

BEAT THE RACERS RECEIVE A FREE* SONY® PS3!

SPEED 0 MPH

*see offer details ©2005 InternetOpinionGroup.com

NEW
NEED ADVICE?
WE'VE GOT IT!

REGISTER | HEADLINES

DAILY NEWS
City News

Search for



Current



DAILY DISH

CLASSIFIEDS | HELP

Related Stories

» [Stanley Crouch: The bad apples](#)

Cracks in UFT pact

Deal lets kids skip extra-help classes



BY KATHLEEN LUCADAMO
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Struggling students could not be forced to attend after-school classes proposed in the preliminary teachers contract, the Daily News has learned.

If the classes take place after the regular school day as planned, state law requires that attendance be voluntary, much like summer school, the state Education Department told The News yesterday.

The revelation baffled some advocates for children because only days earlier Mayor Bloomberg had touted the 37 1/2-minute sessions as a substantial way to help at-risk students by giving them additional instruction.

"If the contract is centered around more time for the kids, but the kids don't have to show up, it doesn't make sense," said Diane Ravitch, an education historian at New York University.

City Hall could get around the state law by extending the regular school day for all kids - regardless of whether they are struggling in class, said state Education Department spokesman Jonathan Burman.

Under that scenario, it's unclear how kids who are not deemed "at risk" would spend the additional 37-1/2 minutes.

"Our lawyers are reviewing the legal issue," city Education Department spokesman Jerry Russo told The News. "We are confident that this added time will be highly beneficial."

Teachers union President Randi Weingarten said the 37-1/2 minutes ideally would be used as "office hours" for teachers so kids can stop by for help - a common practice in colleges and suburban high schools.



25 HOURS

New York Celebrity News Website

"You want the kids who want to be there," Weingarten said.

Under the tentative contract, teachers would be required to work 50 more minutes a week. The city plans to combine that with the extra 100 minutes the teachers agreed to work each week in the last contract to create the after-school sessions, which would be capped at 10 children.

But the plan would effectively cut the mandatory school day by 10 minutes if the after-school classes are voluntary.

Meanwhile, Weingarten and other union leaders are gearing up to present the tentative contract to the city's 80,000 teachers for approval.

The agreement reached Monday calls for teachers to get 15% raises spread over 52 months. But instructors would have to work longer hours and more days and forfeit several coveted perks.

A summary of the contract was posted on the union's Internet blog Tuesday night. "This is a contract which has real and significant gains. ... It is a remarkable achievement, fully deserving of members' support," one teacher concluded.



But other teachers, mainly a vocal group of dissenters who work in city high schools, weren't convinced.

"I am completely disgusted by the monumental piece of garbage that passes for a contract," one teacher wrote.

Union leaders said they are confident their members will ratify the contract after next month's mayoral election.

"There is a faction of the union that finds flaws with everything," said Emil Pietromonaco, the Staten Island union representative. "Once members see it in its entirety and it is explained to them, they will accept it."

Originally published on October 6, 2005

	Fresh stories hot off the site every day via RSS!
	Have stories like this emailed right to your inbox!
	Email this story
	Printer-friendly version

LEFT



[Home](#) | [News & Views](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Business](#) | [Boroughs](#) | [City Life](#) | [Services](#)

All contents © 2005 Daily News, L.P.
[Disclaimer and Copyright Notice](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#)