

President's Report

PHILIP RUMORE, PRESIDENT



**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?

As you can see from the emails to you, this has, as usual, been a busy summer – court, arbitration, attempting to correct the transfer mess, etc.

COURT VICTORY

As you may have heard, we were successful in having Judge Bannister block the changes in the starting and ending times at Schools 3, 59 and 89. As this is being written (August 8th) the order has been signed. We expect the District to challenge Judge Bannister’s decision.

We made the following points:

- a. New York State Law and Commissioner’s decisions require that Receivership changes be made to improve the education of the students. This move was to save money.
- b. The original Commissioner’s decisions were based on our old contract, not our new one; therefore, the District must go back and apply for each Receivership power at each school based on our new contract.

Judge Bannister agreed with both “a” and “b” and so ordered.

TRANSFER ARBITRATION

We have begun an important arbitration relating to seniority as it relates to transfers. Our position is that if based upon your seniority, you are entitled to a position (a vacancy), you have the option to fill said vacancy. An administrator cannot prevent you from accepting it.

Most teachers do not want positions at schools where they become aware that the administrator doesn’t want them... Their problem, not the teacher’s.

We’ll keep you up-to-date. The District is attempting to block this arbitration based upon obscure arguments. One way or another, this will get to arbitration and we won’t stop until we win.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

You have no doubt begun to receive information relating to the vote on whether there will be a New York State Constitutional Convention.

Why do some want a Constitutional Convention?

- To remove the Constitutional guarantee that your pension cannot be reduced once you retire.
- To undo the right to unionize.
- To remove the provision that keeps our contract in force until a new one is negotiated.
- The right to a free public education.
- The right of every child to a “Sound Basic Education”.

Several teachers from almost every school have attended two (2) training sessions this summer to work with their colleagues to ensure that the constitutional convention is voted down in November. We thank them for their support.

You will be receiving BTF designed (the ones available were too “wimpy”) stickers for your lanyards.

We will be providing materials and information for your use.

We need you to convince your relatives, friends and neighbors to vote **No!** on the Constitutional Convention in November.

We will defeat this.

NEW CONTRACT

We have sent a draft of the new contract to the District. Hopefully, we will come to closure on the document soon so that we can have copies printed.

We will have one posted on our website in a format that can be used to find indexed sections. This may take a little longer but it needs to be done.

TEACHER SET-UP DAY

The teacher set-up day, August 31st is to be “duty free for teachers to set-up their classrooms”. Duty free is just that, duty free. “Voluntary” meetings of any sort violate the intent of this section. We all know how you are misjudged and viewed unfavorably by some administrators if you do not attend a “voluntary” meeting or event. This is to be your day to set up your room.

NEW COMPUTERS

We have, as per our email to you, installed new computers, work stations and have begun the installation of new programs.

The process will take time as we work out the glitches.

We appreciate your understanding as we install what we believe is far superior equipment and improved programs.

TEACHER E-MAIL ADDRESSES - BTF GOING GREEN

We still do not have everyone's personal e-mail address.

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.

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.**

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.

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 WEBSITE

Remember, we continue to improve our website. It is www.btfny.org - check it out.

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. For BTF correspondence use your personal email address.

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.

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.