

President PHILIP RUMORE



April 16, 2015

MEMO TO: All Buffalo Teachers

FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

RE: Buffalo News Boycott

BUFFALO TEACHERS  
FEDERATION, INC

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The following motion calling for a May boycott of the Buffalo News was passed by the Council of Delegates:

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

Initially canceling subscriptions for one month with the obvious threat of more and longer boycotts will hopefully bring about some changes. If not, we move to longer boycotts and boycotts of advertisers.

They will ask for the reason you are canceling.

We urge you to cancel your subscription for the month of May and email us at [sumhauer@btfny.org](mailto:sumhauer@btfny.org) so that we know our impact.

We will be reaching out to other organizations to join us.

PR:su