

Serving on Governor Cuomo's Medicaid Redesign Team

On January 5, 2011, Governor Cuomo issued an executive order creating the Medicaid Redesign Team. New York's Medicaid program provides health insurance coverage to almost one in four New Yorkers, and costs over \$52 billion per year. The Medicaid Redesign Team is charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the State's Medicaid program; making recommendations to the Governor by March 1, 2011 on potential Medicaid spending reductions in the State's Fiscal Year 2011-12 budget; and issuing a final report at the end of Fiscal Year 2011-2012 on additional short-term reforms and systemic changes to improve quality of care at lower cost.

While this will be incredibly difficult work, I was pleased to be named one of the team's 27 members, along with New York State Assembly Member Dick Gottfried and two Republican legislators, relevant experts from various state agencies, health care and insurance industry stakeholders, as well as one representative of Medicaid consumers. I would have hoped for more consumer representation; as always, I will speak out to ensure that the concerns New York's least powerful constituencies — which certainly include Medicaid consumers — are addressed.

Key areas on which I plan to focus include:

- Continuing the reform of Medicaid payment mechanisms to better reimburse primary and preventive care services, thus



By New York State Senator Tom Duane, 29th District

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encouraging better management of health problems and reducing the chance they will develop into catastrophic illnesses.

- Reducing health disparities among New York State's poor and minority populations by improving quality and performance of health care providers.

• Expanding and strengthening "Medical Homes" to improve coordination among health professionals involved in a patient's care to achieve better health outcomes.

- Maximizing federal funding provided by the new healthcare law (the Affordable Care Act of 2010) to support innovative ways to care for persons suffering with multiple illnesses,

including those with behavioral health problems in addition to chronic physical health problems.

If you would like more information about the Governor's Medicaid Redesign Team or would like to share your suggestions, please visit <http://governor.ny.gov/medicaidredesign>. Of course you may also contact my office directly at (212) 633-8052.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, March 6
2-5 pm, Fulton Center
119 9th Avenue
**Memorial Service for
Susan M. Cohen**

Thursday, March 17
7-9 pm, Elliot Center
441 West 26th Street
**Local: The Importance
of Judicial Delegates
and County Committee
Delegates**

Thursday, April 21
7-9 pm, Elliot Center
**Regulations/Affordable
Housing Forum,
Endorsement of Judicial
Delegates and District
Leaders**

Saturday, May 7th
**CRDC Spring Brunch
12-3 pm, Nisos**

**Executive Committee
Meetings:**
March 3rd, April 7th, and
May 5th



PRESERVATION OF CHELSEA HISTORY

10th Avenue, looking north toward 24th Street in 1930 and today. (OLD PHOTO: NYPL)

COMMENT ON ECONOMICS:

Contorted Freedom

Remember Janis Joplin’s “Me & Bobby McGee?” One of the lines is: “Freedom is just another word for nothing else to lose.” No one who lives in a society as complex as ours, can live without rules. We all have responsibilities to each other in greater or lesser degree. Unfortunately, Republicans and their right-wing sympathizers seem to interpret freedom as doing whatever they want to do including riling up large numbers of people on false information.

The First Amendment of the U. S. Constitution protects free speech. We are fortunate to be able to express our opinions no matter whether what we say is accurate or not. But free speech is appropriately limited. The most famous example is that it is not okay to yell “fire” in a crowded theater because the resulting stampede would put many people’s lives in danger. The Second Amendment to the Constitution protects the right to bear arms. In comparison to the First Amendment restrictions, it is not a stretch to impose various forms of gun control (which is not the same thing as banning guns) without violating the Second Amendment. Owners of weapons should be scrutinized and licensed. Scrutiny of potential gun owners is an appropriate conditioning of the Second Amendment as it would afford public protection and thus is similar to the constriction on the First Amendment.

In recent months there has been a concerted attack on the philosophy of and the person of Frances Fox Piven, the Columbia University professor long noted for her advocacy on behalf of the poor and her energetic activity to get out the vote. It is important to aid the poor in our society and there should be a significant redistribution of funds, for example, through additional taxation of the rich in order to protect and aid the poor. Poverty, after all, exists in the context of our society. It is usually not earned; it is most often inherited. But I concede that the First Amendment affords the right to Republicans (or anyone) to argue that redistribution of funds should not happen. Freedom of speech gives them the right to make that argument even if they are wrong.

It is not appropriate nor is it protected, however, to issue death threats or provoke others to issue death threats at a person holding a different political position as has happened in Piven’s case. In addition it is not appropriate to provoke the use of weapons, whether legally or illegally held, against individuals expressing political positions. Appropriate gun control as an explicit restriction on the Second Amendment would have rendered the threats on Piven’s life less scary and might have



by Maarten de Kadt,
Vice President,
CRDC

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avoided the recent Tucson shootings of Gabriela Giffords and the others. Sarah Palin placed cross hairs over Gifford’s (and other Democrats’) district map in political advertisements, a clear threat to Gifford’s personal safety. Common decency should have prevented that extreme use of free speech.

And while we’re discussing freedom, let’s include a woman’s freedom to choose. Planned Parenthood, a more than 90 year old national organization helping women make choices for themselves about their reproductive life, came under attack for what they have been doing since their inception: provide pregnant women with accurate information about the choices they have. Planned Parenthood exercises its right of free speech, while an anti-choice group distorts their information through the use of edited and distorted videos (really not that different from the Shirley Sherrod July 2010 video attempting to depict her remarks as racist -- a video that led to her resignation from the United States Department of Agriculture).

That distortion is another twisting of the First Amendment. We need to worry. The First Amendment should not be twisted.

The definition of freedom must not be permitted to continue to simply mean support of the rich by whatever means. If the Republicans promote their so called “take back our freedom” positions with showmanship and inaccurate information, we must counter it with the careful formulation of our own policies. We need to carefully research and then speak truth to power.

Education Needs to Start at Home ... With the Parents

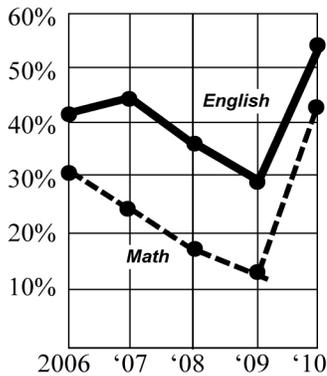


by Donathan Salkaln,
Executive Committee
Member, CRDC

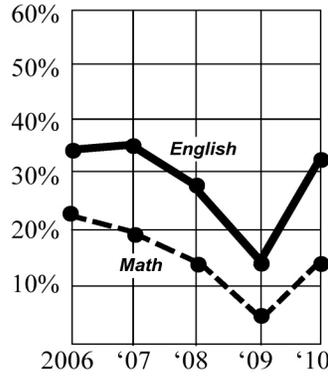
As reported in a recent Time Magazine cover story, “The Truth About Tiger Moms” (January 31st), the rest of the world is saying we coddle our children too much. Video games and TV instead of reading, writing, and arithmetic. They say all this, as their own children swim the ‘Brain-Pool’ past our own children like ours are doing the dogie-paddle. Bloomberg News recently reported that the US ranks 27th out of 29 wealthy countries in sending kids to college to get degrees in math and science. Most disturbing of all: this year, China will eclipse the United States in the number of new patents. Patents are the high water mark of industrial progress. That high water mark is moving east, to Asia.

Our parents need to start displaying more of the same ‘Tough Love’ perseverance that produced so many of our countries

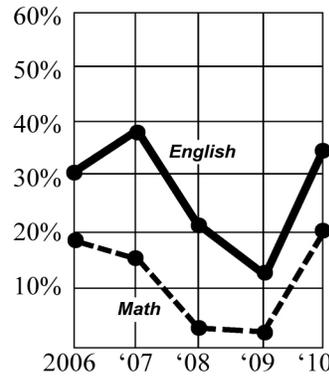
NYC students that tested below proficiency at grade level (Grades 3-5)



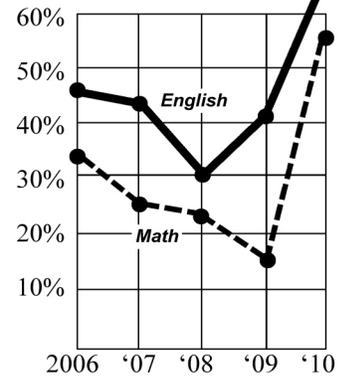
P.S.011 students that tested below proficiency at grade level (Grades 3-5)



P.S.033 students that tested below proficiency at grade level (Grades 3-5)



P.S.111 students that tested below proficiency at grade level (Grades 3-5)



NYC SCHOOLS
Grades 3-5
 In 2010, grades 3-5 had 207,727 children that took the english tests, a figure that has grown from 194,942 in 2006. In 2010, grades 3-5 had 213,001 children that took the math test, a figure that has shrank from 220,368 in 2006.

P.S. 011
 William T. Harris
 320 West 21st Street
A Department of Education has assigned letter grade to this school taking in below grades in overall performance:
 A — school environment
 A — student performance
 A — student progress

P.S. 033
 Chelsea Prep
 281 9th Ave @ 27th street
A Department of Education has assigned letter grade to this school taking in below grades in overall performance:
 A — school environment
 A — student performance
 B — student progress

P.S. 111
 Adolph S. Ochs 440 West 53rd Street
B Department of Education has assigned letter grade to this school taking in below grades in overall performance:
 C — school environment
 D — student performance
 A — student progress

CHELSEA AREA SCHOOLS VISITED

As a follow-up to the concerns of the parents at CRDC's showing of the controversial movie 'The Lottery,' we conducted a study of Chelsea Area schools. Using data provided by NYC's Department of Education, above are math and english results of 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades charting those testing below proficiency at grade level.

We found that Chelsea had remarkable

results. P.S. 11, who's student body reflects the neighborhood's steady gentrification, produced results far more successful than the city's average. And P.S. 33, with a minority make-up of 90%, posted heroic numbers. Might P.S. 33's success be due to the fact that they have a higher percentage of seasoned teachers with Master Degrees than other area schools? — Donathan Salkaln

athletic champions: Richard Williams, drilling the strokes of tennis with his daughters, Venus and Serena, till the sun went down. Earl Wood's training Tiger, in the game of golf, soon after his son's birth. We need the parents to learn how to drill children in cerebral skills too!

Parents need to display more of the same 'Tough Love' perseverance that it took to produce so many of our countries athletic champions

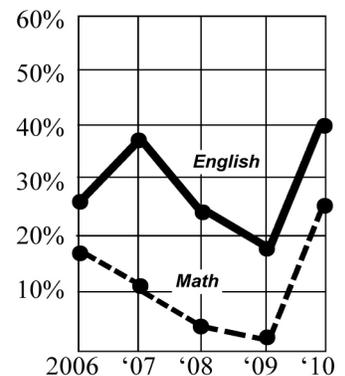
Parents also need to get physically closer. One of the greatest thinkers was Abraham Lincoln. He grew up with the ultimate supervision — a single-room log cabin with

his mother, Nancy and his father, Thomas, and a couple of books. They taught him well. No TV. No Sponge Bob. And yet, Abe grew up to rewrite history. Parents need to display that same supervision in preparing our children for a challenging future.

A big speed bump is the media. We don't hear about twitters from a surgeon who just performed a successful quadruple bypass with a heart transplant. Rather, we hear of a snow boarder that just did the first-ever 'triple cork' at the X games, or celeb's x-rated ménage à trois.

But true change toward intellectual improvement begins at home, be it a one room log cabin of yesteryear's frontier, or today's urban studio apartment walk-up.

P.S.051 students that tested below proficiency at grade level (Grades 3-5)



P.S. 051
 Elias Howe
 520 West 45th Street
B Department of Education has assigned letter grade to this school taking in below grades in overall performance:
 A — school environment
 B — student performance
 B — student progress

Please Note: All test scores are skewed in 2010 due to New York State raising the new cutoff for passing. All data supplied by D.O.E.

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Chelsea, Madison Sq., Flatiron, Rosehill



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