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BTF CALLS VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS A NATIONAL CRISIS

The BTF today released the results of a “School Safety Survey” completed by Buffalo teachers between March 10, 2022 and March 15, 2022 ([click here](#)).

The overview of the results are as follows:

- Q Disruptive student behavior in my school is:
- 18.79% Agree (162) Dealt with quickly and appropriately.
 - 38.52% Agree (332) Dealt with inconsistently and as such is problematic leading to continued disruptive student behavior and unacceptable learning conditions.
 - 18.45% Agree (159) Is not dealt with appropriately leading to increased disruptive student behavior and unacceptable learning conditions.
 - 14.04% Agree (121) Is almost out of control leading to increased disruptive student behavior and unacceptable learning conditions.
 - 10.21% Agree (88) Out of control
- Q An administrator always discusses how a student's behavior can be expected to improve before returning the student to the teacher's class.
- 26.28% (226) Agree 73.72% (634) Disagree
- Q I believe that discipline and suspensions are underreported in my school.
- 68.07% (582) Agree 31.93% (273) Disagree
- Q As per the BTF contract, the following procedures are followed (please check all procedures that are followed).
- 24.73% (206) XVIII C. (4) - Regardless of the cause of any pupil difficulty, no teacher or class is ever required to tolerate any act of gross misconduct, including flagrant discourtesy, abusive and vile language, acts of violence, and deliberate insubordination. The teacher has the right to remove any

pupil whose behavior repeatedly disrupts the learning atmosphere of the class. The pupil shall not be readmitted until the teacher has conferred with the principal or assistant principal involved. The pupil shall not be returned to the same class until the teacher and administrator have discussed the basis on which improvement can be expected. If it is mutually agreed that the pupil's behavior cannot be expected to improve another placement will be provided.

22.45% (187)

XVIII A. - The teacher involved shall be consulted by the principal before the principal takes action thereunder, and the principal shall inform the teacher of the action taken. If the teacher believes such action to be inappropriate, the matter may be referred for review through the first three steps of the grievance procedure.

29.05% (242)

If Applicable - XVIII B. - Upon the menace or assault (as defined in the New York State Penal Law) of a teacher by a pupil, the teacher shall submit a sworn affidavit outlining the facts and circumstances to the Principal and to the Federation. Upon receipt of the affidavit, the principal shall immediately suspend the pupil and request a formal suspension. No such pupil shall be returned to the same classroom against the desire of the teacher if the charges which led to the suspension are upheld in the formal hearing.

59.78% (498)

None of the Above

The survey also delineated many disturbing concerns, e.g.

- Lack of (or NO!) security officers.
- Lack of consequences for dangerous and disruptive behavior.
- Lack of staff "Swipe Cards" to open school doors from outside. Doors are then often propped open.
- Disruptive students wandering the halls, fights.
- Lack of metal detectors.
- Weapons in schools.
- Drugs in the schools.

"In addition to the shooting and knifing at McKinley High School, recently, in our schools, in just one week, an elementary school student was attacked with a knife by another student and a teacher at another school was severely injured (her face lacerated) by a student.

These, in addition to the very disturbing and serious concerns raised in our School Safety Survey, require immediate action by the District and an investigation by the New York State and US Departments of Education.

We believe that Interim Superintendent, Dr. Tonja Williams, is working to correct the security issues that have been identified. We look forward to continuing working with her to ensure that our schools are safe.

However, it is critical that we realize that dangerous and too-often fatal incidents in our schools and on school grounds are occurring across the United States.

The violence, anger and disruptive behaviors of some adults are harmfully infecting our kids.

This is a National Crisis involving the well-being of our children that must immediately be addressed by the President, Congress and other relevant agencies.

Our students must have but not limited to:

- Safe schools, e.g.:
 - Earmarked Federal funding for school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, school attendance teachers, etc., with a defined caseload, e.g. 120/1.
 - Earmarked Federal funding to provide sufficient security personnel who will also be trained to gain the confidence of students to relate any concerns.
 - Earmarked Federal funding for community organizations that have experience working with students to prevent acts of violence and disruption.
 - Earmarked Federal funding to provide metal detectors for any District/School that needs them, without taking away from other students' educational needs/programs.
 - Other critical school security needs identified by a school district.
 - De-escalating techniques for all staff and parents.

We are working on actions that will accomplish the above.