



# at the Delegate Assembly

April 2017

Labor Donated

[www.morecaucusnyc.org](http://www.morecaucusnyc.org)

[fb.com/morecaucusnyc](https://fb.com/morecaucusnyc)

[@morecaucusnyc](https://twitter.com/morecaucusnyc)

[more@morecaucusnyc.org](mailto:more@morecaucusnyc.org)

## Save Our (Public) Schools: The Time for Revolt is Now

By Marcus B. McArthur, UFT Executive Board, City As School HS

On March 22nd at the Panel for Education Policy Meeting (PEP), the DOE Chancellor and other appointed cronies, sat do-eyed as teachers, alumni, parents, and community members spoke out against Central Park East 1's wrecking-ball principal and the unjust closing of J.H.S. 145. A neighborhood zoned school in the Bronx, J.H.S. 145 occupies the same building as a Success Academy charter school, the test-prep suspension factory run by Eva Moskowitz, leading Wall Street's charge to colonize our schools. J.H.S. 145 was designated a "renewal school" in need of resources and institutional support to meet the needs of the children served by their community. They were promised resources. They were promised three years to right the ship. The resources never came. The DOE cut their turn around time by a year.

### One more betrayal and counting...

The Chancellor offered little beyond the absurd declaration that these decisions were made "with the best interests of the kids at heart." Translation: Eva and her hedge fund backers want more space and rather than paying rent for a political rival, we prefer to throw under the bus an under resourced school serving a politically expendable community. I have news for our elected officials.

### Expendability will no longer be tolerated!

At the UFT Executive Board meeting two days before the PEP, MORE and New Action urged the UFT leadership to shorten the March 22nd Delegate Assembly to rally delegates and chapter leaders at the PEP against these betrayals of our public school system. I argued that we live in extraordinary times that require extraordinary responses. Normal protocols and rules of political engagement no longer apply. Our "elected officials" do not respond to our congenial 'seat at the table' politics, where our mayor accepts our endorsement with one hand, while his Chancellor stabs us in the back with the other. Take note that our leadership voted down our call to action.

Make no mistake about it, every neighborhood public school, serving every working-class racial, ethnic, and religious community that populates our city, is threatened by the proliferation of segregated, Wall Street backed, union busting charters. Furthermore, the enduring culture of dictatorial leadership fostered by the Bloomberg era DOE, has bred a new generation of catastrophic principals that are destroying democratic school communities across the city. Fifty-seven years ago, after enduring years of egregious injustice in the workplace, our union drew a red line and said no more. This is our generation's opportunity to do precisely that.

The democratic pageantry of PEP meetings, where we implore unelected bureaucrats to represent the will of the people, must be recognized for the colossal sham that they embody. The bureaucrats attend simply to maintain appearances—the guise of democracy in the midst of an oligarchy. Their body language and unresponsiveness communicates their

disdain louder than the few words they may muster the energy to utter. PEP meetings exemplify the farce of mayoral control where the voice of parents, teachers, and students can be ignored unchecked. With each school closure, co-location, and rogue administrator run amok, our union leadership's support of mayoral control becomes more absurd by the day.

In 1857 in front of an audience of American Abolition Society members and allies, Frederick Douglass offered a prescient message that we, union members and teachers, should heed:

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress...Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing on the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning."

Have our political elites yet breached the threshold of injustice and wrong to which we quietly submit?

Have we yet recognized that those who profess to represent our interests, but attempt to pacify us, want rain without thunder and lightning?

Have we yet devised a set of cogent demands that will trigger genuine resistance?

The time for revolt is now.

### WHERE DOES OUR UNION STAND?

An IS 61 teacher asked de Blasio why teachers are under a "gag order" not to speak ill about state tests, when teachers elsewhere encourage their students to opt out of tests. "Think of what it would lead to" if teachers openly criticized every education policy they disagreed with," de Blasio said. Commentary at: <http://nyceducator.com/2017/04/think-of-what-it-would-lead-to-if.html>

# Parents at CPE 1 Stand Up For Teachers and Themselves

By Peter Lamphere, Chapter Leader, Gregory Luperon HS

Parental anger boiled over at a Harlem elementary school as parents, demanding the resignation of a principal who has targeted tenured teachers and lied to parents repeatedly, occupied the school auditorium and remained overnight despite a massive police presence inside and outside the school. The action was preceded by a four hour SLT meeting attended by over 100 families, teachers and local politicians where they presented their demands and then proceeded with the sit-in when principal Monika Garg replied that she answers only to her superiors, to her superintendent and to the chancellor. Supporters rallied outside the school for hours. The parent activists at CPE 1 have blamed mayoral control for leading to continuous examples of ignoring the stakeholders.

Sixty percent of families at Central Park East 1 signed a letter stating no-confidence in the leadership of Garg.

Garg took over administration of the school a year and a half ago and swiftly alienated staff and parents. With little background in the progressive, child-centered pedagogy on which the school has been based since its founding over 40 years ago, she began disciplinary investigations on every experienced teacher at the school, culminating in the removal of the school's delegate, and later the chapter leader, Marilyn Martinez.

Parents and rank-file-teachers defended the chapter leader, packing four successive disciplinary hearings with up to one hundred supporters.

MORE and New Action members of the UFT executive board urged solidarity. Arguing that "it is crucial that the rank and file members of our union see that the UFT is at the front lines fighting to defend members publicly at every available opportunity," and citing the incoming attacks from the Trump administration, they wrote a letter asking UFT leaders to join the parents in attending the chapter leader's disciplinary hearings. While MORE and New Action retirees were present, no union leaders showed up. A resolution raised at the executive board to support the CPE1 rally was tabled without action despite teachers from CPE1 who spoke to the Board to tell their stories in two successive meetings. The UFT's Leroy Barr did attend the SLT meeting and committed the union to support the school, causing skeptics to ask, "Where have you guys been for the past year and a half?"

Garg is the lowest rated principal in the DOE school survey with 65% of parents saying she is not effective manager and teachers unanimously stating they do not trust her.

Too often authoritarian principals are given free rein. Only a concerted struggle can win back democracy in our schools - and parents and teachers at CPE 1 have led the way. To be an effective union the UFT must be at the forefront of these fights as well, taking official actions and mobilizing rank and filers.

Supporters can go to [SaveCPE1.org](http://SaveCPE1.org) to sign the petition and participate in future actions.

## Townsend High School Battles Principal With History of Abuse

The CPE1 community has shown how to fight back against abusive administrators and they are not alone. Students and teachers from Townsend Harris High School, for example, are engaged in a similar battle against abusive Interim Acting Principal Rosemarie Jahoda, who has provoked sit-ins of students and a vote of no confidence from the parent association. Jahoda was promoted to principal despite have been ruled by a neutral arbitrator to have harassed the entire Bronx Science math department when she was assistant principal at that school.

**JOIN US to discuss actions around these issues and others at the MORE Monthly Meeting April 22, 12PM-3PM CUNY Grad Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. between 34<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> St. Room 5414 - Bring ID**

## Robert to Mulgrew: Follow My Rules

*"Rotating between speakers for and against something is not complicated. It is a fundamental principle of a deliberative democracy that is violated every month at the UFT Delegate Assembly."*

Chapter 2, Section 3 of Robert's Rules: "Obtaining and Assigning the Floor." On page 31, Robert's Rules explains in 3) how the floor is supposed to be assigned.

Robert urges Michael Mulgrew to read his rules.

Follow this story on the ICE Blog:

<http://iceuftblog.blogspot.com/2013/12/da-report-president-mulgrew-acknowledges.html>

<http://iceuftblog.blogspot.com/2017/04/roberts-rules-misused-at-executive.html>