

# New Action/UFT

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

May 2013

## Post-Victory Demonstrations

UFT and CTU election results in New York City and Chicago gave landslide victories to Michael Mulgrew and Karen Lewis. Mulgrew won with nearly 86% of the vote. Lewis won with 80%. The reelected Ms. Lewis called for three days of demonstrations against 54 closing schools. Those demonstrations have been all over the news, capturing our imaginations. Our own President called for support for a MLC demonstration demanding contracts for New York City public employees.

New Action/UFT has called for actions at the school level before the end of school. In fact, we have been calling for "Days of Solidarity" to be held at schools on an ongoing basis. The extremely low turnout in our own UFT election (18% of active members voted) proves to us that our membership must be mobilized, involved and this can only be accomplished by activating the base—our rank and file. While we call for all-out support for the June 12 rally, New Action calls for regular mobilizations at our 1,700 schools. Until that happens we will continue to witness increasing demoralization and increasing detachment from seeing our union as a relevant, invigorating, active force.

## UFT Elections

*New Action will have 10 seats on the new UFT Executive Board: Keith Fessel, Joel Garcia, Bill Goldman, Regina Gori, Jonathan Halabi, Douglas Haynes, Kate Martin-Bridge, Francisco Peña, Maria Ramos, and Michael Shulman*

New Action's vote was 9.4%, better than 2004 or 2007. Unity swept the officers. MORE's vote exceeded the 2010 ICE/TJC vote in all divisions and had a good showing in the high schools. All victories? No. New Action's vote fell from over 11% in 2010. Unity in-service vote total is about half what it was a decade ago. And MORE's in-service vote was less than their predecessors received in 2007 and 2004. The big story, unfortunately, is the overall drop in turnout.

This is symptomatic of many members not feeling part of the union, not being involved. But that is where a union's strength should lie, in an active membership. New Action will continue to prioritize rebuilding chapters and organizing at the school level, to involve members in the life of our union.

The drop in vote is also symptomatic of members being overwhelmed, angry, and confused: Overwhelmed by the unreasonable and unceasing demands of a system that seems designed to punish educators with paperwork and impossible requirements, not to allow us to educate children; Angry about colocations and school closings, about the threat of being forced into the ATR pool, about losing 20 or more days each year to testing and test prep, angry about maltreatment at the hands of abusive administrators; Confused that our union is not doing more, and is cooperating with Danielson and a new, potentially dangerous teacher evaluation system. Each of these is a challenge to our strength. New Action remains committed to addressing all of these issues – be it by supporting the leadership, by urging a more active approach, or by opposing the leadership where they have taken a wrong stance.

There is much work going forward.

\*\*\*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to join New Action/UFT (\$25 for pedagogues, \$15 for all others)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to distribute New Action/UFT material at my school \_\_\_\_\_ Number of copies

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

LABOR DONATED

LABOR DONATED