A tentative agreement on changes to the Annual Professional Performance Review, (APPR), has been reached between the BTF and Buffalo Public School District.

The proposal was presented by BTF President Philip Rumore Dec. 7 to the Committee of 40, a group of Buffalo teachers who volunteered to review the changes and make recommendations if additional adjustments were needed.

The state has mandated that the new APPR be adopted by Jan. 1 or the District will lose $50 million in school funding.

Besides Rumore, the BTF APPR team included Presidential Assistant Rebecca Pordum and NYSUT Labor Relations Specialists Deana Fox, Dennis Licherelli and Nick Whitman.

The new process applies to probationary and tenured teachers covered by 3012-d. Under the tentative agreement, individual Student Learning Objectives, (SLO), will be required of only the teachers who teach Regents courses to 50% or more of their students. Local Measures of Achievement, (LMA) and artifacts, are no longer part of the APPR.

Teachers who no longer need to complete an individual SLO will have a group SLO for the Student Performance component measured using a district target that is based on historical data.

Rumore said although it seems unfair that some teachers will have to do SLOs and others will not, this was the best that could be negotiated because of state law.

“We can’t do anything about the law right now,” he explained, “but we were able to stretch the law to get some people out of doing the SLO. Our next objective is to have the regulation changed so that everyone is exempted from the meaningless SLOs.”

However, he said, teachers can factor in various issues when determining SLOs, such as poverty, absenteeism, ENL students, Special Education, etc.

The APPR agreement allows principals to conduct only two observations per year, unless the teacher or principal requests a third observation. One observation has to be announced and will count as 80% of the teacher’s evaluation. The other observation is unannounced; however, the teacher must be notified which month it will be conducted. It will only count as 20% of the teacher’s evaluation.

If the teacher wants to postpone the unannounced observation, she/he can request an announced observation. The scores for each observation will be averaged.

For the announced observations, pre and post conferences must be conducted. Minimum duration for observations is one complete lesson, or as long as the teacher and administrator have agreed.

The APPR agreement also reduces the number of standards and indicators in the New York State United Teacher’s (NYSUT) Teacher Practice Rubric that can be used when evaluating teacher performance. The number of standards that can be used is reduced from seven to six and the number of indicators is reduced from 84 to 18. Language in the indicators, which allows students to direct instruction and assessments, has also been removed by the BTF.

The teachers’ final HEDI score will be determined by using a matrix that includes the teacher’s observation score and the Student Performance score.

According to Rumore, the new APPR model will make it difficult for a teacher to be inappropriately classified as “ineffective.”

“Most teachers should wind up in the effective range,” he said. The committee overwhelmingly supported the process and made suggestions that were incorporated into the final draft.

**Highlights:**
- Artifacts and an LMA are no longer part of the APPR.
- Student Performance remains a component of the APPR.
- Many teachers are no longer required to develop individual SLO’s as part of the APPR.
- Only those teachers of record who have 50% or more students taking a Regent’s exam will need to develop SLOs for students.
- All other teachers will have the Student Performance component measured using a district target that is based on historical data.
- There will be one announced and one unannounced classroom observation (there are exceptions and limitations). The APPR procedures are the only procedures that can be used to evaluate teachers.
- A matrix is used to determine the final HEDI score.
- There is a score for the Observations and score for the Student Performance.
- Where those scores fall on the matrix determines the final HEDI score and overall rating.
There’s no other answer,” Julie said as they one of our old teachers is getting back at us.

Each one of these students, by themselves, would jokingly call “a class from the dark side.” It had been “one of those years.” Once in a while, the holiday season always found Don and Julie having students discuss their own holiday and how they would observe it. They talked of Kwanzaa, Chanukah, Christmas and all the holidays each one observed. They remembered how they always seemed to learn something new from one of the kids. Of course, their students knew about Julie and Don’s yearly pilgrimage. “What do you do in a plane for that long?” “Do you have to bring food on the plane?” “How big is the Christmas tree?” “How come there are only boys in the choir?” were but a few of the endless questions that each day came out of nowhere.

“Do they stay up nights thinking of these questions?” Don asked Julie one day at lunch.

“They must stay up nights thinking about our trip,” Julie said as she smiled and shook her head. They agreed that they would tell their classes that they would bring back pictures of the old hotel, the giant Christmas tree and the boys’ choir. One evening, as they were making final flight and hotel arrangements, Don mentioned that his class had been quiet with Michael out. The kids said that he had the flu.

“It is Nicole,” Don said. “Yes, but she must be getting better,” Nicole answered.

“I think I’ll give the Warners a call to see how Michael is doing and find out when he’ll be back. You know – I’ll deny I said this – but we sort of miss him,” Don said shaking his head as if he couldn’t believe what he had just said.

When Don came back into the room, Julie knew something was wrong.

“Michael... Michael... has leukemia. He has leukemia,” Don sank into the chair. He put his head back, closed his eyes, and could say no more. Michael needed an immediate bone marrow transplant and the only hospital that had perfected this procedure was the San Diego Medical Center. But since the Warners couldn’t afford the expense, Michael was to begin a promising chemo treatment at one of the local cancer treatment centers. The doctors gave no guarantees, but the treatment had shown promise.

Soon, everyone at school knew Michael was sick, very sick. During the week before the winter break, Michael was in everyone’s thoughts. Somehow the family had put together enough money to fly Michael, his mom and sister to San Diego and back (as well as pay for a place to stay). Michael recovered completely. It seems that his sister’s marrow was a perfect match.

Michael, that holiday season, and the sense of being one family would long be remembered by the East Rockaway Elementary School students and staff. All of their individual trials and tribulations faded from view and became so very trivial.

It was a lesson that was not, but was – one that each in his own way did not learn, but understood. That made it all the more important.

Now, 25 years later, this was to be Julie and Don’s last winter holiday season as teachers. In all, they had only missed one visit to the old hotel. Their retirement was set for June. The anticipation of their annual visit to the old hotel still was there – still very special. They were getting ready to leave on the last day before the break, when the always too loud intercom blared out “Don and Julie Adams to the office please.”

Upon reaching the office, the clerk advised that a Dr. Anderson and a lawyer were there to see them. Don and Julie looked at each other wondering what had happened.

“Mr. and Mrs. Adams?”

“We came to thank you,” the young woman, tears welling in her eyes. “Thank us for what?” replied Don.

“I’m Dr. Anderson, Nicole Anderson. It used to be Nicole Warren, Michael’s sister,” the woman explained.

The young man stepped forward, tears continuing to well in his eyes.

“I’mone of those moments when no words need be spoken—when no words could be spoken, but so much was said.

Nicole had become a doctor. Her specialty was pediatric oncology. Michael, while a lawyer, had returned to school a year ago. It seems that he had long wanted to be a teacher. Student teaching would begin next September. They both had families and were doing well.

“We have always wanted so much to see you again to tell you how much you both meant to us— even before we knew what you had done. You were our favorite teachers,” Michael explained.

“We wanted to give you something you missed,” Nicole said.

In the card Michael handed Julie were two tickets to San Diego and a certificate for a week at the old hotel.

“It’s funny the things you remember from your childhood, but both Nicole and I remembered, as if it were yesterday, where you both went every winter holiday,” Michael said.

Don and Julie spent the rest of the day as if they were relatives. And although they had not seen each other for years, it seemed as though they had been together forever, and always would be.

That year, as Julie and Don looked up at the giant Christmas tree, listening to the voices of the boys’ choir enveloping them, they thought of all the Michaels and Nicholes whose lives were intertwined with theirs, and how, on this special night, somehow they were all together. Each light on the giant tree was one of “their kids.” Yes, there had been some very tough times, but they wouldn’t trade places with anyone. They had meant something to thousands of kids who had been touched. They, who were blessed. They were teachers.
Letters to the Editor

Variety Telethon Seeks BTF’s Continued Support

First, I want to congratulate all the BTF members on your new contract! Just think of the children born 12 years ago who have been helped by Variety’s Telethon and realize that that was when the last BTF contract was signed.

We at Variety are rebranding ourselves for 2017 and beyond. Our Telethon donations have been declining for the past several years, in part due to a lack of visibility in the community, especially with young people. We have hired some new staff and are concentrating on drastically improving our social media presence and building up the Variety website.

In addition, our theme for 2017 is “Variety is WNY,” as we work to connect our broad base of support and our significant impact directly to the region. Variety truly does represent the faces of WNY, as exhibited by all our donations and fundraisers, and the thousands of babies and young children that we help, all across the eight counties. This diversity extends to our Telethon family, from Reverend (Darius) and True Bethel Church to the Senecas and their tribal dances, to unions, like the BTF and UAW, and to corporates, schools, food industry, senior homes, and the Cast, including the Scintas and Terry Buchwald, that make it all possible.

Our 2017 Telethon will be held on Sunday, April 2 on WKBW from the Seneca Events Center in Niagara Falls. The move will save Variety $80,000, eliminating costs for a remote truck, fiber optic set-up, the orchestra, and many other concessions the Events Center has provided Variety.

Phil, please try to re-energize your teachers and their schools to help Variety’s special kids, like those we presented the adaptive bike to at School 84. I will make arrangements to schedule all participating Buffalo schools and BTF representatives, no earlier than 10 am, given the logistics of driving to Niagara Falls. Variety needs the BTF and Buffalo schools to once again take a lead position in our schools and youth committees.

Thank you in advance for your continued support. I look forward to hearing from you and our team is excited to work together in new ways for Variety and the kids.

Kindest regards,
Richard Goldstein
Executive Director

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CWA Thanks BTF For Verizon Strike Support

The thought of Thanksgiving and the resiliency needed to get through the WNY winter season, has us thinking of you, so we wanted to take this time to write to say thank you.

On April 13, 39,000 workers represented by CWA and the IBEW, 700 here in WNY, struck Verizon Communications, in a collective fight to overcome this Corporate BULLY and their all-out assault on those who toil for them.

The risk our members were willing to take was looked at in shock and awe by the entire working class. Standing up and pushing back in the workplace is what every laborer wants to do and as we know, so many are unable, for so many different reasons. We had voice and we understood that we must use it.

To go on strike is one thing, to endure the sacrifice and hardship and return to work with dignity is another. We knew we were on the right side of the issues. And you did too.

Inspiration is a two-way street, and we all need to be motivated to do things…Your willingness to stand alongside us, without condition, inspired and motivated us.

The Bully stood alone and we had each other. For this we are forever grateful.

Together our SOLIDARITY Wins!
In Unity,
CWA Local 1122
Executive Board

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BTF Supports Hispanic Women’s Scholarship Dinner

Thank you so much for your support of our 37th Annual Hispanic Women’s League Scholarship Dinner. We are humbled by the generous support of our sponsors and were able to raise over $7,000 for our scholarships. The overwhelming success of our 2016 dinner proceeds will ensure our ability to continue to award college scholarships to deserving Latina women in the WNY region.

We are in the planning stages for our 38th anniversary Dinner & Scholarship Celebration during 2017 Hispanic Heritage month. We encourage your continued support of the mission of the Hispanic Women’s League. We are proud of our past accomplishments and look forward to future endeavors with our generous supporters and friends.

Sincerely,
Natalie Land & Maggie Orta,
Co-chairs HWL Dinner
Darlene Mercado, HWL president

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BTF Donates To Black Educators Rock Inc.

Black Educators Rock Inc. would like to thank you for your generous donation for our fundraising event to support the teachers, students and families that have suffered during the tragic flooding in Louisiana. This storm was considered the worst flood in the US since Hurricane Sandy. Please accept my gratitude and sincere appreciation for your contribution of a cash donation valued at $200.

Your contribution will help raise money to send to Louisiana to help reestablish classrooms and bring a sense of normalcy to the lives of the people in Louisiana. Schools still haven’t started back in this area. Your generous gift will help assist these efforts.

Thank you for your assistance in helping us meet and exceed our goal.

Sincerely,
Dr. Melissa Chester, co-founder
Kiser Roosevelt, co-founder
Vicki Baxter, WNY State Rep.

Letters Continued on Page 8
BTF’s 21st Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Feeds More than 100 Needy Families

For the 21st consecutive year, the Buffalo Teachers Federation has made Thanksgiving “a day of thanks” for needy families in the Buffalo School District. Thousands of dollars in food and gift certificates were donated by BTF members and distributed through several charitable and non-profit groups.

The annual event is held in an effort to “make sure those families enjoy a ‘meal of thanks’ on Thanksgiving Day,” BTF President Phil Rumore explained.

“As we do each year, this bounty of food before us was donated by Buffalo Teachers and students who want to do their part to make sure families, who might otherwise go without, would enjoy their Thanksgiving Day meal,” Phil said.

“This is our 21st Annual Thanksgiving food drive where canned and packaged goods and monetary donations were made by Buffalo teachers. This is a wonderful way for all of us to give thanks for what we have. After all, isn’t that what Thanksgiving is all about?,” Phil continued.

He said more than 3,000 families have benefited from the BTF Thanksgiving Food Drive throughout the years.

After the food was collected, volunteers met at the BTF office where they stuffed 120 shopping bags with all the traditional foods for a Thanksgiving feast: corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, dinner rolls, stuffing mix, and a $10 gift card for Tops Supermarkets to purchase a turkey.

Among the volunteers were Pamela Brown, Ny’Aire Ferguson, Linne Amatul-Nafi and Jada Fisher, teachers from Middle Early College High School.

The bags, and boxes of additional food items, were picked up and distributed to the needy by several non-profit organizations. JROTC cadets in Jeff Cipolla’s class at Hutch Tech carried the food bags to the cars of the agencies that distributed the food.

Schools that generously donated food items to supplement the bags were Hutch Tech, School 304; Houghton Academy, School #69; Lorraine Elementary School #72; Hamlin Park Claude & Ouida Clapp Academy School #74; Grabiarz School of Excellence #79; Bilingual Center, School # 33; Buffalo Elementary School of Technology, School # 6; Southside Elementary School #93; Arthur O. Eve School of Distinction, #61; Lafayette High School, #204 and Harvey Austin School #97 and School #414.

The organizations distributing the food were: The Community Action Organization, The Gloria Parks Community Center, Native American Community Services, Fulgham Family Foundation and Women for Human Rights and Dignity.

Annual Event Collects Food In Honor of Former Teacher

For the second year, students and teachers at Lovejoy Discovery School #43 honored the memory of former gym teacher Albert Diminuco, who passed away in 2009.

The Second Annual Mr. Diminuco’s Canned Food Film Festival, was recently held at the school to bring everyone together for a worthy cause.

Each student was asked to bring in one canned good in exchange for admission to a school-sponsored “Film Festival.”

The event amassed 1,252 pounds of food that was donated to the Food Bank of Western New York. The items filled a mini van and pick-up truck, which were driven to the Food Bank by two teachers.

“Collecting so much shows what big hearts the kids at school 43 have,” said Jillian Grisanti, a teacher at the school. said.

Teacher Writes New Book

Kezia Pearson, who currently teaches at East Community High School, has recently published her second book for young children, “Because I Am Me and You are You.”

The book addresses the search for acceptance of beauty within ourselves and others.

To purchase a copy of her book for yourself or as a gift, contact Kezia Pearson at her BPS email or go to her website, www.ke3ia.com
**Provocator at a Glance**

**BTF President**
Philip Rumore

**BTF Vice President**
Edith LeWin

**BTF Treasurer**
Rebecca Pordum

**BTF Secretary**
Kevin Gibson

**BTF Executive Committee Members**

**Pre-K-6**
Sophia Howard-Johnson, Christopher Stephens, Trisha Rosokoff, Rachel Binda-Lis, Phyllis Mays, Teresa Leatherbarrow

**7-12**
Tom Gattie, Melissa Kenney, Dennis Brancato, Chris Salamone, Tom Anthony, M. Sue Raichilson, Lynn Garcia

**K-12**
Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan, Mark Mecca, Gregory Sawicki, Nicole Herkey, Lucille Emmi, Susan Marie Baker, Sean Crowley

**At Large**
Mike Mecca, Joseph Montante, Ruyvette Townsend

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Edith LeWin, Presidential Assistant
Rebecca Pordum, Presidential Assistant
Tim Connick, NYSUT Counsel
Dennis Licherelli, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist
Nick Whitman, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist
Deana Fox, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist

**BTF Provocator Staff**

Rebecca Pordum, managing editor
Chris Salamone, editor
Joseph Montante, photo editor

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**Postmaster**, send address changes to: BTF Provocator, 271 Porter Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14201.

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**Plan...Protect...Invest...**

It’s your TSA/403b...We can help.
BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Balance Sheets
August 31
2015  2014

Assets
Current assets:
Cash $213,392  $275,531
Trade receivables (Note 2) 289,787 230,880
Prepaid expenses 20,092 14,497
Investments (Note 3) 3,063,327 3,175,083
5,589,206 6,691,906
Property and equipment, net (Note 6) 63,640 55,124
5,652,846  $7,747,077

Liabilities and Net Assets
Current liabilities:
Current portion of accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6) $32,660  $24,649
Accounts payable 21,007 83,588
Accrued expenses 111,086 108,116
Payable to affiliate (Note 5) 355,975 557,075
738,088 773,317
Accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6) 1,161,078 1,261,797
Net assets - unrestricted 1,764,272 1,712,004
5,652,846  $7,747,077

See accompanying notes.

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statement of Income
For the year ended August 31
2015  2014

Revenue:
Member dues $3,326,974  $3,178,242
Investment income (net) (Note 3) 274,994 118,791
Rent 321,213 118,872
Advertising and other 16,812 9,975
Total revenue 3,949,496 3,315,980

Expenses:
Net capital gain 2,067,583 2,046,752
Personnel (see page 5) 793,707 911,219
Activity and program (see page 9) 172,625 203,030
Other administrative (see page 10) 265,720 281,574
Total expenses 3,362,350 3,542,555

Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenses (594,839) 201,488

Post-retirement health care benefit obligation (Note 6) 353,940 1,526,023

Change in net assets 56,211 1,725,495
Net assets (deficiency) - beginning 1,713,061 (13,394)

Net assets - ending $1,769,272 $1,712,066

See accompanying notes.
Letters Continued from Page 3

Karen Klimczak
Center Thanks BTF For $200 Donation

We are so appreciative of your gift in the amount of $200 to the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence.

Your gift supports our programs such as Camp Peaceprints, Alternatives to Violence Project, and Peace Education Project in the community, schools and prisons. We work with all ages: children, youth and adults. We are grateful that your donation also helps us with our annual event in April.

We hope you were able to join us on April 24 when Arun Gandhi, grandson of the great peacemaker Mahatma Gandhi, was our speaker. This year is the 10th anniversary of Sister Karen Klimczak’s passing and the event included a special commemoration of her life and ministry.

Camp Peaceprints 2016 was a great success as well. Our theme was “Pathways to Peace” with an interfaith focus. We had over 50 children and youth attend! We learned together how similar the core teachings of love and nonviolence are in many faith traditions.

Your support is integral to the fulfillment of our mission to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society, and in our world. Thank you for your generosity!

Warmest regards,
Vivian Waltz, director

Remembering
Deceased BTF Members

The BTF remembers the following active and retired members who have passed away.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<td>Bruce C. Allen</td>
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<td>Carol M. Batt</td>
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<td>Bertron Carter</td>
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<td>Robert Alan Davis</td>
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<td>Diane DelSanto</td>
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<td>Richard (Dick) Fisher</td>
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<td>Elizabeth A. (Betsy) Flynn</td>
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<td>B. John Harris</td>
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<td>Thomas C. Harris</td>
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<td>Lucille Higgs (Jones)</td>
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<td>Luann F. Joy-Woods</td>
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<td>Geraldine S. Kocher</td>
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<td>Dr. Gertrude Krawitz</td>
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<td>Ruth E. Lampe</td>
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<td>Marie J. Maida</td>
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<td>Robert McCarthy</td>
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<td>Wally Mucha</td>
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<td>Parmalier D. Murphy</td>
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<td>Norma Patterson</td>
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<td>Candice A. Pawlewski</td>
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<td>Denise Rivers</td>
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<td>Mariya Shanahan</td>
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<td>Corinne Sindo</td>
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<td>Eleanor Thompson Stillman</td>
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<td>Joseph M. Taibbi</td>
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<td>Barbara Winkler</td>
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<td>James C. Yuhnke</td>
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Provocator To Highlight Teachers
Are you involved in a community project, publishing a book or traveling to an exotic location? Have you won an award, been honored or elected to a post? If so, share your good news and accomplishments with your colleagues. The Provocator will highlight Buffalo Public School teachers in each of its editions. If you would like share your news, complete the following form and email the information to salamone426@aol.com.

Name__________________________
School_________________________
Personal Email__________________
Phone__________________________
Announcement__________________

Provocator To Promote School News
If there is an event at your school, a field trip or something your students are doing in class that you would like to share with the Provocator, we want to hear from you. Email stories and photos to salamone426@aol.com. All submissions become the property of the Provocator.

Name__________________________
School_________________________
Personal Email__________________
Phone__________________________
Description of Event_________________________

BTF Purchases Ad
Thank you for once again purchasing an ad in the award dinner program. We greatly appreciate your long term faithful support of all our activities.

Jim Lee,
Forest District Civic Assoc.