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September 3, 2014

MEMO TO: All Buffalo Teachers

FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

RE: Amazing

Amazing but not unexpected – 98%, 99% and 100% of teachers, joined by retirees and parents, picketed in front of and in some cases, surrounded their schools.

Although some at City Hall suggested that our newer teachers would be afraid to participate -- how little they know about all Buffalo teachers. Our newer teachers demonstrated that they were not intimidated by walking arm and arm with veteran teachers.

Throughout this area and in my travels across the country, Buffalo teachers are held up as models of strength and solidarity. This continued demonstration of solidarity will ensure that we have a new contract that reflects your critical importance and commitment to our students and that addresses our students' learning conditions.

Some Board members and District administrators believe you will lose your determination and solidarity. They don't know Buffalo teachers.

Buffalo teachers continue to demonstrate a dedication to our students and solidarity that is second to none.

Note: The Wednesday, September 10th Board of Education meeting has been moved from City Hall to the Buffalo Academy for Visual & Performing Arts. Will that discourage or prevent us from our mass protest/picket? Of course not!

We will be picketing in front of Buffalo Academy for Visual & Performing Arts, 450 Masten Avenue, Buffalo 14208 (Masten Avenue & Ferry Street) from 4:00 to 5:15 p.m. prior to the Board meeting that starts at 5:30. The school entrance is on Ferry Street about 3 blocks east of Main Street.

Teachers who can stay should proceed to the auditorium for the Board meeting at which time I will be addressing the Board.

It is not necessary to stay for the entire meeting as they sometimes can be very contentious and long. As always, don't fall for any verbal ploys in which some Board members may engage.

We will continue informational picketing every Wednesday morning for one-half (1/2) hour before you are to report. Each school should adjust the times for picketing to fit your school's schedule.

Once again, thank you for your amazing but not unexpected demonstration of solidarity.

Thanks to that, the public and media have a clear understanding that we have been without a contract for over 10 years, are \$20,000 behind our colleagues in other districts, and have horrendous teaching conditions. The extensive media coverage and statements by teachers on the picket line has sent a strong message.

Thanks to your support and demonstration of solidarity on the picket lines, our message is resonating throughout the area and our school district.

Let's keep the pressure up.

PR:su