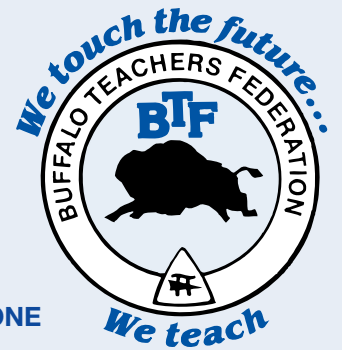


PROVOCATOR

June 2023

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 53/NUMBER 4

DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



Beginning of a New Era:

Nigro/MacPherson-Sullivan Elected BTF Chief Officers in Convincing Victory



BTF President-Elect Rich Nigro and Vice President-Elect Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan.

For the first time in 42 years, a new president has been elected to the Buffalo Teachers Federation.

Rich Nigro, a Buffalo teacher for 25 years, was elected after he and his running mate, Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan, defeated their opponents in a runoff election.

Nigro and MacPherson-Sullivan received 1,363 votes or 68.2% of the total, while their opponents, Marc Bruno and Patrick Foster, had 636 votes.

Nigro succeeds Philip Rumore, who has been President of the BTF

since 1981. Phil, who decided to retire, did not seek re-election.

Melinda succeeds Rebecca Pordum, who has been Vice President since 2017 and a Presidential Assistant since 2014. Becky is also retiring and did not seek re-election.

The runoff election was required by the BTF bylaws which call for the election of the president and vice president to be by a majority of eligible votes (more than 50%). Since the original election included three sets of candidates, and none of the teams received a majority, the two teams with the highest vote totals had to compete in the runoff election. This had not occurred since 1981.

Rich, a member of the BTF Executive Committee for the past two years, began his career as an ELA teacher and currently is an Instructional Technology Coach. He has served as Delegate Chair, Delegate, Alternate, Building Committee member, and SBMT member. He's a Teacher Center Policy Board member, and sits on the Policy Board's Program Committee, which assesses courses for the Teacher Center based on the

expressed interests of teachers.

MacPherson-Sullivan has been actively involved in the BTF for most of her BPS career, which began in 1991 as a Reading teacher. She has served as a Delegate Chair, Delegate, and Alternate. She was elected to the Executive Committee in 1999 and was elected Secretary of the BTF in 2017. She has served on the BTF's Retirement, Action, and Political Action Committees.

On the state level, she was a delegate to NEA/NY and is a member of the unified Board of Directors. She is currently a delegate to NYSUT, a member of the NYSUT Committee on Teacher Centers and an inaugural member of the NYSUT Women's Committee.

MacPherson-Sullivan is also a representative for the Far West Teacher Center Consortium and was elected to the Statewide Leadership Team of the New York State Teacher Centers (NYSTC), which oversees all programs for the state's 125 centers.

On the national level, she is a delegate to the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

BTF Election Results by the Numbers

Nearly 58% of eligible teachers exercised their right to choose and cast a vote in the initial election. This was the highest percentage in many years as teachers knew the future of the union depended on the results.

Of 3,777 eligible teachers for the first vote, 2,186 cast a ballot in what was one of the most significant elections in the history of the BTF. In the runoff vote, the total was nearly as high with 1,999 (53%) of the 3,782 eligible voters participating.

The election marked the end of an era in which President Phil Rumore decided to retire after 42 years in that position and pass the torch on to a new generation.

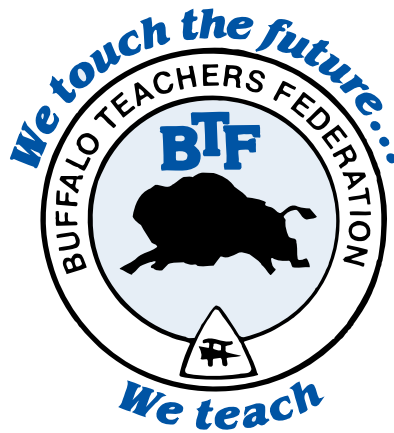
Three teams emerged to replace Phil and Vice President Becky Pordum, and a runoff election was needed when none of them captured more than 50% of the votes in the first round.

After leading the other candidates in

both elections, Rich Nigro and Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan were officially declared the winners.

A number of long-time Executive Committee incumbents either lost their bids for re-election or decided not to run, making room for some former members to return and some new blood to come on board.

The officers and Executive Committee members begin their terms July 1. Each serves for a two-year term. (By the numbers continued on page 8)



Thank You

It has been an honor to have been chosen to work together with the most dedicated, caring and united teachers anywhere.

Yes, there have been challenges and differences of opinions, yet we have always found a way to come together in the interest of our students and each other.

As always, there will be challenges ahead; however, I move on grateful for your caring, with the knowledge that as always you will pull together to overcome all obstacles and never give up until you have, because you care.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Phil



BTF at a Glance

BTF President

Philip Rumore

BTF Vice President

Rebecca Pordum

BTF Treasurer

Joseph Montante

BTF Secretary

Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan



BTF Executive Committee Members

Pre-K-6

Rachel Binda-Lis, April Hall,
Sophia Howard-Johnson,
Trisha Rosokoff, Janine Schuster,
Ruyvette Townsend

7-12

Dennis Brancato, Mike Jeffers,
Melissa Kenney, Rich Nigro,
Richard Pysczek, M. Sue Raichilson,
Eve Shippens

K-12

Susan Baker,
Desiree Breckenridge-Barnes, Amy Flynn,
Nicole Herkey, Ellen Malone,
Mark Mecca, Gregory Sawicki

At Large

Tom Anthony, Mike Mecca, Brian Meyer

BTF Headquarters Staff

Philip Rumore, *President*

Joseph Montante, *Presidential Assistant*

Rebecca Pordum, *Presidential Assistant*

Tim Connick, *NYSUT Counsel*

Jenna Burke, *NYSUT Labor Relations
Specialist*

Devon Gawley, *NYSUT*

Labor Relations Specialist

Robert Mueller, *NYSUT*

Labor Relations Specialist

Visit Our Updated Website
www.btfny.org

PROVOCATOR

BTF Provocator Staff

Joseph Montante, *managing editor, photo editor*
Chris Salamone, *editor*

The **Provocator** is the official publication of the Buffalo Teachers Federation. It will be published five times during the 2022-2023 school year as a service to BTF members and interested parties in the community. Subscription price is included in BTF dues.

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BTF Provocator, 271 Porter Avenue,
Buffalo, New York 14201.

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The **BTF** is an affiliate of **NYSUT**, **AFT** and **NEA**.

June 2023
Volume 53, No. 4
Circulation 4400

Letters to the Editor

PAL Thanks BTF for Improving Literacy

The Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Inc. and the PAL Board of Directors would like to thank you for appointing the Buffalo Teachers Federation as a Book Nook & Book Giveaway Sponsor of Reading Rules! Mayor Byron W. Brown's Kid's Summer Challenge!

We appreciate the benevolent contribution you made to this critical educational program in the amount of \$1,500, and you played an instrumental role in helping students in grades K-12 who live in the City of Buffalo work on improving their reading and writing skills during the Summer Camp Season.

Thank you for also investing vital resources into providing an amazing array of books at Mayor Brown's Awards Ceremony for Champion Readers on October 29, 2022 at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. Hundreds of Champion Readers and their family members enjoy receiving fantastic prizes due to your generosity.

Thank you again for supporting Buffalo PAL's efforts to help address summer learning loss in at-risk youth who benefited intellectually, socially, and emotionally from participating in Reading Rules!

I hope you continue to enjoy an abundance of health and happiness in the New Year!

Sincerely,
Judy Sperry
Development Director

Mayor Thanks BTF for Support of Program

Thank you for supporting my 21st annual Reading Rules! Kid's Summer Reading Challenge. Your generous sponsorship contribution, in-kind donation, or service as a volunteer made a positive difference in the success of this high-impact program for young people in Buffalo. I am pleased to announce that over 24,000 students in grades K-12 have worked on improving their literacy proficiency skills since I established Reading Rules 21 years ago in an effort to help slow the summer learning slide. Your continued support has enabled generations of students to become Champion Readers who qualify to receive free children's books, backpacks filled with school supplies, educational scholarships, academic prizes, laptops, kindles, bicycles, restaurant gift certificates and passes to cultural institutions.

BTF Donates to Teachers College

Giving through Teachers College truly makes a difference. Your commitment ensures that students, faculty, staff, and the extended community have the resources they need to pursue TC's teaching and research mission to our influence in the world.

There are no limits to what we can accomplish together to achieve the TC vision of a smarter, healthier, more equitable and just world.

With much gratitude,
Kelly S. Moody, vice president
Institutional Advancement
(Editor's note: BTF has worked with Teachers College to secure significant increases in state aid.)

WNYCOSH Thanks BTF for Donation

Thank you for your support of WNYCOSH's Germain's Retirement Party fundraiser and your gift of \$500. Your support makes it possible for us to continue to stand up for all workers. With your help we were able to celebrate Germain's career of fighting for workers' protection while we look to the future.

Sincerely,
Brian Brown-Cashdollar
Executive Director
WNY Council on Occupational Safety and Health

A special thank you to school teachers, educators, librarians, parents and caregivers for joining my mission to encourage this year's participants to complete my summer reading challenge. I am also grateful to all of the sponsors and in-kind donors who are providing support for our first in-person Reading Rules! Kids Summer Reading Awards Celebration since 2020. After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 global health pandemic, it was great to see everyone in person on Oct. 29 at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

Thank you again for investing in this empowering literacy program for our city and region's youth, and inspiring students to improve their reading and writing skills this summer.

Sincerely,
Mayor Byron W. Brown

BTF Donates to FeedMore WNY

Thank you for the gift of \$500 to FeedMore WNY Foundation. This gift will provide Western New Yorkers of all ages with nutritious meals and a bit of comfort when and where neither can be taken for granted.

In 2022, FeedMore WNY's partner hunger-relief programs and agencies – serving Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties – distributed 12.8 million meals, including more than 1.3 million nourishing meals to our homebound neighbors in need. This could not be accomplished without the support of your organization.

The fight against food insecurity is a fight for better health, education and economic stability. Thank you for contributing to a stronger Western New York!

Sincerely,
Judy Burnett Christian
Annual Fund Director

(FeedMore WNY has a tribute program through which you can honor a family member, friend or coworker with a meaningful memorial or celebratory gift.)

BTF Buys BPO Tickets

Thank you once again for the wonderful purchase of BPO tickets for your teachers. We are always grateful to work with you and appreciate your partnership. The vouchers this year are good for many more concerts so I hope the options are well received.

Sincerely,
Daniel Hart
President & Executive Director

BTF Donates \$500

Thank you for your donation of \$500 made to Wings of Compassion Ministries, Inc.

We are a nondenominational evangelical Christian tax-exempt charity, providing spiritual and physical assistance to needy people in inner-city communities, outdoor family fun outreaches, and rural mountains of Puerto Rico.

Elsie Guash-Rosario
Secretary

Visit Our Updated Website

www.btfny.org

Forty-two Teachers, with More Than 1,000 Total Years of Service, Honored During BTF Annual Retirement Dinner

Forty-two teachers, with more than 1,000 cumulative years teaching in the Buffalo Public School District, attended the annual BTF Retirement Dinner May 23 at Salvatore’s Italian Gardens in Depew.

The teachers, ranging in service from seven to 35 years, taught a total of 1,116 years in Buffalo schools. Prior service in other school districts were not part of the calculations.

The annual dinner was started by the BTF to honor retiring teachers who wanted to attend. Each participant received a complimentary dinner and a framed certificate for their service.

BTF President Phil Rumore and Vice President Becky Pordum, both retiring this year also, presented the certificates. Secretary Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan emceed the event.

In opening remarks, Phil told the retirees they will always be part of the BTF and can call with their questions and concerns.

The retirees honored at the dinner and the number of years they taught in Buffalo Public Schools are:

<u>Retiree:</u>	<u>Years:</u>	<u>Retiree:</u>	<u>Years:</u>
Barbara Bunch	7	Valerie Hoffman	30
Marilynne Crawford	7	Mary Anne Kulp	30
Terry Fiedler	9.5	Yolanda Long	30
Lois Cobb	13	Shirley MacKinnon	30
Candace Young	15	Kathleen O’Brien	30
Jennifer Strickland	19	Ana Espinosa	30.2
Duane Davis	20	Karen Ann Smith	30.8
Anthony Viola	20	Marilyn Hidalgo	31
Sylvia Wallace	20	Alison Dees	32
Partricia Kopper	21	Teresa Erazo	32
Diane Gianturco-Laczi	22	Lynn McCarthy	32
Judy Hidy	22	Susan Metzger	32
Mary Hughes	22	Rebecca Pordum	32
Maria Baker	25	Ellen Renaldo	32
Holly Tedesco	27	Linda Zakrzewski	32
Margaret Fahs	29	Daniel Danforth	32.7
Gina Forcucci	29	Michelle Weymer	32.9
Marianne Rotolo	29	Cheryl Nikander	33
Rebecca Blake	30	Nicholas Corallo	35
Jane L. Burgio	30	Kathleen Herzig	35
Julie Figueroa	30	Sarah Johnson	35
Total Years of Service		1,116.1	





Welcome to NYSUT Retiree Council #44

Congratulations to our new retirees! As you conclude your time as an active teacher and BTF member, be assured that you are still a union member in NYSUT and AFT.

NYSUT Retiree Councils, established in 1991, are a powerful voice for retirees, who continue to support the values and work of our union.

BTF members, upon retirement, become members of NYSUT Retiree Council #44 and join more than 250,000 NYSUT retirees. As a retiree, you can still take advantage of the many benefits that NYSUT offers its members.

Retired members serve as delegates to the NYSUT, NEA, and AFT conventions, where they represent the interests of their retired colleagues as well as support the issues important to active teachers.

RC #44 partners with retirees from Western New York (Retiree Councils #1, #2, and #3) to plan activities for its members.

Traditionally there is fall luncheon to welcome new retirees as well as a holiday luncheon and a retiree conference in the spring. These events provide members the opportunity to network with retirees as well as to keep up to date on member benefits, legislation, and any other issues

pertinent to retirees.

There are a variety of activities that retirees can engage in. RC #44 members volunteer at The Teacher's Desk, participate in the Making Strides Walk, and make phone calls to support NYSUT-endorsed candidates, to name a few.

Our retirees are active and involved. Members can participate in workshops and trips. You can keep informed of all of our events through our RC #44 newsletter, Buffalo Retiree, which you will receive during the year. You can follow us on our Facebook page (NYSUT Retiree Council #44) and website <http://rcwest.ny.aft.org>.

Retirees do not pay dues to belong to NYSUT. RC #44 has a voluntary participation fee that is collected each year.

Upon retirement, you are no longer an NEA member unless you join as a lifetime member. This will enable you to continue to enjoy all the benefits of membership.

We look forward to welcoming you into our organization and encourage you to become an active member! If you have any questions, please contact Sara Rodland, president of RC #44, at 716-689-9561 or by email at sarasarasara2008@live.com.

Retirees Remain Active

You don't have to say goodbye to your friends and colleagues when you retire. The Buffalo Retired Teachers Association (BRTA) will keep you busy and in touch.

The BRTA is open to all Buffalo teachers and administrators who are retiring. The BRTA hosts four luncheons during the school year, including the Fall Luncheon on the first day of school in September, Holiday Luncheon in December, Winter Luncheon in February, and the Spring Luncheon, in May.

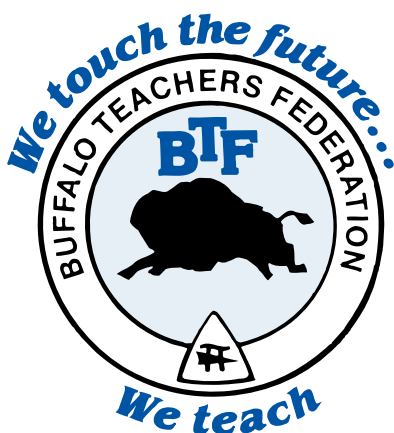
During June, BRTA men and women participate in the Annual Golf Tournament. Travel excursions are sponsored by the BRTA throughout the year, including international vacations, day trips to various locations within a 100-mile radius, overnight trips outside New York State, and theater trips to Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

The BRTA newsletter keeps members informed of all important issues.

And, although retired, members of the BRTA don't forget the students. Each year, three \$1,500 scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors of the Buffalo Public Schools.

Life membership in the BRTA is \$150 and must be paid in full. Annual membership is \$12 per year.

For more information contact Linda Parada, membership secretary, at 875-3392 or online at www.BRTA.biz.



Thank you, Phil and Becky, for your years of dedicated service to the teachers of Buffalo.



**Philip Rumore
BTF President
1981-2023**



**Rebecca Pordum
BTF Vice President
2017-2023**

Know Your Contract:

Personal Time

Q. How many personal days am I entitled to during a school year?

A. All full-time BTF Unit members are granted 5 personal days per year. These days are credited prior to the beginning of the school year*.

Q. How do I apply for a personal day/s?

A. The Board uses a form entitled “Application for a Short-term Absence/Leave From Regular Duty” for the application. Complete this form to qualify for a personal day and submit it to your payroll school.

Q. What part of this form do I complete?

A. This form is used for many purposes for different bargaining units. For a personal day, complete the form by listing:

1. Your Name
2. The date of absence
3. Check the fourth box “with absence to be charged to Personal Business Leave”
4. Check the second box “with substitute to be provided”
5. Sign “Applicant’s signature”

Q. Do I have to explain “reason for request”?

A. Personal business should be personal. Keep it that way. No reason is usually necessary or recommended.

IF YOU GIVE A REASON, VERBALLY OR IN WRITING, THE ADMINISTRATION MIGHT DENY YOUR REQUEST AND SALARY FOR THE DAY/S

Q. When must I supply a reason?

A. Only when the leave request is for the day before or after a paid holiday.

Q. Does it hurt to give a reason when I am not required to provide a reason?

A. Yes, it might. Please do not provide a reason, even verbally, unless required to do so by your contract.

Q. Do part-time teachers get personal days?

A. Part-time teachers receive pro-rated personal leave benefits based on the amount of time worked.

Example: If you are a .8 employee (teach 4 of 5 periods or 4/5 of the work day for the school you are assigned to), you should receive 4 personal days a year.

Q. Do I need to use a personal day if I am required to be in court and I am not responsible for my appearance?

A. No. Absence for service required by law, court order or other governmental authority beyond your control is not charged to sick or personal time (Article XXXI, Section C). This section includes, but is not limited to, jury duty.

Q. What happens if I do not use all my personal days in a given school year?

A. Personal days do not accumulate as personal days. They are converted to sick days after July 1 and “new” personal days are credited to your account.

Did You Know...?

That if a salary adjustment will result in a decrease of twenty-five dollars (\$25) or more in a teacher’s net pay, the teacher shall be given at least thirty (30) days’ written advance notice thereof if the adjustment was initiated by the District or as much notice as the law permits if it was initiated by an outside party. The only exception is if there is insufficient time remaining in the fiscal year (which ends June 30) to provide such notice.

This important provision can be found in Article XXV, J (4) of the collective bargaining agreement.

BTF Receives NYSUT Social Justice and Community Service Awards

Every year, the BTF goes above and beyond what is expected when giving back to the community and fighting for what’s right.

For these extraordinary contributions, the BTF received two awards during the annual NYSUT Representative Assembly, held April 28-29 in Albany.

The BTF earned the Ken Kurzweil Social Justice Recognition Award because it “consistently evidences a belief in social justice”.

Named for Union Activist Ken Kurzweil, who spent years educating fellow NYSUT members and the local community on civil rights, social justice and human rights issues, the BTF was awarded for:

- Advocating for educational justice, including resources that schools need
- Supporting initiatives to combat hunger and poverty
- Educating the public about the rights of undocumented children to public education
- Demonstrating labor solidarity and wage equity
- Championing racial justice
- Championing women’s issues, history and rights

- Providing information on health care for members and the community

The BTF also was awarded the NYSUT Community Service Award for “consistently evidencing a belief in community service”.

This was evidenced by:

- Participating in the Variety Club Telethon, Read Across America, Making Strides Breast Cancer Walk and a Women and Children’s Hospital visit.
- Contributing significantly to local charities including Hispanic Women’s League, Gay Lesbian Youth Services of WNY, World of Boys and Girls Leadership and Coalition for Economic Justice.
- Awarding \$4,000 in scholarships to the Say Yes Buffalo Scholarship, Teachers College Fund, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and Archie Hunter Scholarship Committee.
- Sponsoring annual Thanksgiving Food Drive; Toy Story 2022 toy drive for needy children and Ukraine Relief Fund Drive.
- Holding an all-union rally to end hate and racism after the Tops murders and donating \$50,000 to the families.

Nearly 99% of Members Approve Ratification of BTF Contract

After nearly four years of negotiations, the Buffalo Teachers Federation and Buffalo School District were able to agree on a seven-year contract, described by many, as “the best contract yet”.

The collective bargaining agreement, which covers the period from July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2026, was approved by 98.7% of the teachers who voted during the ratification meeting conducted on April 24 at Kleinhans Music Hall.

Of the 3,777 eligible voters, 1,877 attended the meeting to exercise their right as members to vote on a contract. Of those, 1852 voted in favor of the pact and 25 voted against. Voting was done by paper ballot as per a new BTF by-law and the Erie County Board of Elections brought in their voting machines and supplied the ballots.

Salary highlights of the agreement include:

- An 8% salary increase for the current school year, retroactive to September 1, 2022.
- Another 6% pay hike on July 1, 2023.
- A 4% pay hike July 1, 2024.
- A 3% pay increase July 1, 2025
- Each year of the contract, a salary step will be removed and those teachers on the top step will receive a \$1,500 stipend in lieu of not benefitting from the reduction in steps.

In addition, full time teachers and psychologists received a one-time signing bonus of 10% of their new salary. Also, teachers providing instruction to students where a bilingual extension required will receive an additional \$1,000 on the salary schedule.

In exchange for the increased financial package, active teachers and those who retire during the term of the contract will pay slightly more to maintain their district medical coverage. However, that will remain a fixed amount and not the percentage the District was seeking. Teachers who are hired after June 30, 2026 are not eligible for medical coverage in retirement.

Other features of the contract include:

- BTF will receive a one-time payment of \$175,00 for the Supplemental Benefit Fund and on July 1, \$650 per teacher, an increase of \$25 per teacher.
- Petty cash is increased to \$10 per pupil this year with \$2 per pupil increases slated for the next two years.
- The District Supply Fund will spend at least \$4 million for school supplies, effective July 1, 2023. The fund will also be increased \$250,000 each of the next two years
- Teachers will be informed and kept informed of a student’s psychological, emotional, medical conditions and other information including legal guardianship which might affect the student’s achievement or behavior or the safety of that student or others.
- Effective July 1, 2023, class instructors and advisors employed by the Adult Learning Center programs shall be provided with a thirty (30) minute paid period per day for the purpose of preparing lessons and/or completing necessary paperwork.

Teachers with two complete years of satisfactory teaching service in an area for which they are certified and licensed shall be granted a waiver from future “selection procedures” in their certification areas and be provided with preference over applicants with less service time in the Buffalo Public Schools.

To read the entire collective bargaining agreement, scan the QR code below:



By the Numbers

(Continued from page 1)

The elected officers and Executive Board members, by the numbers, are as follows:

President/Vice President:
(First election)

R. Nigro/	
M.MacPherson-Sullivan	864
M. Bruno/P. Foster	695
M.Kenney/T. Rosokoff	615

Run-off Election:

Nigro/MacPherson-Sullivan	1,363
Bruno/Foster	636

Treasurer: unopposed

Joseph Montanti (i)	1,952
---------------------	-------

Secretary: unopposed

Mark Mecca	1,922
------------	-------

PreK-6: (All unopposed)

Chis Stephens	1,355
Janine Schuster (i)	1,340
Kim Parzymieso	1,335
Rachel Binda-Lis (i)	1,321
April Hall (i)	1,315
Tara Rosa	1,310

7-12

Sam Fritz	1,300
Eve Shippens (i)	1,184
Dennis Brancato (i)	1,178
Mike Jeffers (i)	1,168
Tom Anthony	1,130
Rich Pysczek (i)	1,122
Sue Raichilson (i)	1,081

K-12

Mel Holden	854
Greg Sawicki (i)	718
Sean Crowley	711
Karen Kane	702
Amy Flynn (i)	638
Melinda CuvIELLO	600
Desiree Breckenridge-Barnes	581

At-Large:

Michael Mecca (i)	1,136
Brian Meyer (i)	1,072
David Stephens	942

(i) = incumbent

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for 5 or more units.

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Becky Pordum Receives NYSUT Leadership Award for BTF Service



BTF Vice President Rebecca Pordum was honored May 25 for many years of hard work and dedication to the BTF and its members during the NYSUT Western New York Annual Leadership Awards Dinner at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

Becky, as she likes to be called, started her career in the Buffalo Public Schools as a math teacher in 1991. She later became a Math Support teacher, mentoring teachers throughout the District.

In 2010, Becky was named director of the Buffalo Teacher Center. In that role, she was responsible for the implementation of professional development courses, budgeting and the operation of the teacher workroom.

In January 2014, Becky was

appointed treasurer of the BTF and began working full time for the union as a Presidential Assistant to President Phil Rumore.

She won re-election as treasurer in 2015 and then in 2017, she was elected Vice President. She officially retires from that position effective July 1.

As Vice President, Becky had countless duties, including organizing workshops, serving as PAC Chair, oversight of BTF committees, and meeting with and assisting teachers on a variety of issues.

Her contributions to the BTF are innumerable and their impact unmeasurable.

Becky is the mother of two adult children, Kim and Tom, and grandmother of four.



BTF Pins Available

If you have 20, 25, 30, or 35 years of teaching experience in the Buffalo Public Schools and would like a pin to commemorate your service, please complete the form below and mail it to the BTF, c/o Joseph Montante, 271 Porter Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14201. This form may be faxed to (716) 881-6678.

Name: _____

Home/cell phone: _____

Home address: _____

Personal E-mail: _____

School: _____

Number of years teaching in BPS: _____

Welcome New Members

The following 69 teachers have joined the Buffalo Teachers Federation since the last printing of the *Provocator*. Welcome to the union!

Rumana Akter
Raegan Augustino
Ryan Begany
Andrea Bell
Lesle Berkman
Geoffrey Blake
Brittany Bradberry
Melissa Brock
Seth Bush
Jennifer Carden
Shannin Cleveland-Saltzer
Emily Collins
Kristin Cook
Nicole Cottman
Amber Crittendan
Kristy Crouse-Siedlecki
Teresa Donisi
Erin Donovan
Sofia Fanizzi
Timothy Flood
Alexis Gabryszak
Brianna Garcia
David Genco

John-Mark Giamberdino
Elizabeth Giglia
Eric Granville
Jena Grinnell
Corey Griswold
Kevin Helfer
Gina Humbert
Uzo Ifedigbo
Tia Jaynes
Katherine Junevic
Wendy Kilburn
Randy Leon
Indeed Love
Madison MacNeil
Stacy Madej
Colby Mears
Jennifer Mogford
Linette Moses
Elizabeth Noonan
Stacey Ortnier
Ida Parker
Abigail Phillips
Emilie Phinney

Kittiya Pichejkulbordee
Miranda Price
Andrew Prisco
Michael Quigley
Mackenzie Rockwell
Heather Russell
Molly Second
Mason Secor
Kimberly Sisti
Courtney Sobowiec
Shawna Soles
Amela Soteli
Danielle Spring
Abbey Staebell
Sherry Tanner
Darcie Thomas
Heather Toscano
Sherice Tyes
Madison Waddell
Rayeshawn Ward
Michael Wilbert
Ashlyn Zgoda
Rebecca Zuch

BTF Releases Auditor's Report

2021-2022

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Balance Sheets

August 31,	2022	2021
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 708,918	\$ 841,064
Receivables, net (Note 2)	224,047	100,509
Prepaid expenses	27,395	26,208
Investments (Note 3)	4,458,845	4,890,617
	<u>5,419,205</u>	<u>5,858,398</u>
Property and equipment, net (Note 4)	92,358	78,275
	<u>\$ 5,511,563</u>	<u>\$ 5,936,673</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Current portion of accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 7)	\$ 22,800	\$ 21,500
Accounts payable	14,800	-
Accrued expenses	122,387	135,070
	<u>159,987</u>	<u>156,570</u>
Accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 7)	1,449,483	2,262,123
Net assets without donor restrictions	<u>3,902,093</u>	<u>3,517,980</u>
	<u>\$ 5,511,563</u>	<u>\$ 5,936,673</u>

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Cash Flows

For the years ended August 31,	2022	2021
Operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 384,113	\$ 811,283
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:		
Depreciation	21,704	25,435
Net loss on disposal of property and equipment	-	1,660
Net (gain) loss on investments	498,611	(531,891)
Changes in other operating assets and liabilities:		
Receivables	(123,538)	63,844
Prepaid expenses	(1,187)	(1,318)
Accounts payable	14,800	(15,304)
Accrued expenses	(12,683)	30,840
Accrued postretirement health care benefits	(811,340)	(75,808)
Net operating activities	<u>(29,520)</u>	<u>308,741</u>
Investing activities:		
Purchase of property and equipment	(35,787)	(19,791)
Purchase of investments	(8,044,779)	(9,027,875)
Proceeds from sale of investments	7,977,940	8,979,727
Net investing activities	<u>(102,626)</u>	<u>(67,939)</u>
Net change in cash	(132,146)	240,802
Cash - beginning	841,064	600,262
Cash - ending	<u>\$ 708,918</u>	<u>\$ 841,064</u>

See accompanying notes.

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BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Activities

For the years ended August 31,	2022	2021
Revenue:		
Member dues	\$ 3,415,065	\$ 3,427,881
Investment income (loss) (Note 3)	(383,426)	662,377
Rent	134,655	129,696
Advertising and other	5,410	24,518
Total revenue	<u>3,171,704</u>	<u>4,244,472</u>
Expenses:		
Program	3,280,718	3,201,495
Management and general	471,324	451,382
Total expenses	<u>3,752,042</u>	<u>3,652,877</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(580,338)	591,595
Post-retirement health care benefit obligation (Note 7)	964,451	219,688
Change in net assets	384,113	811,283
Net assets - beginning	3,517,980	2,706,697
Net assets - ending	<u>\$ 3,902,093</u>	<u>\$ 3,517,980</u>

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Notes to Financial Statements

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies:

See accompanying notes.

Organization:

Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc. (the Federation) is the bargaining unit for teachers employed by the City of Buffalo Board of Education (the Board of Education).

Cash:

At various times, cash in financial institutions may exceed federally insured limits and subject the Federation to concentrations of credit risk.

Receivables:

Receivables from member loans and the Federation's affiliate and national and state organizations are stated at the amount management expects to collect from outstanding balances. An allowance for doubtful accounts is recorded based on management's assessment of the collectability of individual account balances and historical trends. Amounts outstanding after management has used reasonable collection efforts are written off through a charge to allowance for doubtful accounts and a credit to receivables.

Investments:

Investments are stated at fair value based on quoted prices in active markets.

Property and Equipment:

Property and equipment is stated at cost, net of accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided over estimated useful lives using the straight-line method.

Income Taxes:

The Federation is a 501(c)(5) organization exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Functional Expense Allocation:

The financial statements report certain categories of expenses that are attributable to program and supporting functions. Some expenses require allocation on a reasonable basis that is consistently applied. The allocated expenses include personnel and related benefits, occupancy and office, public relations, and professional fees, which are allocated based on employee responsibilities and occupancy.

Use of Estimates:

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and accompanying notes. Actual results may differ from those estimates.

Revenue Recognition:

The Federation represents contract, probationary, and temporary teachers of the Buffalo Public Schools and provides a variety of benefits to its members including legal representation and financial assistance. The Federation's main source of receipts is dues collected from its members by their employer, the Board of Education, on a bi-weekly basis from the end of September through July. Dues revenue is generally recognized and collected during the service period.

Subsequent Events:

Management has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure in the financial statements through March 28, 2023, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

2. Receivables:

	2022	2021
Affiliate (Note 6)	\$ 151,631	\$ 26,921
National and State Organizations	40,621	34,879
Member loans	78,340	80,590
Interest and other	31,455	38,119
	<u>302,047</u>	<u>180,509</u>
Less allowances for doubtful member loans	78,000	80,000
	<u>\$ 224,047</u>	<u>\$ 100,509</u>

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3. Investments:

	2022	2021
U.S. Government securities	\$ 257,809	\$ 189,143
Common stock	1,261,817	1,419,490
Mutual funds	1,613,575	1,961,672
Corporate bonds	327,765	414,858
Certificates of deposit	128,423	284,250
Money market	869,456	621,204
	<u>\$ 4,458,845</u>	<u>\$ 4,890,617</u>

Investment income (loss) is as follows:

	2022	2021
Interest and dividends	\$ 115,185	\$ 130,486
Net gains (losses)	(498,611)	531,891
	<u>\$ (383,426)</u>	<u>\$ 662,377</u>

4. Property and Equipment:

	2022	2021
Land	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Buildings and improvements	493,305	463,417
Office furniture and equipment	157,857	157,857
Computer equipment	155,847	155,847
	<u>832,009</u>	<u>802,121</u>
Less accumulated depreciation	739,651	723,846
	<u>\$ 92,358</u>	<u>\$ 78,275</u>

5. Short-Term Borrowings:

The Federation has available a \$100,000 bank demand line of credit with interest payable at prime plus 3.5%, secured by substantially all assets of the Federation. The line is subject to the usual terms and conditions applied by the bank for working capital financing, and is subject to review annually. There were no amounts outstanding under the line at August 31, 2022 and 2021.

6. Transactions with Affiliate:

The Federation receives rent (for the use of a portion of its building) from Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc. Supplemental Benefit Fund (SBF), a tax-exempt, health and welfare organization. This rent totaled \$17,000 for each of the years ended August 31, 2022 and 2021.

The Federation also remits payment of certain SBF personnel and other expenses for which it is reimbursed. Amounts owed to the Federation from SBF at August 31, 2022 and 2021 included in receivables were \$151,631 and \$26,921.

7. Post-Retirement Health Care Benefits:

The Federation provides postretirement health care benefits to all retirees who attain age 55 with fifteen years of service. Employees who retire after September 1, 2016 contribute annual amounts ranging from \$360 to \$900 depending on insurance coverage. It is the Federation's practice to fund these benefits as incurred. The measurement date used to determine the benefit obligation is August 31st of each year.

The status of the postretirement health benefit plan at and for the years ended August 31, 2022 and 2021 is as follows:

	2022	2021
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)	\$ 1,472,283	\$ 2,283,623
Accrued postretirement benefit obligation (benefit liability)	1,472,283	2,283,623
Accumulated adjustment change in net assets available for benefits	1,133,914	169,463
Benefit cost	163,383	153,283
Benefits paid	10,272	9,403

At August 31, 2022 and 2021, the following items included as adjustments to net assets available for benefits had not yet been recognized as components to benefit cost:

	2022	2021
Net gain	\$ 1,133,914	\$ 169,463

	2022	2021
Weighted-average assumptions used to determine benefit liability:		
Yearly health care premium increases	6.00%	6.00%
Discount rate	4.50%	2.25%
Yearly retiree contribution increase	3.00%	3.00%
Weighted-average assumptions used to determine net periodic benefit cost:		
Discount rate	2.25%	2.25%

Expected future annual benefit payments:

2023	\$ 22,800
2024	46,000
2025	47,300
2026	48,700
2027	49,900
2028 – 2032	263,300
	<u>\$ 478,000</u>

8. Financial Assets Available for Operations:

The Federation's primary source of financial assets are member dues, rental income, and investment income, which are acquired throughout the year to help meet the Federation's cash needs for general expenditures. If necessary, the Federation also has access to a \$100,000 bank demand line of credit (Note 5).

The Federation's financial assets available within one year of the balance sheet date to meet cash needs for general expenditures consist of the following at August 31, 2022 and 2021:

	2022	2021
Cash	\$ 708,918	\$ 841,064
Receivables	224,047	100,509
Investments	4,458,845	4,890,617
	<u>\$ 5,391,810</u>	<u>\$ 5,832,190</u>

9. Expenses by Nature and Function:

2022	Program	Management and General	Total
Per capita dues	\$ 2,285,469	\$ -	\$ 2,285,469
Personnel	635,673	327,466	963,139
Occupancy	58,586	25,108	83,694
Office supplies and expenses	59,495	36,341	95,836
Contributions	60,000	-	60,000
Public relations and contract enforcement	69,394	-	69,394
Professional fees	-	68,152	68,152
Other	112,101	14,257	126,358
	<u>\$ 3,280,718</u>	<u>\$ 471,324</u>	<u>\$ 3,752,042</u>

2021	Program	Management and General	Total
Per capita dues	\$ 2,300,090	\$ -	\$ 2,300,090
Personnel	654,502	337,168	991,670
Occupancy	69,997	29,999	99,996
Office supplies and expenses	30,236	18,484	48,720
Public relations and contract enforcement	70,100	-	70,100
Professional fees	-	52,202	52,202
Other	76,570	13,529	90,099
	<u>\$ 3,201,495</u>	<u>\$ 451,382</u>	<u>\$ 3,652,877</u>

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Extended Pay Plan Questions & Answers For the 2023-2024 School Year

Periodically, the BTF receives inquiries about the Extended Pay Plan.

Essentially, the Extended Pay Plan is a form of a savings plan for teachers who want to be assured they have budgeted monies for the summer following the school year. Interest monies are used to help defray the BTF's operational expenses and thereby keep dues costs down.

The program is optional for any Buffalo teacher who wishes to participate. Any teacher who wishes to participate in the Extended Pay Plan for the summer of 2024 should be aware of all the information that follows.

Q. How much money do I receive during the summer?

A. You decide how much you want to receive during the summer of 2024. Assuming there are no difficulties, payroll deductions occur from 20 paychecks during the 2023-24 school year. The amount you receive will depend on how much you have deducted from each check.

Q. How do I receive my summer payments?

A. You may receive your summer payments as paper checks mailed directly to the address that is on file with the BTF. There is also a direct deposit option. (Please see the Direct Deposit Section.)

Q. How much money will come out of each check?

A. The exact amount of deduction is determined by you and will be withheld from 20 of your 22 paychecks. The minimum deduction per paycheck allowable is \$40. You may increase this amount in \$5 units (i.e. \$45, \$50, \$55, \$60, etc.).

Option 1: One check or direct deposit issued during the summer recess.

Formula: to determine the exact amount of the summer check or direct deposit under Option 1, multiply the amount deducted each paycheck times 20. **Example:** \$100 withheld per paycheck times 20 equals \$2,000. If you saved \$100 per paycheck and selected **Option 1**, your one summer check or direct deposit would total exactly \$2,000. **Option 2:** Two checks or direct deposits issued during the summer recess. **Formula:** to determine the amount per check or deposit under Option 2, multiply the amount deducted each paycheck times 20 and divide by 2. **Example:** \$100 withheld each paycheck times 20 equals \$2,000 divided by 2 equals \$1,000. If you saved \$100 per paycheck and selected Option 2, your two summer checks or direct deposits would each total exactly \$1,000.

Option 3: Four checks or direct deposits are issued at two-week intervals during the summer recess. **Formula:** To determine the amount per check or direct deposit under Option 3 multiply the amount deducted each paycheck times 20 and divide by 4.

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Example: \$100 deducted per paycheck times 20 is \$2,000 divided by 4 equals \$500. If you saved \$100 per paycheck and selected Option 3, your four summer checks or direct deposits would each total exactly \$500.

Q. Are there other teachers participating in the BTF Extended Pay Plan?

A. Currently more than 2,000 teachers are participating.

Q. How do I sign up?

A. You must complete an Extended Pay Plan card. The Extended Pay Plan card is divided into 3 cards. Be sure to complete the top two cards as instructed. Be sure the amount that you would like to have deducted from each paycheck is listed. The third card is for direct deposit (please see the direct deposit section below). Cards are not available online. Contact your building delegate for an application form or call Joseph Montante or his secretary, Jackie Newton, at the BTF Office (881-5400). **ALL CARDS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE BTF OFFICE.**

Q. When should I sign up for the Extended Pay Plan?

A. Submit your form during the months of May, June, and July for the following September. New teachers may enroll when they receive their New Membership Packet.

Q. What is an advance withdrawal?

A. An advance withdrawal is available to you should you need funds before the summer. One withdrawal per school year is allowed. Call the BTF and ask to speak with either Joseph Montante or Jackie Newton and they will take the necessary information over the telephone. Please be advised that it may take three to five days to process a check.

Q. Am I allowed a second withdrawal?

A. Yes, however, if a second withdrawal is taken, you will be asked to discontinue your paycheck deduction for the remainder of the school year.

Q. Will I be able to have my summer check before the scheduled payments?

A. No. To keep our records accurate, up to date and provide sufficient time for our accountants to review the accounts, there will be no withdrawals after June 1st (of each school year) Extended Pay Plan Questions & Answers for the 2023-24 School Year unless there is an extraordinary circumstance, which we will ask be accompanied by appropriate

documentation.

DIRECT DEPOSIT

The BTF/Extended Pay Plan Program reached an agreement with Northwest Savings Bank for DIRECT DEPOSIT of your Extended Pay Plan checks. Listed below are ways that Direct Deposit can make your summer checks efficient and safe:

- 100% of the funds are available when the funds are deposited to your account.
- Funds are in your account when you are sick or on vacation.

• No worries if the mail is late or lost. Please consider this benefit. You will need to complete the third card of the Extended Pay Plan card. The best way to ensure the accuracy of your banking information is to include a voided check for the account that you would like to have the funds deposited into.

• Northwest Bank will have your Extended Pay Plan funds electronically deposited during summer into the bank of your choice. You DO NOT need to have an account at Northwest Bank.

• Please remember that if you make any changes to the account that your Extended Pay Plan funds are deposited in, **YOU MUST** notify the BTF before June 1st to be sure that your summer payments are deposited into the correct account.

***Special Note:** If you receive paper checks, please be aware that they are only payable for 60 days after the date of issue, as stated on the front of the check. Also be sure to update your address to be sure that your payments arrive on time.

Extended Pay Plan Dates Set

Extended Pay Plan disbursement dates for the summer are:

- July 14
- July 28
- August 11
- August 25

The number of disbursements you will receive has been pre-selected by you. If you have questions, please call the BTF.