



Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc.  
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President, PHILIP RUMORE

March 8, 2018

MEMO TO: All Buffalo Teachers  
FROM: Philip Rumore, President, BTF  
RE: Know Your BTF Contract & Other Issues

### **Classroom Interruptions**

We continue to receive concerns relating to people entering classrooms interrupting lessons.

The BTF Contract states:

#### Article XI, Section L.

“Classroom interruptions shall be permitted only in case of urgency. Persons other than Board of Education personnel shall be allowed to enter classrooms only with prior consultation with the classroom teacher.”

#### Article XVI, Section A.

“Parent-Teacher conferences are desirable and encouraged. Parents desiring conferences with teachers shall make requests through the Building Administrator. Upon granting such request the administrator shall arrange that such conference shall be scheduled when the teacher is not supervising pupils. If this is not possible, appropriate relief shall be provided for the teacher.

Non-Board personnel shall not be authorized to enter a classroom unannounced during teaching periods or at other times when the teacher has responsibility for pupil supervision.”

### **Transfers**

The transfer procedure tried last year has not been agreed to again. Requests for transfers must be made in writing by March 23, 2018. They should be addressed to Jamie Warren, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources. Make sure they are postmarked prior to March 23 to avoid problems. Keep a copy.

They can also be hand delivered to 65 Niagara Square, Room 720. Make sure you receive a receipt.

### **Meetings with Administrator**

When called to a meeting with an administrator that may become disciplinary, you have a right under State law to have a BTF representative from BTF headquarters with you.

You should not have a delegate or another teacher be your representative. That is not their responsibility nor is it advisable.

Call BTF and your BTF/NYSUT representative will contact the administrator to make arrangements for a meeting.

We have wallet size “Teacher Representational Rights” cards available. If you need one, your delegate chairperson may have some. If not, give us a call. We will send you one.

### **Teacher Evaluations**

Only a certified Buffalo Administrator can evaluate teachers. Teachers cannot evaluate other teachers. Any information used in a teacher’s evaluation that is not done in conformance with the above can be grieved and thrown out.

#### Article XIII, Section F.

“Only qualified members of the certified staff shall be used to evaluate teachers. Teachers represented by the Federation shall not evaluate other members of the bargaining unit. Each time a teacher is evaluated, a signed copy of the standard evaluation documents will be given to the teacher.”

See Article XIII for more information.

### **Academic Freedom**

The BTF Executive Committee and Council of Delegates passed the attached resolution.

For our grievance, please advise us of any instances where your choice of materials was not allowed, you had materials removed against your wishes, you were directed to not utilize appropriate materials, e.g. we heard that a teacher was told not to use teaching materials two years below the grade level of the student, even though the student was performing 3 years below level and making excellent progress.

Please send your examples to [sumhauer@btfny.org](mailto:sumhauer@btfny.org). Include your, name, school, and contact information. We will not use your name and school if it will identify you, unless we contact you first.

### **Opt-Out**

As you know, the BTF is in strong support of the Opt-Out movement to protect our children from what I call “institutionalized child abuse.” Despite the temporary moratorium that eliminates certain consequences of the state tests for students and teachers, these tests are still administered and used for “advisory” purposes and for identifying struggling schools.

While teachers should not counsel the parents of their students to opt-out, they can, if asked, refer them to

our website [www.btfny.org](http://www.btfny.org) for information on the opt-out movement. Teachers are also encouraged to consider having their own children and those of their friends and relatives opt-out.

Progress against these insidious tests has been made as a result of NYSUT and parents across New York State taking action. The testing begins in April. Let the battle against institutionalized child abuse continue.

### **Personal Days**

We have been advised that some administrators are asking for the reason that a teacher is taking a personal day.

The only time a teacher must provide a reason for taking a personal day is if the day is before or after a holiday.

Article XXIX, Section A (2).

“Personal leave may not be taken on the day before or the day after a holiday unless a request, specifying the reason, is made and approved.”

Teachers should not volunteer the reason for taking a personal leave day if it is not before or after a holiday. It is a personal day.

In addition, the contract does not mandate advance notice although some teachers do provide notice. The contract states:

Article XXIX, Section A (5)

“Whenever possible, advance notice of forty-eight (48) hours shall be given before the use of a personal day.”

Unfortunately, some principals apparently have nothing better to do than to create issues rather than provide support and encouragement. How sad.

PR:su