

President's Report



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BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION

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Welcome back. Hopefully, your summer “layoff” was restful, safe, and productive. This year will be, as are most, filled with challenges; however, we will, as always, change them into successes and accomplishments. With the finest and most dedicated teachers anywhere, how can we not prevail?

We will again have our new member, leadership and retirement workshops and, as always, be looking for more ways to support you.

NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

Negotiations will resume on September 11th with the assistance of Kevin Flanigan, Director, Office of Conciliation of PERB. We look forward to working with him and will keep you up-to-date via e-mail and our website www.btfny.org. He may impose a blackout. If so, we will keep you apprised to the extent possible.

IMPROPER PRACTICE CHARGE (I.P.)

For our new members, an Improper Practice Charge (I.P.) is a charge brought against a public employer or public sector union claiming a violation of the Taylor Law. Once a charge is made, the first step is a conference with both sides and a representative of PERB in an effort to either settle the issue(s) or schedule a full hearing on them.

If a party is found guilty, corrective action can be ordered.

Our conference with PERB for both the I.P. we filed against the District and the District's I.P. against us will be on Thursday, September 24, 2015.

Our case against the District includes lowering their total package offer, introducing completely new proposals, etc.

They have charged us with canceling negotiating sessions (we were awaiting notification from PERB) and illegally attempting to negotiate monies during the wage freeze (we did not). We will keep you up-dated.

BTF FULL-PAGE ADS

We have had a great response from teachers as well as others relating to the full page ads that have appeared. As we move into the crucial days ahead, it is important that the public Understand the issue as they are usually misrepresented by the media (mostly *The Buffalo News*).

TEACHER E-MAIL ADDRESSES – BTF GOING GREEN

We have only 75% of your personal e-mail addresses. While we want to have BTF go green to the maximum extent, without your help (personal e-mail addresses), we can't. We can't take the chance that a teacher didn't receive information from the BTF.

We understand that some have had problems using the updating procedure on the website. If you can't update your information, please contact the BTF with the particular issue. Most have been corrected by the website developers.

Once again, here are the procedures. Go to www.btfny.org - in the blue menu block on any page, click Misc. Then click on Update Form. Enter your District ID and the last four digits of your social security number for confirmation. Then enter any new phone number, address and the personal e-mail address that you would like used for quick contacts. Click the submit button and we'll take it from there. If this still doesn't work, fax the information to us at 881-6678

ATTENTION TEMPORARY TEACHERS

Re-employed temporary teachers should call the Board's Benefits Office at 816-3754 or 816-3755 to confirm that the Board is providing your healthcare coverage. Newly employed temporary teachers must file an application with the District to receive health insurance. As always, when in doubt, call the BTF.

ATTENTION TEMPORARY TEACHERS

If there are openings in your school being filled with substitutes instead of regular teachers, i.e. there is no teacher assigned to the position or no “replacement” (temporary) teacher assigned when the “regular” teacher is not expected to return until at least the second semester of the school year, please call us at BTF. (Regular and “replacement” (temporary) teachers are members of the BTF bargaining unit and receive all contractual pay and benefits.)

**MARITAL STATUS
CHANGE /ADDRESS
CHANGE**

If there has been a change in your marital status, it may be necessary to change your life insurance beneficiary, NYSTRS beneficiary, SBF benefit cards, health insurance coverage.

Check your check! Is your address correct? If not, you should notify the Administration (Human Resources/Personnel Office, Room 720 and Payroll Office, Room 814, City Hall), in writing. **You should also notify the BTF.**

**TEACHER
TRANSFERS/NEW
ASSIGNMENTS**

Teachers are advised that under the terms of the contract, if you applied for a transfer prior to March 23rd, or were cut from a school due to a reduction in force during the school year or this summer and made a request for a transfer, you have a right to and preference for vacancies that existed this summer. If you fit one of the above categories and were denied a position, please read pages 30-33 of the BTF Master Contract and call the BTF.

**SALARY
ADJUSTMENT
FOR COMPLETED
COURSES**

Completion of course work, which leads to a pay differential should be reported immediately. Obtain an Advanced Credit Differential application from your office or from the BPS website. (Refer to page 57 of your contract.) Differentials are granted for the semester following completion of the 10-hour block, provided forms are filed within thirty (30) days after school starts or completion of the course work. Just sending a transcript often isn't enough to receive credit. Examine your check.

ZERO TOLERANCE

I want to know about every act of violence against teachers. Once an incident is reported, we provide support for the teacher, legal advice, and we contact the District Attorney's Office to ensure that the criminal is prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. There is nothing more important to me than your safety in your school. If at all possible, I will be in court with you. The BTF is continuing to press for more security officers in the schools.

**INCIDENT REPORT
FORMS AVAILABLE**

The BTF will continue monitoring incidents in the schools. The forms, developed by the BTF, are available from your Delegate. Please use them. Report serious acts of violence, vandalism, etc. We will be making sure that appropriate action is taken. Forms should be returned to Rebecca Pordum at BTF.

**INAPPROPRIATE
DISCIPLINE
FORM**

Your Delegate Chairperson also has copies of our "BTF Inappropriate/Inadequate Discipline Report Form" to report incidents of what you consider inappropriate/inadequate discipline resulting from a student(s) with weapons, involved in acts of violence, or engaging in sexual harassment, etc, including students being returned to the same school/class after committing acts of violence against anyone (including other students). Forms should be returned to your Labor Relations Specialist (LRS).

**ON-THE-JOB
INJURIES**

Teachers injured on the job should file an accident report form and the Worker's Compensation form (C-2) and see a doctor even if the injury does not result in immediate lost time from work.

BTF WEB-SITE

Remember, we continue to improve our website. It is www.btfny.org - check it out and use our 24-hour tapeline, 881-4818, to keep informed.

WARNING

Postings to Facebook pages and other social networks are not as private as one might believe. In fact, you should not consider them private at all. Nothing should be put on them that you would not want your current or future employer to see.

Text messages can be saved, shared and potentially used against you.

Also, the Board computers and your Board email address should be used judiciously. Your employer has access to all of this information.

**ATTENTION – REHIRED
CONTRACT/
PROBATIONARY
TEACHERS**

As per Article XXVI (2) A (8) p 72, contract and probationary teachers who are excessed and subsequently rehired are entitled to be reimbursed for healthcare expenses during the period of their layoff. Call BTF for information on how to apply.

**SICK DAY
CARRY-OVER**

Teachers are advised to check their first pay check and make sure that sick days have been properly credited. Unused sick days should roll over, unused personal days are converted to sick days and new sick/personal days should be credited. If you are a member of the Sick Leave Bank, those days should have been deducted from your accumulation.

BUFFALO'S BEST

As part of our continuing "From the Classroom to the Living Room" initiative, we will be distributing a pad of "Buffalo's Best" awards for each teacher to use for students.

They are a quick way for teachers to reward positive behavior. We all know that too often parents are only notified when there is a problem.

The "Buffalo's Best" awards will provide you with a quick effective way to say to a student and parent, "Good job".

The forms were designed by BTF and printed by NYSUT, our state affiliate. When you run out, call BTF...we have extras. You can have more or come and make copies.