

# **SOUTH BRONX SCHOOL**

A Teacher's Take on the World of the NYC Department of Education

**Friday, December 25, 2009**

## **See Ya Kid!!**

So why am I writing this on Christmas day? One, I have the time, and two this is something very near and dear to me. I am writing about something in my school which I swore I won't do anymore, but now I am compelled to. I will attempt to put my cynicism and sarcasm away for a few moments.

On Wednesday I said goodbye to a student. He is in second grade. He was held over this year. He went to another school where there is a special ed seat open for him, and he will have a management para. This is the best thing that could happen to him. I am happy for him and his mom. But I am saddened.

I have spent the better part of this year focused on this student. He has a lot of issues. Major anger issues, but also wants and needs major attention. Unfortunately he was getting too much negative attention. But he also has a huge heart, is quite verbal, and quite smart. Academically he is very behind. But through no fault of his teachers.

He has thrown chairs, flipped over desks, tried to stab students with pencils, blocked the door and refused to allow his class to leave the classroom. I can't count the times I had to look for him all over the

school. He has a sense of entitlement, and all the instances I mentioned have come at the slightest perceived provocation.

But he loves music and art. He wants to be loved, and needed. One on one, or in a very small setting he shines. He is caring. He does have empathy. He is not a mean kid, nor a bad kid. He truly is good. He wants to be good. He just does not know how to go about it at times.

His mother is on the ball. The father is a sperm donor. He speaks a good game, but it is all talk. Mom is the one who has to deal with the phone calls, and the promotion in doubt letters, and the crap. I feel for her.

I told the kid that he can call me anytime, that mom has my phone number. I promised him I will visit him at his new school and that he better visit me. I will genuinely miss him.

But according to Joel Klein, I am a failure, even though I am not responsible for his academic progress. I know that somehow, someday I have had a positive influence in his life. I know that ten, twenty years from now something I said will click in his head and he will become a better person for it. I know when he hears my name in 2033 he will smile. But I can't now, and I don't know if I will then. The **SYSTEM**, not his teachers, has failed him thus far.

The **SYSTEM** is responsible for making learning unfun, everything skewed to some bullshit tests that only benefit the test making companies and the DOE. The **SYSTEM** is responsible for the large classes this kid should never have been in. The **SYSTEM** is responsible for monies going to Tweed lackies, Klein toadies, and charter schools instead of getting this kid a management para long ago. The **SYSTEM** is responsible for an asinine method of holding kids over no matter the test scores or ages when ever freaking study out there shows that the only time this benefits a student is when it is done in Kindergarten! Let's have more fifteen year old fifth graders and let's see how their self-esteem is doing. Yeah, I have seen such students.

The **SYSTEM** is broken. Joel Klein is walking around butt naked but very few wish to tell him the truth.

Posted by A Teacher In The Bronx at [4:24 PM](#)

Reactions:

comment:

[DAVID PAKTER](#) said...

---

Re: "SEE YA KID" & SAYING GOOD-BYE

---

Bravo to South Bronx School for a very insightful and quite touching Christmas Day essay.

I write this comment from a small village near the border between Belgium and Holland.

Even being so far from New York cannot prevent or numb the brain from recalling the institutional havoc and gargantuan human misery Joel Klein, Esq., NY's Faux Schools Chancellor by Special Waiver, has visited on one million innocent children, their parents and one hundred thousand hard working, dedicated teachers.

How ironic to think that had Michael Bloomberg never decided to purchase the Office of the Mayor of NYC, then a former Federal Prosecutor who knows zero about the field of Education would never have been appointed to a position he is so clearly NOT QUALIFIED for from any and every point of view.

How sad that for lifetime career educators like myself, no matter where we go in the world, even for a brief respite from the NYC DOE, it is never far enough to escape the awareness that such sorry excuses for human beings as Joel Klein, resides among us.

The young child who was so horribly cheated by the NYC DOE, so movingly and memorably described by South Bronx Teacher, reminds every NYC public school teacher of the thousands of children they also have encountered in their careers. Children who were and still are, being cheated of their futures and simple human dignity on the

chessboard of the pompous power mad charlatans who treat all those who have spent their lives in Education as if they were only their personal pawns.

Those of us who have dedicated ten, twenty, thirty, forty and more years of our lives trying to level the playing field for all of New York City's mostly, at risk, inner city children know all too well what South Bronx School is speaking of when talking about bidding farewell to a child who has become a permanent part of our lives.

Surely no New Yorker will feel any regret when our egotistical Mayor and "Legend in his own mind" faux, uncredentialed schools Chancellor are consigned to the scrap heap of New York City's history.

---

[December 27, 2009 2:44 PM](#)