

Volume IV • Issue 1

The New York City Teacher Voice



What is MORE? The Movement of Rank & File Educators is a caucus, like a political party, in the UFT. In the spring of 2016 we ran for union leadership against the Unity Caucus, which has been in control of your union for over 40 years. We won all seven seats on the UFT Executive Board along with our coalition partners in the New Action Caucus. MORE seeks to transform the UFT into a democratically run, member-driven union. Join us! Go to more.nationbuilder.com/join_us

2017: NEW YORK TEACHERS UNITE OR...?

By *Marcus B. McArthur, UFT Executive Board High School Representative*



On Monday, September 11, 2017, the UFT convened its first Executive Board meeting for the 2017-2018 school year.

The message was clear. Three critical issues confront us over the next four months of 2017.

1-The NY State Constitutional Convention referendum on November 7th in which we must organize to VOTE NO! A Constitutional Convention is the death knell of collective bargaining rights and pensions in New York state. 2-The Mayoral and City Council elections which are crucial to securing a fair contract with paid family leave. 3-The Janus v. AFSCME Supreme Court case that poses an existential threat to the strength of our union and its ability to protect NYC public schools from a Wall Street takeover. We have a decision to make.

Unite and fight or divide and die.

In his remarks to the board, President Mulgrew stated that his travels across the country this year made clear to him the extent of the damage inflicted on public education in America. Enemies of public education have succeeded in undermining the system to open the floodgates for profiteering.

The testimony of several veteran Adult Education teachers experiencing harassment and termination underscored the enduring threats. The picture paint-

ed was familiar to members who have experienced or witnessed abuse in the DOE.

As for the UFT, we must reconcile the successes of our past with the possibilities of a new direction for the threats we face today. The fights waged by our UFT forebearers and the American labor movement claimed us a seat at the table of the pay-for-play politics of the American system securing significant economic and political gains.

While we should maintain this influence, the UFT and the working people of our city and country would be well served by our union committing resources and our bully pulpit to building the burgeoning left movement. The dominant ideological forces of our time seek a world free of unions so the ownership class can pay workers pennies, privatize education for profiteering, and decimate the political opposition that stands in the way of their radical agenda.

2017 is the year for NY teachers to unite in mass social movement to sustain hard won rights for workers, expand possibilities for economic and social justice for all New Yorkers, and build a winning left movement.

An Injury to One is an Injury to All!

Members of IBEW Local 3 have been on strike since mid-March against Spectrum (formerly Time Warner), and many families are now facing eviction and serious hardship. MORE has already donated \$287.

Make a donation yourself in solidarity!
tiny.cc/SpectrumSolidarity

TIPS FOR UNTENURED TEACHERS

By Jake Kalish

Your first years as a teacher are confusing and hard. You feel insecure and you are insecure, professionally, until you get tenure. Here's a guide for navigating your probationary period.

DO know your rights. Have a private conversation with your chapter leader, even if you'd never otherwise "hang out." Research your rights as well - you can start with the "know your rights" section of the UFT website. (<http://www.uft.org/our-rights/know-your-rights>)

DON'T let yourself be "voluntold" to work for free, and try not to volunteer before you've found your footing. This creates the expectation of sacrifice, and can reward abusive administrative practices. Taking on extra responsibilities leads to burnout and resentment, and takes your attention and energy away from providing for your students.

DO bring a union representative to any meeting that could result in disciplinary action. Administration may try to isolate and intimidate you. It's your union rep's job to stand with you, and your right to have him or her there. If you willingly forfeit that right, you put yourself at a profound disadvantage in a confrontation that could have major career implications.

DON'T give unsolicited advice to more experienced teachers, unless they're harming students. You could lose a potential ally because you critiqued his Powerpoint.

DO leave for a new school if you are being mistreated. You don't deserve abuse, and it gets better. The attrition rate for new teachers is so high in part because people couldn't see a way out.

DON'T give up. You are invaluable, and will receive the protections you deserve.

LETTER TO MICHAEL MULGREW

In September of 2017, a group of concerned teachers called the Teacher Diversity Committee of NYC sent the following letter, with the support of MORE, to our union leadership

Dear Brother Mulgrew,

We urge you to include specific contractual demands in the upcoming negotiations to stop and reverse the disappearing of Black and Latino educators from all NYC public, charter and parochial schools that receive public funding.

Towards this end, we urge you to form a Teacher Diversity Committee to assemble data and to submit specific demands for consideration by the UFT 2018 Negotiating committee.

... Read more and take action at <https://www.teacherdiversitycommittee.nyc>

