

President's Report

PHILIP RUMORE, PRESIDENT



BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION

*271 Porter Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14201*

*716-881-5400 (Phone)
716-881-6678 (Fax)*

www.BTFNY.org

June 2016

NEGOTIATIONS

The Council of Delegates was briefed with specifics at our last meeting (June 16, 2016). As you know from our emails:

- We postponed a meeting with the Superintendent for a pre-negotiation sessions after the Board unilaterally removed our cosmetic surgery rider.
- We are awaiting word from PERB on the appointment of a PERB-appointed “conciliator” to be a witness at our negotiations.
- We expect a decision soon on our Improper Practice (IP) against the District for bargaining in bad faith.
- We have reactivated our action committee to prepare for all eventualities, i.e. a new contract in September.

Once negotiations resume, we will keep you up-to-date via email. *Note:* Emails sent to all teachers are also posted on the BTF website, www.btfny.org, under News and Alerts.

COSMETIC SURGERY RIDER

We have filed a notice of claim on the District. This is required prior to taking legal action against school districts.

Our Improper Practice Charge was sent overnight to PERB in Albany on June 17, 2016.

We will be filing a show cause order with the courts here this week in an attempt to obtain a restraining order preventing the removal of the rider.

If you have missed any of the emails relating to the rider, please see the BTF website, www.btfny.org, News and Alerts, 06/08/16 - Negotiations Update Memo, 6/9/16 - Cosmetic Surgery Rider – The Latest Attack on Teachers.

We will keep you up-to-date as events transpire.

APPR

We are in negotiations with the District. Issues include:

- The Appeal process for teachers receiving an Ineffective.
- The number of and process used for observations/evaluations.
- The number and identification of the “Indicators” in the Rubric that will be used.
- How student growth will be measured (SLO’s).

RECEIVERSHIP

Our court date relating to receivership has been changed to July 5, 2016. Stay Tuned.

UNEMPLOYMENT

If you believe that you might not have a position in September, you should apply for unemployment insurance. Please remember that temporary teachers should be rehired each year by the Board if positions are available. Some temporary teachers, in previous summers, have received a certified letter from the District that indicates in part, that it expects to be able to employ you next year. This letter is sometimes referred to as a “reasonable assurance letter”.

In the past, this letter has been used by the District in an attempt to prevent temporary teachers, who might be eligible for unemployment insurance, from receiving unemployment benefits. If you receive such a letter, and believe you will probably not be rehired, fax a copy to BTF at 881-6678.

If you apply for unemployment compensation benefits, believe you are eligible, and are turned down, appeal the determination, ask for a hearing and continue to report. List the BTF as your representative. Call us when you receive notice of a hearing date.

If you receive benefits and you are subsequently found to be ineligible, benefits are not recoverable unless you withheld information. A question asked is “Have you received any verbal or written POSSIBILITY of a job in September?” If you have received the “reasonable assurance letter” and you answer the question with a “no”, you are considered to be withholding information. Also, you will be withholding information if you subsequently receive the “reasonable assurance letter” and do not report this fact to the Unemployment Office. If you have additional questions, please call your Labor Relations Specialist at the BTF.

TEMPORARY TEACHER SUMMER BC/BS

Temporary teachers who worked at least 100 days, are on the payroll on the last day of school and who have not been terminated based on an evaluation, are entitled to health coverage during the summer lay-off.

If you receive a termination notice from your health care provider, call the BTF so that we can determine your status. In any event, all temporary teachers continue to be covered by the SBF during the summer months for SBF dental, optical, and prescription benefits. As always, SBF forms must be completed for reimbursement.

**HEALTH CARE
LAID-OFF
TEACHERS**

Contract and probationary teachers who are laid off, but are subsequently rehired, are entitled to be reimbursed for health care benefits during the time of layoff. (See Article XXVI (2) Section A-8 on page 72, lines 8-11 of your contract.)

**EXTENDED PAY
PLAN SIGN UP
NOW**

Many Buffalo teachers have joined the BTF Extended Pay Plan to have their pay spread out over the summer months.

If you would like information regarding the Extended Pay Plan, see your Delegate Chairperson. Information is also available in the BTF Delegate Handbook in your building. Enrollment cards are available from your delegate or from the BTF and are due by Friday, June 27, 2014. Reminder – we strongly suggest that you sign up for direct deposit to receive your extended pay plan funds.

**VOLUNTARY
TRANSFERS/
REDUCTIONS IN
FORCE**

If you have applied for a voluntary transfer or are being transferred due to a reduction-in-force and do not believe the transfer is being handled properly, please call the BTF and ask to speak with your Labor Relations Specialist. Remember, transfers are based on seniority. If you are the most senior teacher applying for a school, you may go there. The principal may have a conversation with you but ultimately your seniority determines whether you are assigned there. Most teachers do not want to go to a school where a principal objects to them. But ultimately, that decision is based on seniority! In addition, teachers being involuntarily transferred or seeking voluntary transfers have a right to know all the positions in their tenure area that are available upon request.

Remember seniority for transfer purposes is defined as “a teacher’s length of total continuous service from the date of original probationary appointment as a teacher in the Buffalo Public School System.” Leaves without pay are not counted. This means that seniority in previous tenure areas is added. See page 3 of the contract.

**ATTENTION
TEMPORARY
TEACHERS**

Temporary teachers who have lost pay during this school year due to lack of sick days are reminded that they may apply to use any sick time they have since accumulated to obtain pay for those days. You must submit a written request to the Payroll department.

**SUMMER OFFICE
HOURS**

Once again this summer, BTF will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Any changes will be on the tapeline, 881-4818. Keep up-to-date via the BTF tapeline, 881-4818, and our website, www.btfny.org.

**SUMMER
REMINDER**

WHEN SOMEONE ASKS YOU HOW YOU ARE ENJOYING YOUR “SUMMER VACATION”, REMIND THEM THAT THE CHILDREN ARE ON “SUMMER VACATION” – TEACHERS ARE LAID OFF. NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE KNOW IT IS NOT A PAID VACATION FOR TEACHERS IN THE SUMMER, BUT RATHER TWO MONTHS WITHOUT PAY. LET US CONTINUE USING THE TERM SUMMER “LAY-OFF” AND MAYBE THEY WILL GET THE MESSAGE.

AS A DEMONSTRATION OF CONTINUED SOLIDARITY, WE ARE ASKING ALL TEACHERS TO WEAR THEIR BTF SHIRTS AND/OR SOLIDARITY PINS/STICKERS ON THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL.

E-MAIL REQUEST

The BTF is looking to update our personal e-mail list. Please e-mail dstempniak@btfny.org with your personal e-mail address. There will be periodic updates on significant issues during the summer and you don’t want to miss them. BTF does not communicate using your BPS e-mail address.