

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

AGENDA

MARCH 19, 2015

Presentation – Coalition for Economic Justice (CEJ)

Kirk Laubenstein, Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

TREASURER’S REPORT

VICE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

A. Negotiations - Dates – April 20, 27, May 5 (after the NYS Budget)

- District team seems to want a settlement
- Will keep advised of progress or lack thereof via e-mail

B. Cuomo Event - Volunteers needed

- Kleinhans Music Hall – March 24th – 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- Tickets – General admission – no seat assignments
- Outline – Teachers, Administrators, Board Members/Parents to testify
 - Audience will be Grand Jury – will vote
 - Tentative outline

Charges:

#1 – Governor Cuomo has deprived our students of the funding necessary to provide them with their New York State constitutional right to a Sound Basic Education.

#2 – Governor Cuomo has underfunded our colleges.

#3 – Governor Cuomo has brutalized our students by forcing them to take standardized tests.

#4 - Governor Cuomo has falsely labeled schools and teachers as failing by, in addition to Charge #3 ignoring the facts.

#5 - Governor Cuomo is attempting to undermine local control of schools.

- Pre/Post event stickers distributed
- Parking free (both lots)
- NYSUT to fund
- See *Artvoice* article
- Quinnipiac Poll – Trashes Cuomo on Education ([See Document A](#))

C. NYS Board of Regents – Big Victory for BTF/NYSUT ([See Document I](#))

- Started this over 1 year ago with our picket in front of Regent Bennett’s home.
- After 1 year with much behind the scenes work, with our allies, we succeeded.
- Bob Bennett did support many positive initiatives e.g. Voc/Tech parity with other subjects – however, his support for the Common Core rollout, standardized testing,

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tying teachers' evaluations to student standardized test, former Commissioner King, etc., was unacceptable.

D. Standardized Testing – Motion that the Council of Delegates affirm the Resolution on standardized testing made by Philip Rumore, President, seconded by Edith LeWin, Vice President and passed by the Executive Committee – ([See Document II](#))

Moved: Edith LeWin

Second: Rebecca Pordum

E. Board Budget

- Preliminary based upon a small increase in State aid – any cuts will be re-visited when NYS Budget is finalized.
- School budgets require site-based team consensus. They should not agree to staff cuts. Teacher members of SBMT's must be elected by BTF members.

F. BTF/Albany – Presidents/Directors were in Albany March 2-3, 2015

- BTF made an extensive presentation to the entire WNY Delegation and their staffs. Presentation is on BTF website www.btfny.org – News & Alerts.
- Both Senate and Assembly added \$500,000,000+ to the Governor's budget and cut the ties to Governor Cuomo's APPR/Standardized testing/Funding based on student test scores, etc.

G. Boycott – *The Buffalo News*

WHEREAS: *The Buffalo News* Editorial Board, in our opinion, has distorted and misled the public and made statements that some consider racist recently by wrongly stating:

- "It's a phony crisis, drummed up by unions and others who want nothing to do with the more accurate teacher evaluations . ([See Document III](#))
- "It's indisputable, but changing the outcome has to begin with accurately measuring performance. You can't improve what you can't measure. Yet teachers, administrators and others are willfully blind about the issue, insisting that Cuomo provide them a blank check, and to do so while they blackmail him with spurious accusations of "attacking public schools." ([See Document III](#))
- While supporting the Governor's "deforms" on unions, "Their members live in an economic bubble" and "crying about evaluations, spending and the Common Core are mainly about: preserving the wretched, costly, dysfunctional status quo." ([See Document IV](#))
- "For that (students to excel) to happen teachers need to be evaluated, fairly and accurately. Teachers don't want that and neither do their servants in the State Legislature." ([See Document V](#))
- Perhaps most reprehensible is attacking the appointment of Dr. Catherine Collins to the Board of Regents. **"What role, if any, did racial politics play in Bennett's demise? School Board member Carl Paladino is sure it did. Peoples-Stokes, Heastie and Collins are all African-American, but that alone doesn't prove anything. Bennett and many of his supporters are white and no one has claimed a racial component there. Still, race does seem to be playing a more dominant role in education, at least in Buffalo. It's an important issue to resolve."** ([See Document VI](#)) and,

WHEREAS: The BTF does not want to harm our union brothers and sisters, who are employed by *The Buffalo News*, with an initial prolonged boycott of the paper and,

WHEREAS: A study by Dr. Andrea B. Nikischer, a SUNY Buffalo State Professor titled "Propaganda and Policy: An Investigation into Alleged Anti-Teacher's Union and Pro-Charter School Bias into the *Buffalo News*" included:

- "In summary, all things in support of corporate school reform receive Positive and/or neutral coverage-and lots of it."
- *The Buffalo News* has made a choice to position schools (administrators, Teachers, union) as the root problem."
- Dr. Nikischer recommends two courses of action—the first for the *News* and the second for concerned subscribers: 1) hire an ombudsman to "monitor

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education content and delivery”; 2) “public school supporters should seriously consider cancelling their newspaper subscriptions and boycotting *Buffalo News* advertisers.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the BTF encourages its members and others similarly offended by *The Buffalo News* to cancel their subscriptions to *The Buffalo News* for the month of May 2015 and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that if *The Buffalo News* continues its attempts to mislead the public and make false accusations, a longer cancellation of subscriptions will be recommended.

Moved: Rebecca Pordum

Second: Joe Montante

H. Physical Education – New York State requirements not being met by District

Motion – passed by Executive Committee

To concur with the Executive Committee, that BTF join with the BPTO and DPCC in seeking the Buffalo Board of Education’s full compliance with the NYSED regulations for physical education taught by certified physical education teachers.

Moved: Edith LeWin

Second: Rebecca Pordum

I. Retirement Seminar –

April 21, 2015 – Grapevine Banquet Center – 333 Dick Road

Registration forms were sent to schools

J. Demonstration at Bennett High School – March 26th – 4:30 p.m.

Sponsored by New York State Allies for Public Education statewide – Demonstration to show support for public schools – more information at www.nysape.org

K. May Council of Delegates Meeting /Retirement Dinner

Wednesday, May 27th -- Posting in Delegate Envelopes

L. Deadline for Transfers – March 23rd (received or postmarked) – emails accepted

M. First Book Coordinators

N. School Cuomo Rallies

- Signs

O. Report Lack of SUBS to BTF

P. OTHER LATE ITEMS

Snow Days

Q. OLD BUSINESS

R. ADJOURNMENT