

news release

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION

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For Immediate Release

October 1, 2013

BTF SEEKS TO REPEAL STATE AND FEDERAL STUDENT TRANSFER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

On a motion recommended by BTF President Phil Rumore, the Buffalo Teachers Federation's Executive Committee and Council of Delegates (representatives from all schools) voted unanimously to seek repeal of State and Federal student transfer mandates.

"Once again, we have people who have probably never taught making regulations that undermine the education of our students.

Moving students from what have been mislabeled "Priority" or "Focus" schools not only doesn't provide the resources needed at those schools but has dramatically increased the class sizes at the receiving schools.

Charter schools not only have significantly fewer students with disabilities and the ability to remove 'undesirable' students by sending them back to the district schools, but they also drain millions of dollars of desperately needed funds from our schools because all of the transferred students don't come from the same schools, grade or class; therefore, it is not possible to cut a teacher, reduce the heat, electric, etc.

Paying tuition for students to attend suburban schools also drains desperately needed funds from our schools for the same reasons as sending our students to charter schools.

In short, the misguided and detrimental student transfer policies are educational malpractice at its worse", Rumore stated.

Rumore indicated that the BTF is not opposing the District transfer plan, but rather the State and Federal regulations requiring the student transfers.

Encl: Motion

WHEREAS: The goal of educators is to educate all of our students and,

WHEREAS: Each school has different percentages of students with unique needs, e.g. English language learners, students with disabilities, students who live in severe poverty and/or broken homes, and,

WHEREAS: As a consequence of schools with students with unique needs and inappropriate state assessments that do not adequately adjust for said unique needs, certain schools have been wrongly characterized as “Priority” and “Focus” schools and,

WHEREAS: Federal and State laws and regulations require that parents of students at “Priority” and “Focus” schools be allowed to transfer their children to schools which are not so identified, and,

WHEREAS: The transfer of students from “Priority” and “Focus” schools does nothing to provide the additional necessary supports for the students that remain in said schools and,

WHEREAS: Said transfers of students is detrimental to the education of students by:

- Increasing the class size/class loads of teachers in the non-priority and non-focus schools by maximizing the class sizes to class size limits, e.g. from 21 to 30 in the receiving schools.
- Draining funding from all District schools through tuition payments to other schools and districts. The District cannot reduce costs as a result of transferring students from Buffalo Public Schools since all the transferred students do not come from one school, one teacher’s class or one grade. Therefore, the number of teachers can’t be reduced, the heat can’t be lowered, the electricity reduced, etc. and,

WHEREAS: Sending students to charter schools:

- Reduces funding for district schools as a result of the tuition payments to charter schools that cannot be compensated for by the reduction of the number of students who transfer to charter schools because all the students transferring do not come from one school, one teacher’s class or grade. Therefore, the number of teachers can’t be reduced, the heat can’t be lowered, the electricity reduced, etc.
- Charter schools remove unwanted or troubled students as they wish and send them back to the Buffalo Public Schools.
- Charter schools have very few students who speak little or no English and/or who are students with disabilities and,

WHEREAS: Said transfers stigmatize the students and teacher that remain in the mis-classified “Priority” and “Focus” schools.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- Buffalo teachers will continue to advocate for all of our students
- Buffalo teachers will oppose the transfer of students from schools unjustly classified as “Priority” and “Focus” schools.
- BTF will publicize the reasons for our opposition to said ill-advised and detrimental transfer policy
- BTF will continue to work on both the state and national levels to have said ill-advised and detrimental policy rescinded.

RECOMMENDED BY: Philip Rumore, President, BTF

MOVED: Edith LeWin, Vice-President, BTF

SECOND: Kevin Gibson, Secretary, BTF