

President PHILIP RUMORE



March 13, 2015

BUFFALO TEACHERS  
FEDERATION, INC

271 PORTER AVENUE  
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14201  
(716) 881-5400  
FAX (716) 881-6678

**MEMO TO:** All Buffalo Teachers

**FROM:** Philip Rumore, President, BTF

**RE:** BTF Opposition to Standardized Test/Opt-Out

The BTF Executive Committee unanimously adopted the following resolution. As you may know, various organizations across New York State and the country have adopted motions on this subject. While the ones we have seen are fine, they seemed to lack the BTF “edge”.

The wording was crafted to avoid giving our detractors a way of using the courts to undermine and attack us. Other locals are in the process of modifying their positions to avoid possible legal actions against them and their members.

This is a critical issue. While the linkage of these tests to our evaluations is of great importance, these standardized tests, in addition to not being validated and irrelevant to helping teachers teach, are brutalizing our students.

**We can’t let that happen. We must join with parents in defense of their children – our students.**

PR:su

**WHEREAS:** Standardized tests presently being inflicted on our students:

- have been found to be developmentally inappropriate.
- do not provide timely information that can be utilized by teachers and parents to assist with each student's education.
- are shielded from public scrutiny and analysis thereby preventing educators, parents and the general public from uncovering serious and harmful inadequacies of said tests.
- have not been validated, and;

**WHEREAS:** The Common Core standards that said standardized tests reflect, have also not been field tested or validated for their alleged purposes, and;

**WHEREAS:** Students speaking little or no English and those coming from countries where they never attended school are being cruelly subjected to said tests, and;

**WHEREAS:** Schools are being falsely classified as failing based upon New York State imposed standardized tests even though many Buffalo Public Schools have a student population where twenty (20) to forty (40) different languages are spoken, and;

**WHEREAS:** Fifty-percent (50%) of an Elementary School's score is wrongly based upon the 3rd through 8th grade State mandated ELA standardized tests, the second 50% of an Elementary School's score is based upon the 3rd through 8th grade Math tests in which questions require reading English and most, if not all, of a High School's score is based upon New York State standardized tests that require reading English and;

**WHEREAS:** Students with disabilities are also being cruelly subjected to said tests, and;

**WHEREAS:** The preparation of students for said standardized tests eliminates weeks of instructional time, and;

**WHEREAS:** Some students are not intimidated by and do well on standardized tests while others fear them and do not do well, and;

**WHEREAS:** Curriculum decisions should be validated, developmentally appropriate, designed to enhance creativity, critical thinking, and also foster a student's love of learning and a teacher's joy of teaching and most importantly be made by practicing teachers, and;

**WHEREAS:** Assessments of student progress should be developed by teachers to provide them and parents with timely information to assist with each student's education,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That while educators have been advised of possible negative consequences to them if they advise parents to refuse to have their children harmed by the current High Stakes tests, Buffalo teachers will not be cowered into continuing to allow our students to be brutalized by the current High Stakes testing (junk science), but will continue to

use all appropriate means to assist parents who wish to prevent which in our opinion amounts to a form of child abuse. To that end the BTF:

- will continue to have a policy of opposing High Stakes standardized testing of students,
- will support and provide information on its website for parents wishing to prevent their children from taking High Stakes Standardized tests,
- will encourage its members to utilize the information on the BTF website to prevent their own children from taking High Stakes Standardized tests,
- will defend and seek NYSUT/NEA/AFT support and defense for any member disciplined for exercising their rights to speak publicly on this issue, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** The BTF will continue to seek a Board of Education policy against “sit and stare”, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** The BTF will publicize this resolution to its members, the media, the Board of Regents, Buffalo Board of Education, Western New York Delegation, supportive community organizations and all persons who should receive copies, and;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the BTF will submit this resolution appropriately modified to the NYSUT, NEA and AFT representative assemblies.

**MOVE BY:** Philip Rumore, President

**SECOND:** Edith LeWin, Vice President