

New Action/UFT

...a caucus of the United Federation of Teachers
PO Box 180574 North Richmond Hill, NY 11418
<http://newaction.wordpress.com/>

June 2012

Mayoral Control – The Verdict is in!

The Bloomberg/Klein years have been an absolute disaster for education, our members, our students, our parents, our communities, and our schools. For New York City educators the verdict is in – we cannot suffer three more years of mayoral “mis” control of our schools. The last time the UFT faced this question, we put together a Task Force. It engaged 1,200 educators, parents, students, elected officials and community groups in numerous public hearings. The Task Force concluded that its primary goal was *“passing legislation in Albany which will change the system of governance to make it work better students, for teachers and for schools.”*

The Task Force recommended:

- Checks and Balances to prevent abuses of power in the current system
- Real Voice for Teachers, Parents and the Community to restore school and district leadership teams to the rightful place as leaders of educational and budgetary decision-making.
- Rule of Law to stop the DOE from simply ignoring the parts of state law it finds inconvenient.;
- Transparency and Accountability to end DOE's practices of. arbitrary school closings and other secretive practices.

But after the Task Force recommendation, President Weingarten agreed to give the mayor absolute control over the PEP which has decided the fate of scores of schools. The UFT is NOW reconstituting the Task Force to examine mayoral control.

NEW ACTION HAS ALREADY CONCLUDED THERE'S BEEN ENOUGH “TINKERING” WITH MAYORAL CONTROL. We call for an end to mayoral control of the school system. We should not place our faith in the next “friendly education” mayor. We are calling for an end to mayoral control!

We do not oppose the call for another Task Force. They may come to the same conclusion. HOWEVER, New Action will not participate in yet another Task Force.

It is in the interest of the educational community to conclude that mayoral control of the schools has been a disaster. We call for an independent panel of people, fairly and democratically chosen with background and knowledge in education. The precise make-up of the new panel should be determined after broad discussion and consultation with all stakeholders.

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THREE FROM THE ARCHIVES:

December, 1993

ANDREW JACKSON H.S. CLOSED – IS YOUR SCHOOL NEXT?

Without any consultation the Queens H.S. superintendent and the Board decided to close the schools and “clean house” of existing staff. At the December 1st D.A., the Jackson H.S. chapter leader said “if they can do it to us, they can close any school and displace its staff without regard to seniority.”

A chapter resolution was presented calling on our union to take legal action, if necessary, to prevent the closing. A Unity member presented a motion to table, which passed.

The belated response of the union was to pass another resolution protesting the manner in which Jackson was closed. But will the union back up the resolution? Will we militantly protest the closing of any school without prior consultation with the UFT and the school staff?

We cannot allow the Board to make us scapegoats for their failed policies.

March 2002

IT TAKES A FIGHT TO WIN!

It's time for Mayor Bloomberg to understand that he cannot negotiate with the UFT using the strategy of issuing ultimatums. His insistence that he obtain control over the Board of Education before he is willing to negotiate with our union is not only outrageous but a provocation...

April 2011

UFT Under Attack Chapter Leaders Bear the Brunt of Abusive Administrators It's time for New Action!

For years the Bloomberg administration has been waging war to destroy the UFT and its members:

And now Bloomberg has launched an insidious campaign against seniority and tenure in Governor Walker (Wisconsin)-like fashion. He really wants to destroy our ability to bargain collectively.

In order to accomplish this he has gone after the first line of defense—UFT chapter leaders! The examples are numerous. Many have been reported on in our union paper. But the numbers reported are only the tip of the iceberg. Some cases:

Chapter leaders:

- who are singled out for program abuse
- who are forced to transfer
- who are harassed with multiple unsatisfactory observations
- in every borough who are singled out for unsubstantiated U-ratings

And what is the fall-out of this policy? In many cases the school staff is too terrified to back up the chapter leader. After all, if they can abuse a union representative, what chance does the individual member have? Of course, there are notable exceptions where the staff has come together and stood up and changed the policy or the administrator!

At the same time, Bloomberg has done absolutely nothing about abusive administrators like Principals Blige and Bost, to name a few. In fact after abundant evidence they have received only a slap on the wrist or reinstated to their previous positions in the same school.

What Can You Do?

New Action stands ready to help! We can help with advice. We can help develop a wide-range of proven tactics for implementation at your school. If you can get your chapter and your District Representative to get on board it will improve your chances against an abusive administrator.

Call us at 718 238-8030 or write or e-mail. If you do nothing, nothing can change. Try New Action.