Summits Prepare BTF Reps for Con Con

On November 7, when voters go to the polls, there is more at stake than who will be the next mayor of Buffalo. The BTF has spent the summer preparing for that day when voters will be asked, “Shall there be a convention to revise the Constitution and amend the same?”

It’s a question the voters must answer once every 20 years. However, what most voters don’t know is that a convention is not necessary to change the constitution. The Legislature can change it without a convention by proposing and passing amendments that are then voted on by the public.

The Con Con, if approved by the voters, is expected to cost taxpayers about $350 million. Delegates to the convention, some already on the state payroll, will be paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in addition to their regular salaries. Some of the items that could be removed from the constitution include:

- The preclusion of the State from diminishing or impairing retirement benefits (i.e., if you are receiving a pension now, it could be reduced. If you are, for example, Tier 4, you could be made Tier 6)
- The right of collective bargaining for unions
- The opportunity for a sound basic education for our students

To prepare for this and other upcoming battles, the BTF conducted three summits in July, August, and October for BTF delegates, alternates, and building committee members. The summits, held in conjunction with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), included information on the convention, what’s at stake for public employees, and why the Con Con is a waste of money. Over 100 building leaders were trained on what is at stake and how to conduct one-on-one conversations. The trained representatives will turnkey the information to their fellow BTF leaders and they in turn will meet with each BTF member in their buildings and have one-on-one conversations with each about the convention and other union issues.

Representatives from the following schools attended one of the Summits: #3, 6, 12, 18, 19, 30, 31, 33, 37, 40@4, 42, 43, 45, 48@39, 54, 64, 65, 67, 69, 72, 79, 82, 91, 93, 94, 95, 97, 131 (The Academy School) @4, 156 (Frederick Law Olmsted), 197 (MST), 198 (I-Prep), 205 (Riverside), 206 (South Park), 207 (Lafayette), 302 (Emerson), 304 (Hutch Tech), 335 (Middle Early College), 357 (Pathways Academy), 363 (CATS), and 910 (Teacher Center).

1. BTF President Phil Rumore stresses the urgency of a NO vote in November.

2. With Mike Jeffers and Mark Mecca in the background, Fran Costanzo and Mary O’Rourke gear up for the Con Con Referendum.

3. Listening carefully to what is at stake, Bridget Hudson, Michelle Phillips, and Jeanne Cummings are ready to put their plan into action.

4. As BTF delegates, Temothy Peart, Jennifer Panzica, and Phyllis Piazza have accepted the responsibility of spreading the word about the Vote NO campaign in their buildings.
York State Commissioner of Education has the authority to rewrite our contract. We will not let this stand!

The BTF, with NYSUT’s assistance is challenging Receivership in court.

In New York State, we have all of our detractors lining up in support of the New York State Constitutional Convention. We all know why most want to change the Constitution – to undermine retiree pensions, weaken labor laws and undo many of the protections we have… including constitutional right to free education.

The BTF has been working with NYSUT and our many other friends to defeat the referendum that will be on the ballot on Election Day, Tuesday, November 7th, 2017. We have worked with several dedicated teachers in each school who will help organize your school to ensure the defeat of this attack.

The BTF has developed our own Vote No on the Constitutional Convention stickers, lawn signs and bumper stickers. They were distributed at the September Council of Delegates meeting.

Locally, we have a school District that is attempting to use the absurd Receivership laws and Commissioner’s decisions to change the starting times at three (3) schools by changing them from early to late schools. Why do they say they are doing this? To improve the education of the students!! No, I’m not making this up.

As you know, the court ruled in our favor while, to no one’s surprise, the Commissioner ruled to uphold her own decision.

The BTF, with NYSUT’s assistance is challenging this in Court.

While wrongly viewed by some as smaller battles, the individual battles you have, whether it be a grievance, an attack by an administrator, horrendous teaching and learning conditions, etc. These battles are equal to or more important than what others may think of as bigger battles. They directly affect you and your students’ lives.

The District has too often shown a callous disregard for you and our contract. We process approximately 180 (200 last year) grievances a year. We have over fifty (50) arbitrations scheduled and 50 more awaiting the assignment of an arbitrator.

We have filed an improper practice charge (IP) with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) and have had our first conference with the Administrative Law Judge who will hear our charge against the District.

The District’s disregard for the grievance timelines and lack of action on grievances will be addressed.

This is just the beginning of our actions on this issue.

We greatly appreciate your understanding as we work to ensure that your grievance is heard and acted on fairly and in a timely manner.

We CANNOT AND WILL NOT LET THE HEDGE FUNDERS, BILLIONAIRES AND UNION HATERS, DEFEAT US. WE MUST AND WILL REMAIN UNITED AND STRONG.
Letters to the Editor

BTF Supports Boys To Men Conference

This letter is written to your organization because you believed in our cause and made a donation toward our 3rd annual Boys to Men Youth Empowerment Conference (BTM). It’s because of organizations like yours we are able to do the things we do. Your contribution went toward supporting our 2017 Boys to Men Conference. We were able to purchase shirts and neckties, giveaways, as well as other pertinent items for the boys.

We take pride in our work. We are committed and determined to provide families and children with the care, support and encouragement they need to strive, reach high and be successful.

Thank you! Your organization helped make a difference in the lives of these boys who attended this year’s conference. We were very excited, this year we had over 100 boys participate. Every year the conference is getting larger and with your continued support we can grow every year.

Words can’t express how much we appreciate you! On behalf of myself, the Board of Directors, and especially the boys who benefitted from your donation, again thank you.

With Great Humbleness,
Jacqueline Mines
President/CEO
Helping Families & Children of America, Inc.

BTF Supports Young Audiences/Waterfront

The following note was written by an exemplary 2nd grade student from Buffalo’s Waterfront Elementary School.

“Hi. My name is Said. In Mr.Teloh’s 2nd grade class, we worked with Mr. Jeremy after school and created comic books.”

Mr. Michael Teloh’s 2nd grade class worked with both Victoria Perez and Jeremy Stock in their after-school residencies. Students explored their individual super powers and then brought them to life on paper via caricatures in a comic book that was ultimately printed out for each of them to take home.

For 20 years, Young Audiences and Waterfront Elementary School have worked together in successful partnership. Students connect with artists through creative learning opportunities every year. This collaboration continues to provide young people at all nine grade levels with intensive curriculum tied to arts learning experiences. (Former) Principal David Hills credits partnerships like ours with boosting the school from the lowest achievement rating and in need of improvement to one in good standing.

Thank you for making our partnership with Buffalo’s Waterfront Elementary School possible!

Young Audiences, WNY

BTF Backs Brew Bash

On behalf of the Board and staff at Theatre of Youth (TOY) - thank you for your generous contribution of $300 to TOY’s 2017 Brew Bash. For your records, no goods or services were provided in exchange for this sponsorship.

This year’s Brew Bash helped raise over $26,000 towards our mission of providing Western New York youth with quality professional theatre experiences that spark imaginations and encourage creative confidence. To more fully understand the tangible benefits children receive from programming like TOY’s, consider the following statistics showing that low Social Economic Status (SES) students involved in the arts were:

- 2 times more likely to win an award for academic achievement
- 4 times more likely to participate in a math or science fair
- 3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance
- over 3 times more likely to be elected to class office in school
- over 4 times more likely to engage in community service
- 8 times more likely to win a community service award

Children engaged with the arts have a decisive, demonstrable advantage. Your support ensures that we can continue to give all students these opportunities. We are humbled by and grateful for your partnership with TOY.

Thank you for being a champion to the youth of Western New York.

With much gratitude,
Cynthia Giganti Ludwig
Event Chair/ Secretary
Kevin Leary, Managing Director

Did You Know...

Normally, a teacher must work 160 days in order to move up a step on the salary schedule (years where a teacher worked less than 160 days can be combined, however.) But did you know that a new teacher who has completed at least 100 days of continuous, full-time service as a first year probationary or temporary teacher is entitled to a full pay increment? This increment is in addition to the regular increment they will receive on the September 1 following the completion of the teacher’s probationary term. If you didn’t know these facts, check out in Article XXV, C, 1a of the contract. It may apply to you!

Tell Us What’s Happening at Your School

Are you running a special performance at your building? Taking students on an overnight field trip? Was there a lesson that went exceptionally well that you would like to share with your BTF colleagues? We want to hear about it and may feature it in a future edition of the Provocator. Photos of such events are especially welcome. Please send the following information and any related photos via e-mail to salamone426@aol.com.

Name________________________ School/position:_____________________
Personal Email__________________ Phone__________________________
Description of event____________________________________________________

______________________________
All submissions become the property of the Provocator.
1. ABOVE: BTF President Phil Rumore and VP Rebecca Pordum listen as NYSUT attorney Claire Sellers presents a legal update.

2. In a scenario of “What If’s”, Melissa Kenny, Sophia Howard-Johnson, and Trish Rosokoff brain-storm ways to better serve our members.

3. With potential changes to the agency fee looming, Susan Baker, Greg Sawicki, Chris Salamone, and Nicole Herkey prioritize ways to address members’ concerns.

Crowds Thrilled to See Teachers Marching in Neighborhood Parades

There’s a new group making the rounds of local parades these days and the crowds are going wild. The BTF has participated in three recent parades and have been met with warm welcomes at each. Our Community Engagement Committee, chaired by Eve Shippens, is making itself known in communities throughout the city by participating in neighborhood events.

First was the Juneteenth Festival on the East Side, where BTF members carried our union banner in the opening parade. Under the direction of Ruyvette Townsend, co-chair of the Public Relations Committee, the BTF has participated in the festival for many years. As has happened in the past, a table was set up where backpacks and rulers were distributed to children.

In August, a group of BTF members joined the procession for the Puerto Rican and Hispanic Day Parade on the West Side. Marchers again distributed backpacks to children along the route. Last up was the Labor Day Parade in South Buffalo. Marching along Abbott Road to Cazenovia Park, a good showing of BTF members trekked alongside other members of NYSUT, throwing candy to the children along the route.

During all three parades, the BTF was met with resounding applause and appreciation from the crowds. Participation in the parades is one way the BTF is getting involved with the community and making itself visible to the public. All BTF members are welcome and urged to participate.

BTF Executive Committee Attends NYSUT Summer Leadership Conference

Legal updates, the New York State Constitutional Convention, and litigation aimed at destroying labor unions were among the topics of a three-day Summer Leadership Conference sponsored by New York State United Teachers. The event was held August 16-18 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, PA. Some 210 educators and school support staff from across Western New York were in attendance.

Among those participating in the conference were 17 members of the BTF Executive Committee, including President Philip Rumore, Vice-President Rebecca Pordum, and Treasurer Joseph Montante. Also attending were: Susan Baker, Dennis Brancato, Lynn Garcia, Nicole Herkey, Sophia Howard-Johnson, Melissa Kenney, Sue Raichelson, Trisha Rosokoff, Chris Salamone, Greg Sawicki, Janine Schuster, Eve Shippens, Elizabeth Spiro-Carman, and Ruyvette Townsend. Participation in the conference was financed through a National Education Association (NEA) grant.

The program got underway with remarks by Michael Deely, NYSUT Regional Director, who told attendees they need to be prepared for upcoming battles against unions. The remainder of the conference was divided into 90-minute workshops designed to provide information on union-related issues.

Among the workshops featured were Apathy to Action, Doomsday Prepping, Grievances and Contract Interpretation, and You Be the Judge.
BTF Releases Auditor's Report

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Balance Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August 31</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$283,684</td>
<td>$213,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables (Note 2)</td>
<td>198,804</td>
<td>269,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>25,532</td>
<td>26,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments (Note 3)</td>
<td>3,954,557</td>
<td>3,950,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net (Note 4)</td>
<td>72,554</td>
<td>65,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>$4,378,725</td>
<td>$4,262,808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current liabilities:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current portion of accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6)</td>
<td>$32,668</td>
<td>$32,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>1,964</td>
<td>21,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual expenses</td>
<td>116,793</td>
<td>111,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>27,608</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payable to affiliates (Note 5)</td>
<td>587,075</td>
<td>537,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total current liabilities</td>
<td>722,158</td>
<td>722,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6)</td>
<td>1,692,108</td>
<td>1,642,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets - unrestricted</td>
<td>1,831,162</td>
<td>1,740,272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total liabilities and net assets</td>
<td>$4,378,725</td>
<td>$4,262,808</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Activities

For the years ended August 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership dues</td>
<td>$3,222,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income (loss) (Note 3)</td>
<td>336,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>121,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and other</td>
<td>18,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenue</td>
<td>$3,796,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita dues</td>
<td>$2,100,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal (see page 9)</td>
<td>811,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities and programs (see page 9)</td>
<td>385,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other administrative (see page 10)</td>
<td>354,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenses</td>
<td>$3,652,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenses</td>
<td>143,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-retirement health care benefit obligation (Note 6)</td>
<td>(478,679)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>(246,970)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets - beginning</td>
<td>1,190,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets - ending</td>
<td>$1,335,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Cash Flows

For the years ended August 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating activities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>$246,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>11,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net (gain) loss on investments</td>
<td>(593,200)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes in other operating assets and liabilities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td>90,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>(6,580)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>(19,143)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued expenses</td>
<td>3,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued post-retirement health care benefits</td>
<td>130,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net operating activities</td>
<td>229,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing activities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of property and equipment</td>
<td>(26,462)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds from sale of investments</td>
<td>7,866,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net investing activities</td>
<td>(19,337)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in cash</td>
<td>70,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash - beginning</td>
<td>213,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash - ending</td>
<td>$283,684</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Math Teacher Writes Song about the NYS Constitutional Convention

Jeff Grossi, a hip-hop artist and math teacher at Middle Early College, has written a song urging New Yorkers to vote against a Constitutional Convention.

This is one of many songs Grossi has written regarding educational issues. To the right are some of the lyrics of his latest recording.

Say No to the Con Con
by Jeff Grossi aka MCZILL

INTRO:
On Election Day New Yorkers vote wisely to this question
Shall there be a convention for constitution revisions
Vote no; it’s a $350 million Dollar bash for the cost of politicians

REFRAIN:
So vote no, no to the Con Con
Vote no, no to the Con Con x3

No convention for constitution revisions
No $350 million dollar bash for politicians

So vote no, no to the Con Con
Vote no, no to the Con Con

Say no to a constitutional convention
Give two thumbs down on this referendum question

So vote no, no to the Con Con

VERSE:
Say no to a constitutional convention
Such a very unnecessary deception
We don’t need a convention for constitution revisions

No $350 million dollar bash for politicians

Here’s an easier concept
Changes citizens want can be made
through the normal legislative process
Yes! Already we can change our constitution at will
We draft, discuss, then vote to approve the bill

Voting yes robs Taxpayers pay delegates two salaries for the same jobs
We don’t need a congress carbon copy
We need to increase the quality of life for everybody

Say no to a constitutional convention
If you snooze you’ll lose this important voting lesson
They will schedule cuts like surgeries
Ruin public schools, colleges, universities

A recording of Grossi’s song also can be heard on the BTF website under the Audio/Video tab.
Six Spend Summer Talking to Members

While many teachers were enjoying their well-deserved summer off, about 50 teachers and support staff from across New York State went door to door to meet other members of NYSUT and discuss union issues. Among those teachers were six members of the BTF Executive Committee. Lynn Garcia, Sophia Howard-Johnson, Melissa Kenney, Trish Rosokoff, Chris Salamone, and Eve Shippens, along with members of BEST and the Buffalo Substitutes United combed the Buffalo area and its suburbs.

The group was part of a NYSUT initiative known as Education Summer in which the participants met with NYSUT members for one-on-one conversations. These conversations were aimed at finding out what issues NYSUT members are concerned with, to update member information, and ask members to become actively involved in their unions. The other goal was to determine if members were planning to vote against it. Participants also placed “Vote No to the Constitutional Convention” signs on their lawns.

During the six-week program, participants knocked on 33,097 doors across the state and had conversations with 8,419 members or about 25% of those visited. About 65% of those members knew about the NYS Constitutional Convention and, after the conversations, 90% of all members said they would talk to friends, neighbors, and colleagues about the Con Con. Lawn signs were placed at 3,123 homes.

Participants in the program went through an intensive three-day training at the Member Organizing Institute in Albany and returned for a debriefing at the end of the program. Many reported that NYSUT members were pleased to meet with representatives of the union and eager to discuss pressing issues, most notably the Constitutional Convention. NYSUT is gearing up for Education Fall and will be knocking on the doors of the members missed in the summer campaign.
Social Committee Seeks Ideas For Family Events

The BTF Social Committee is seeking ideas for family social events, such as baseball outings, picnics, zoo day, etc. If you have any suggestions, complete the following form and mail it to Nicole Herkey, c/o BTF Social Committee, 271 Porter Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201.
Name: __________________________
Cell phone: _____________________
Suggestion: _____________________

Physical Education Teacher Wins Contest

Andrew Grine, a physical education teacher at Schools 64 and 65 won 2nd place in the Get Moving New York video contest sponsored by Flaghouse Sports. In addition to getting to pose with Phil Rumore, Grine won a $250 cash award and also a free conference registration to this year’s NYSAHPERD state conference in November. This was in addition to receiving a $100 award for submitting a winning lesson plan. Grine is no stranger to this contest having won first place in last year’s video contest. The BTF offers its congratulations to Mr. Grine.

Buffalo Teachers Have Heart

A Big Thank You to Those Individuals/Schools that Donated to the Red Cross/Hurricane Harvey Fund

We also Thank the Teachers not listed above who made a contribution as part of a school-wide donation.
The Sick Leave Bank – A Valuable Benefit

What would you do if you were ill and all of your sick days had been exhausted?
Could you get by without pay checks? Would you be able to pay your rent? Make car payments? Feed your family?
Such a situation would be very difficult for most teachers. But Article XXVI, Paragraph G of the Master Contract states “The Board of Education agrees to provide administrative cooperation with the Federation in the establishment of a Sick Leave Bank Program. The administration of the Sick Leave Bank shall be the responsibility of the Federation according to the rules of procedure as established by the Federation.”

Indeed, many teachers have made use of the Sick Leave Bank and in times of crisis, it can be a lifesaver. But few teachers realize that this is a negotiated benefit and, in fact, one that did not always exist.
The Sick Leave Bank was established in the collective bargaining agreement ratified on September 4, 1973. Prior to that, if a teacher ran out of days, pay warrants would abruptly end.
Like everything in the contract, the Sick Leave bank was not merely given to the teachers but rather was awarded in exchange for something else. Collective bargaining is always about give and take.
Originally conceived to benefit two teachers who were receiving treatments for cancer, the Sick Leave Bank has allowed teachers to receive their salaries after their own sick days have been exhausted.
The idea is that teachers make an annual donation of sick days to the bank. The trustees of the Sick Leave Bank, all of whom are BTF members, meet biweekly and maintain an accounting of the number of days remaining.
In addition, they review applications for teachers in need and remain vigilant about potential abuse of benefits, all while maintaining strict confidentiality. A physician’s statement is required with the application and the trustees may require a member requesting and/or receiving benefits to submit to an examination by a doctor of the SLB’s choice.
The current trustees are Dennis Brancato, Sophia Howard-Johnson, and Melissa Kenney. Tom Gattie serves as an alternate should a trustee be unavailable. All of these teachers also are members of the BTF Executive Committee.
“It is a tedious and time consuming job and most of our colleagues are not aware of how much time we devote,” said Howard-Johnson. “We spend a lot of hours working on Sick Leave Bank so that our teachers can survive during a crisis.”
If you are new to Buffalo Public Schools, you have 90 days from the date of your hiring to join the Sick Leave Bank. Otherwise, BTF members may enroll between June 1st and 20th each year.
Joining is highly recommended so you are not caught in an impossible situation. The trustees report that the Sick Leave Bank is running well and that salary is being paid to several teachers who otherwise would have no money coming in. The Federation intends to keep this negotiated benefit as the trustees continue to make sure the Sick Leave Bank is there for you if you ever need it and that the days are only used if needed.

Why is a Con Con a Bad Idea?

1. At risk: The right to unionize and bargain collectively. The strength of unions could be jeopardized.
2. At risk: Workers Compensation. Safeguard your rights if you’re injured on the job.
3. At risk: Public pension protections. The constitution guarantees your pension will be there and cannot be diminished or impaired.
4. During the last convention, four out of five delegates were career politicians and Albany insiders.
5. The environment – New York State’s constitution has the nation’s strongest protections for forever wild areas like the Adirondacks and the Catskills. Greedy developers could push to undo these safeguards.
6. The social safety net – The state constitution ensures that the state provide for citizens in need.
7. Public education – The state constitution guarantees our students the right to a free public education.
8. A constitutional convention will cost about $350,000,000 in taxpayer dollars and lawmakers can collect salaries and pension credits as elected officials and as a delegate simultaneously.
9. Opening the state constitution is like opening Pandora’s Box. You can’t predict what changes delegates will propose.
10. A process already exists to amend the state constitution and it costs nothing!

Vote NO on November 7th!
Keeping Records is a Must

by Claire Sellers, Associate NYSUT Counsel

Whether you are new to the Buffalo City School District or a veteran teacher, make sure you are saving your records. The District has over 7,000 current employees’ and 30,000 current students’ records to store and maintain. As such, the District frequently is unable to provide accurate personnel records for its employees.

As a Buffalo City School District and New York State public school teacher, you are entitled to certain benefits. To protect those benefits, it is the best practice to maintain the records listed below. Teachers who maintain the records listed below are likely to have better overall outcomes when a question of their benefits or rights arises.

- Education Transcripts
- Proof of Certification(s)
- Advanced Credit Differential (ACD) form copy
- Prior Credit Experience Form (When requesting this from a former employer, include two self-addressed envelopes, one for the District and one for you. That way you receive a copy along with the District).
- Substitute Teaching Record(s)
- Temporary Appointment Letter(s)
- Probationary Appointment Letter(s)
- Tenure Appointment Letter(s)
- Any document relating to a change in tenure area OR a new appointment
- Coaching Appointment Letter(s)
- Professional Development Records (Keep a print out from PGS or at a minimum, the name of the course, date of the course, course instructor, and course number)
- Any record of extra activity hours; e.g. after school programs and interview teams
- Evaluations and Annual Professional Performance Reviews
- Paystubs – keep for 12 months (Paystubs show your rate of pay and accrued sick and personal leave days).
- Layoff notice(s)
- Leave requests and approval letters
- Accident Report / Workers Comp C-2 Forms (If assaulted make sure you use the word “assaulted” on your report).
- Family Medical Leave Act paperwork
- Americans with Disabilities Act paperwork
- Retirement Notification Letter
- Any documents mailed or emailed to the School Board or School District representatives

Maintain the above records as a hard copy or scan and store a digital copy in a secure location in your home. This is not an exhaustive list. When in doubt, keep a copy of the record. If you are using an email address to maintain your records, make sure it is a personal email address and not a school email address. Where possible, obtain a date-stamped copy, a certified return receipt, or save the email identifying the date and time.

This article is for informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it establish an attorney-client relationship.