alex Villalobos



School Board
Dist. 2
Solomon Stinson

Stand up for public education
and your profession.
Vote Nov. 7.

Every vote counts!



Feasting on Thanksgiving

To help polish up those research skills, give your students some questions (number of questions

depends on the grade level) about Thanksgiving. The questions could be about the Mayflower's voyage, the ship's dimensions, number of passengers onboard, the tribe of Indians that had dinner with the Pilgrims, the name of the President that declared Thanksgiving a holiday, etc. In order to answer the questions, the students will have to use different reference materials, such as atlases, dictionaries, encyclopedias and even a cookbook!

Speaking of food, you can have students bring a favorite Thanksgiving dinner recipe and type it on the classroom computer. Then make a cookbook with the class recipes to send home to each family.

SUCCESS STORIES

Help getting correct salary

"The power of the union comes through," said a long-time member when UTD stepped up to give a helping hand...long distance. After 32 years of teaching ESE in Miami-Dade, a teacher moved to Citrus County in Central Florida and found she needed employment verification to remain on the correct payroll step. She filled out the requested forms, faxed them to the MDCPS personnel department and was told verification would be sent to Citrus County. After a week, her forms and the calls her principal put out were not being returned. "Short of contacting the Superintendent directly," she turned to UTD for help in finding the 'missing forms.' By the end of that same afternoon, Citrus County had not only received the forms, but also calls to confirm the issue had been resolved. She is now a member of the Citrus County teachers' union.



Maturity

by Karen Aronowitz
UTD President

I ran into a former student of mine in the hallowed hall of Home Depot, where he is now working. This student greeted me enthusiastically and we chatted for a few minutes. I teased him and asked if he were the manager of the store. "Not yet," he replied.

It was his use of the word 'yet' that caught my attention. This child had not been a success in my classroom. This child had once bolted out of the door in my class upon hearing security was after him (from another referral handed out by another of his teachers). This child was the one who made off color, sexually suggestive comments to the girls in the class (referral), along with inappropriate ethnic comments about other national origins (referral). This child never had a pen, pencil, sheet of paper, book (even when handed out to him by the school) or supply items needed for participation in class. This child would poke his classmates asking in a whisper so loud it carried into the hall for these items (which were always given to him by one of the more tender-hearted girls). This child was the cause of more frequent applications of hair dye to my head than any other student I had. This loud, profane, noncompliant jokester had (somehow) graduated from high school and had seriously responded to my questions of moving into management with "not yet."

This child was wildly popular because the few times a week he'd visit us (between his suspensions) there was a heady rush of humor, wit, entertainment and merriment in the classroom. He had his role, and I had mine. Sigh.

So I greeted him and he, me, with an affectionate acknowledgement of our previously assigned roles. He was now a productive member of society who

may entertain goals for advancement. He had matured.

Seeing this former student made me pause and reflect upon myself in serving as president of UTD. Has the presidency changed me? Yes, of course it has. Being the president of the union is being the steward of the union. Our union stood up for the Class Size Amendment when many were "advising" me to work to modify this constitutional amendment. Didn't I know that it was impossible to work against the apparent will of the legislature? When UTD stood up, others stood up with us. (One legislator told me, "I don't get mad, I get even.")

As president of this union, I depend on our members to stand with me when we move forward with our agenda. I am responsible for moving our issues forward as well as protecting the jobs of our members. It is very simple to put peoples' livelihoods at risk but for what end? It is very easy to endanger our union through illegal activities and then find we have no union.

It is hard to make the decision that will have us arrive at our goal, with all intact, and the realization that our job is not yet done. There will be other politicians to battle, there will be other issues to support, there will be another contract to be won.

As president of United Teachers of Dade, I have matured. Have I accomplished all the dreams I dream for UTD? Not yet. But we're on our way.



Spicy tunes and food at UTD Hispanic Heritage celebration

Sporting their traditional Cuban guayaberas, Orquesta Son del Señor spiced up the Hispanic Heritage celebrations at MAST Academy on Friday, October 13th. The yearly event celebrates our community's Hispanic diversity and it is presented by UTD's Hispanic Coalition.

UTD makes its mark towards a cure at Komen Race



TEAM UTD once again races to help find the cure for breast cancer. Passionate and proud UTD members enjoyed a hot South Florida morning at the Komen Race for the Cure 5 mile run on Oct. 21. Left to right: From Miami Heights Elem. Elizabeth Acosta, Julio Acosta, Leslie Schwartzman, Yilian Morales, Yisel Morales, and Julian Morales.

JIM DAVIS

A Leader on Education



Karen Aronowitz with Rep. Jim Davis who is running for Florida Governor.

Throughout his career, Rep. Jim Davis has consistently been supportive of teachers, students and schools. He has stood firm for an increase in teachers' salaries, smaller classes sizes and returning the use of the FCAT to a diagnostics tool. As Governor of Florida, Jim Davis' priority is to improve education and he truly believes Florida can have a world-class education system. "By investing in and building a world-class education system, we will prepare our children to succeed in a competitive global economy," Davis said.

INSIDE...

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UTD EDGE

2200 Biscayne Boulevard
Miami, FL 33137

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