NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

What a trip! Class tours resume at museums

By CARL CAMPANILE
Education Reporter

City cultural institutions reeling from the World Trade Center disaster are about to get a financial bailout of sorts — from students.

Schools Chancellor Harold Levy yesterday lifted restrictions on class trips, providing an infusion of cash to numerous museums that charge students for admission.

The Board of Education had halted use of yellow school buses for the trips because of traffic woes and safety concerns after Sept. 11. Levy said it's time to get back to normal.

Directors of museums, zoos and aquariums — whose exhibits have played to sparse crowds since Sept. 11 — were ecstatic.

"We've taken a tremendous hit," said New York Hall of Science spokesman Michael Savino. "We've done some layoffs."

The science museum in Queens' Flushing Meadows Park charges students on class trips $5 per head. With 1,600 kids passing through on a good day, that translates into a hefty $8,000.

Other cultural directors were equally relieved.

"Hooray!" said Fran Hackett, spokeswoman for the New York Aquarium in Coney Island.

"We're very happy to hear that. Business has been so bad. We depend on the schools this time of year."

A staffer at the Museum of the Moving Image in Queens said, "God. This is good news. Business has been down 30 percent."

Levy and cultural directors stressed that it's the kids who ultimately benefit from the resumed trips.

The chancellor, during a press conference at the Museum of Natural History, said it's a "crying shame" for students not to have the opportunity to learn from some of the best cultural institutions in the world.

"It's part of the curriculum. It's part of the way teachers teach," said Levy, who toured a bird exhibit there with fifth-grade students from PS 56 in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

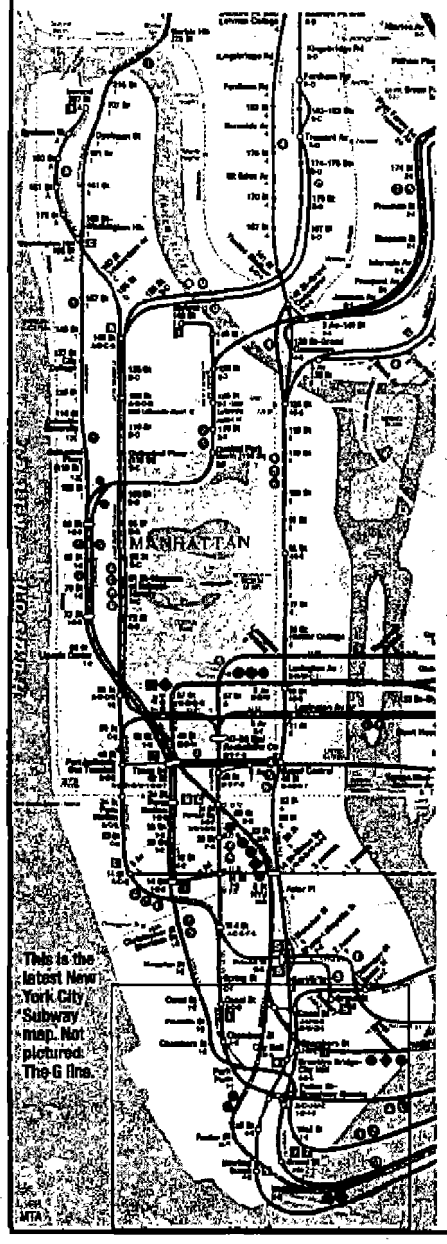
The students, who sketched their favorite birds, enjoyed the trip.

"It's fun. We got to see different kinds of birds. My favorite is the blue jay. I like the color of it," said 10-year-old Deanne Stewart.

W'ORST PERFORMANCE

The W train is ranked last in on-time subway ratings

By DAN MANGAN



The W is the "worst," and the N and R live up to their reputation as "never" and "rarely" in a new survey of subway on-time performance.

Straphangers are waiting longer for trains to arrive in stations on more subway lines, according to Transit Authority statistics.

In fact, 14 train lines scored lower on rider wait-time than during the same time period last year.

Only four lines — the 1/9, the 3, the F and the G — improved on-time performance in the most recent quarter compared with the same quarter last year, the TA said.

And those poor results came before Sept. 11's terror attacks wreaked havoc on subway service.

TA spokesman Al O'Leary chalked up the decreased scores to big changes in subway lines that took effect last July — and the confusion that followed.

Several lines were reconfigured and created to accommodate maintenance work being done on the Manhattan Bridge.

"It generally slows down the railroad until people get accustomed," O'Leary said. "The loading [of subway cars was] slower because people are hesitant getting on a newly named train."

But the Straphangers Campaign, a riders advocacy group, was skeptical.

"I don't think they can just say the bridge did it," said Gene Russianoff, senior attorney for the Straphangers Campaign.

"They're admitting that there's a problem. It's not just up to the riders to adjust," Russianoff said. "People who take these lines are getting worse service ... transit officials have to do a better job of providing service."

"And the W, the new line, is the least regular in the whole system. That's not a good debut. It's W for 'worst,'" Russianoff said.

The W, introduced in July as part of the Manhattan Bridge changes, had just 76.4 percent of its riders step on a train within two minutes of its scheduled arrival in stations.

The TA rates a train's performance as acceptable if riders wait no longer than two minutes after the scheduled arrival time in a station during peak periods, and no longer than four minutes during off-peak times.

The N and R lines experienced the worst drops in on-time service over the year.

The R was within two minutes of on-time arrival in a station just 82.6 percent of the time, a drop of 6.6 percentage points from last year.

And the N was on time 78.9 percent of the time, a plunge of 8.6 percentage points.

Both the 2 and 5 trains were on time less than 80 percent.

What's my line?

Rank	Line	OTR
1st	1/9	91.5%
	6th Ave.	91.5%
3rd	L	89.6%
4th	7	89.3%
5th	6	89.0%
6th	J/Z	88.8%
7th	F	88.5%
8th	C	87.3%
9th	3	86.7%
10th	G	86.3%
11th	4	85.6%
12th	E	85.2%
13th	M	84.0%
14th	Q	82.6%
	R	82.6%
16th	A	80.7%
17th	N	78.9%
	2	78.9%
19th	5	78.3%
20th	W	76.4%

OTR = On-time rate

- **The MTA's definition of being late**
  - If a train arrives within 2 minutes after its scheduled time, then it's not classified as being late.
  - If a train arrives after 2 minutes, then it's late.
  - For off-peak periods the "late" time is 4 minutes.
- **The trains that have improved their service are 1/9, 3, F and G.**
- **The trains that have gotten worse are 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, A, C, E, J/Z, L, M, N, Q and R.**
- **The new 6th Ave. trains (B, D, S and W) have not been in operation long enough for the MTA to make comparisons.**

Ex-Giant may punt on gov bid

By FREDRIC U. DICKER
State Editor

EXCLUSIVE

ALBANY — Former Giants football star Phil McConkey is reconsidering his threatened primary challenge to Gov. Pataki in the wake of the Sept. 11 terror attacks, The Post has learned.

Spokesman Roger Stone said yesterday that McConkey, who raised the specter of taking on Pataki four months ago, now isn't sure if he'll mount a Conservative Party primary campaign against the governor next year.

"He's on hold," said Stone.

"No one wants to talk about politics right now. They're too concerned with Osama bin Laden and anthrax, and now we're heading into the holidays."

"Right now he's neither in nor out. He's just biding his time."

Stone said McConkey will make a final decision about running "early next year."

Public opinion polls show Pataki's approval rating going through the roof in the wake of the World Trade Center attacks.

A Quinnipiac poll last week put the governor's job-performance rating at a stunning 78 percent.

There's no alternative to Regents tests: judge

By KENNETH LOVETT
Post Correspondent

ALBANY — Students at 28 alternative high schools must take Regents exams like every other student in the state in order to graduate, a state judge ruled yesterday.

State Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kane refused to overturn Education Commissioner Richard Mills' move last April to force the schools to use the Regents exams.

All but three are in New York City.

In a 25-page decision, Kane did not deny that the alternative assessments may have positive effects on students.

But ultimately, Kane wrote, the schools provided "insufficient data" to prove the portfolios meet the state's tougher standards.

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