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Dear Colleague,

We know that Buffalo teachers are doing an amazing job and our students are doing much better than the Buffalo News and others (some Board members included) want the public to believe.

As you can tell from the articles relating to the candidates, the Charter School advocates and funders with very deep pockets are attempting to take control of the Board and District under the guise of removing the Superintendent. This election is really about the for-profit privatization of education through the creation of more charter schools, the destruction of unions, the BTF in particular, and the funneling of lucrative District contracts to friends.

Need we remind you of the following Paladino quotes:

“I will move at the July 10, 2013 meeting of the BOE “to retain Bankruptcy Counsel to advise on the filing of a voluntary petition in Bankruptcy to “cram down” public employee contracts including substantial adjustments to employee health benefit programs and to recover management prerogative rights.” July 2013 memo.

and

Motion: “1.). The superintendent shall immediately study and implement a policy of outsourcing students and converting all priority schools to Regents Approved Charters requesting expedited and special consideration and approval of the Board of Regents.” July 1, 2013 memo.

and

“I move that Barb Smith be instructed to make a public presentation to the BOE of why the health costs for retirees are so high, including a description of coverages and possible less costly alternatives.”

What does that tell you about the candidates he supports?

-OVER-

It is important to know that thousands of dollars will be spent to elect School Board members who will serve for five, yes 5 years, and who may make decisions on issues such as our new contract. Need we say more? You and your family and friends can make the difference.

We have thoroughly interviewed the candidates who have requested our endorsement. The Council of Delegates has endorsed the following candidates based on their records and interviews:

Ralph Hernandez indicated that he believes the Board's budget priorities must be placed in the classroom with smaller class sizes. Teachers must be retained. He committed to introducing a motion for a Board briefing on negotiations at every meeting in order to facilitate agreement on a successor contract. He is opposed to the creation of new charter schools and states that most of the current Buffalo charters are not working. One of his goals is to build consensus on the Board of Education. He has worked with the BTF on a comprehensive study of Charter Schools which includes the high suspension rate, lack of English Language Learners, under-representation of students from poverty and diverse backgrounds, and lack of students with disabilities. Ralph also sponsored the motion to repeal the Board strict residency requirement – i.e. no position unless you are a resident.

John Licata was endorsed by the BTF five years ago for his first term. His four children attend Buffalo Public Schools. He supports lowering of the class sizes and has personally lobbied in Albany and with the Common Council to secure additional funding for the BPS. If funding is not sufficient, he believes cuts must occur away from the classroom. He will seek regular updates on negotiations and states that a new contract will serve to attract and retain the best teachers. He suggests that the Charter School legislation must be re-written to establish a separate funding stream and require audits and stated that ultimately charter schools are a failure and he will not vote to create new charter schools. He explains that the demonizing of public education is occurring as a means for corporate take-over. He also voted against the Teach for America program that allows candidates with only five weeks training to become “certified” Buffalo teachers.

Dr. Barbara Nevergold, the current Board President, is a graduate of the Buffalo Public Schools and prior to employment as Director of Student Support Services at the UB Educational Opportunity Program, worked as a teacher and guidance counselor with the Buffalo Public Schools. When re-elected, she will continue her efforts to increase student achievement, opportunities for extended day and summer school programs, and collaborations as well as finding ways to keep kids in schools. Her priority issue within the Board's budget is the classroom and the impact on children. She has demanded urgency in contract negotiations and has already sought a Board briefing on them at each Board meeting and the reasons for their delay. She will not support creation of more Buffalo Charter Schools and stated they are not the answer they purport to be and definitely take resources away. She, on very short notice, put an end to District policy forcing students who had opted out of tests having to sit and do nothing i.e. did away with District “Sit and Stare” policy.

Please don't be confused by the Buffalo News' attempt to mislead the public into thinking that we and our students are doing poorly. Indeed we are doing much better than both Rochester and Syracuse. Have you heard any reports of that?

Nor have Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, et al been made to go through the hoops that we have when applying for grants etc. Wonder why? If anyone believes that there isn't a NYSED vendetta against us and that there isn't a systematic attack on us by NYSED, I have a bridge in Brooklyn to sell you cheap. Remember, we alone waged a very public battle to have student absenteeism as a factor in our evaluations. We won. They did not like that one bit.

The Charter School privatization millionaires want people to believe that this is about the Superintendent and a dysfunctional School Board. It is not.

Yes, mistakes have been made and some people downtown have been leaking every negative thing they can.

We know you will see through the smoke screen and realize that this election is really about getting more pro-charter school candidates elected to continue the for-profit privatization agenda and anti-union attacks.

The Board of Education election is Tuesday, May 6th. The choices that are made will determine not only your future but that of the District.

You will make the difference. If you live in Buffalo, you, your family and friends can make the difference. If you don't live in Buffalo, please ask any family and friends to support the candidates who will support us and our students. Also, please share your support of our endorsed candidates on facebook, twitter or any other social media.

Others are counting on you being fooled. We know you won't.

In Solidarity,



Philip Rumore
President



Edith D. LeWin, Chairperson
Political Action Committee

EDL/jc

-OVER-

Who has endorsed and is supporting their opponents says it all. (*The Buffalo News* 04/23/2014)

Patricia Bowers Pierce - **Notable supporters include:** Buffalo Niagara Partnership (business group), William Nowakowski (Republican chairman in Buffalo), David Pfaff (Democratic operative tied to Steve Pigeon), Dennis Ryan (former Republican Chairman in Buffalo), Greg Olma (Democratic former Erie County legislator), Democratic state Assemblyman Michael P. Kearns, Amy Friedman (president of Buffalo ReformED), School Board member Carl Paladino, Ralph Lorigo (chairman of the Erie County Conservative Party), Republican committee members Joseph Totaro, Sandra Waugaman-Beck and Tracey McNerney

Lawrence Quinn - **Notable supporters include:** Buffalo Niagara Partnership (business group), Students First (education reform group founded by Michelle Rhee), Jamie Moses (Artvoice editor), William Nowakowski (Republican chairman in Buffalo), David Pfaff (Democratic operative tied to Steve Pigeon), Democratic North Council Member Joseph Golombek Jr., School Board members Jason McCarthy and Carl Paladino, B. Thomas Golisano (former owner of the Sabres), Carl J. Montante (president of Uniland Development), Robert E. Rich Jr. (chairman of Rich Products), Robert Gioia (president of the Oishei Foundation), F. James McGuire (CEO of the McGuire Group), Frank McGuire (chairman of the McGuire Group), Republican committee members Joseph Totaro, Sandra Waugaman-Beck and Tracey McNerney

Bernard A. Tolbert - Board members James Sampson (Charter School/Privatization Advocate) and Theresa Harris-Tigg

Wendy S. Mistretta - **Notable supporters include:** Joseph Totaro (Republican committee member), Mike Madigan (Grand Island Republican committee member who ran for Congress), Rus Thompson (local Tea Party leader), Jessica Bauer Walker (District Parent Coordinating Council DPCC leader)

Candidates that support more Charter Schools in Buffalo (*The Buffalo News* 04/23/2014). Does this list look familiar?

Patricia Bowers Pierce

Lawrence Quinn

Bernard A. Tolbert

Wendy S. Mistretta