



Trainer to the stars discovers a natural supplement for building strength and endurance

Dow Jones Reprints: This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers, use the Order Reprints tool at the bottom of any article or visit www.djreprints.com

[See a sample reprint in PDF format.](#)

[Order a reprint of this article now](#)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WSJ.com

REVIEW & OUTLOOK | JULY 6, 2009

A Union Promotion

An enemy of education reform gets kicked upstairs.

In her weekly "What Matters Most" newspaper column, Randi Weingarten recently bid the Big Apple farewell. Ms. Weingarten has been elevated to president of the national American Federation of Teachers from head of its New York City affiliate, and she had some notable parting words: "One of the most rewarding (and exhausting) things about working in public education in New York City is that it is the best laboratory in the world for trying new things."

Well, it could be, if it weren't for Ms. Weingarten's union. Since taking over in 1998, she has done everything she could to block significant reforms to New York's public schools. Take her opposition to charter schools. She resisted raising the state cap on charters from 100 unless the union could organize them. (She lost and the cap now is 200.)

Ms. Weingarten was also against merit pay for individual teachers. She supported a law that bars school districts from linking teacher tenure to student test scores. In return for even the mildest pension reforms, Ms. Weingarten recently won a concession that teachers no longer need to work on the two days before the start of the school year. Meanwhile, she has fought to ensure that the Absent Teacher Reserve Pool keeps allowing teachers whom no principal wants to hire to receive their full salaries. New York spends an estimated \$150 million on this and on Teacher Reassignment Centers (for instructors who have been accused of misconduct) alone.

Speaking of money, Ms. Weingarten has long been among the union leaders claiming that more cash will fix public education. Mayor Michael Bloomberg has paid for the modest reforms he's been able to implement by increasing spending to \$22 billion from \$13 billion, much of that in teacher salaries. The four-year high school graduation rate in New York City is now 56%. In union politics, results like these are how you win a promotion to national leadership.

Printed in The Wall Street Journal, page A12

Copyright 2009 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our [Subscriber Agreement](#) and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit www.djreprints.com