

New Action/UFT

...a caucus of the United Federation of Teachers
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Renewal Schools – Some Questions

This school year we have a new group of schools targeted for intervention. There are 94 Renewal Schools, mainly in poorer neighborhoods, chosen because of lower test scores.

The Renewal program calls for 1) transformation into a Community School, 2) creating extended learning time, 3) ensuring effective leadership and rigorous instruction, 4) performing needs assessments, and 5) “Bringing increased oversight and accountability including strict goals and clear consequences for schools that do not meet them.”

We understand the payments for extended time are being fixed. We have more questions:

- *What curricula are being used in Renewal Schools, and how is “teacher voice” being recognized in selecting and implementing them?*
- *Some renewal schools are in shared buildings (“campuses.”) Is the scheduling flexible enough to work with the inherent challenges of sharing a building that was not designed to be shared?*
- *Has Fariña assigned experienced, collaborative, successful administrators to the Renewal Schools? Some names stand out for lacking experience. Is this the exception, or the rule?*
- *How does the UFT communicate with members in renewal schools?*

AFT Rushes to a Presidential Endorsement

On July 11, 2015, the AFT was the first national union to endorse the candidacy of Hillary Clinton.

New Action believes UFT members want a presidential candidate who can defeat right wing Republicans. We also agree with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka who urged national unions not to rush to an endorsement. “The field is wide open. There’s a lot of time for things to happen and issues to unfold.” New Action also asks, “Why the rush?” Many UFT members support Bernie Sanders. Wouldn’t a wait and see approach put us in a better place? Allow us to bargain with the candidate?

It would be interesting to see what a poll of UFT members would produce.

Retroactive Pay and Fairness

Many members are happy to find the first lump sum payment from the 2014 contract in our checks. There are a flurry of questions – as is expected. When money is involved, we want to get it right.

The contract left out some groups of UFTers. People who have been discontinued are not entitled to the pay. Nor are people who resigned. Nor are people who left before age 55, waiting to retire when they turned 55. And people who died in service – their survivors are not entitled to the money they should have earned from 2009 – 2011. There is, unfortunately, nothing we can do to correct this unfairness.

But we can help another group. UFTers on maternity leave are not receiving the money due them this week. The City intends to pay them next round, in October 2017. There is a proposed resolution to get our folks the money they are due now. We urge you to vote to put this resolution on the agenda.

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