

PROVOCATOR

December 2016

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 45/NUMBER 3

DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



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.



Hardly one day goes by that you, probably one of the most important people in your student's lives, don't give gifts more precious and more important than many they will receive – you in your own way shape knowledge and provide encouragement.

Indeed, through your caring, you become an important part of your children's lives. Everyone of us can remember an important teacher in our life. That important teacher is and will be you for someone.

On behalf of the Buffalo Teachers Federation and Staff, may the precious gifts that you give so freely enrich your lives and be returned to you one hundred fold during this holiday season and throughout the New Year.



No Greater Gift

By PHIL RUMORE

Though a month away, Don and Julie's excitement about the upcoming holiday easily reflected that of "their kids." Yes, even though their students sometimes seemed intent upon exhausting the last remnants of their patience and sanity, they were still "their kids."

The winter holiday break was Don and Julie's special time together. This year they would once again wing their way across the country to the West Coast to have their Christmas dinner in the warmth of the old hotel with the giant Christmas tree. After dinner, the voices of the boys' choir would fill the air with songs of the holiday season.

They had been married there, and every year since then had scrimped and saved so they could return to that wonderful old hotel that they accidentally discovered. Each year it brought them closer together. Each year's visit became ever more special.

It had been "one of those years." Once in awhile either Julie or Don would get what they would jokingly call "a class from the dark side." Each one of these students, by themselves, was fine; but all in one class – that school bus never looked so good at the end of the day!

This year, they both had "classes from the dark side." "I know it's the ghost of my third grade teacher getting back at me for hitting her smack in the middle of the forehead with a spitball," Don said. "How was I supposed to know that Carl was going to put his head down on his desk at the exact moment I shot it. I know it must be her. There's no other answer," Don sighed. "You know that's it. The ghost of one of our old teachers is getting back at us. There's no other answer," Julie said as they both laughed.

The catalyst in each of their classes seemed to be Nicole and Michael Warren. Nicole was in Julie's fourth grade class and Michael was in Don's sixth grade class. The Warren children weren't bad kids. They were bright, friendly and motivated to learn. They just had that touch of the dark side that made each of their classes bubble beneath the surface, only to bubble over when you least expected it. Of course, the anticipation of the holiday season stirred the pot even more.

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.

"Is Nicole in school?" Don asked.

"Yes, but she must be getting something too. She's been very quiet," Julie answered.

"I think I'll give the Warrens 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 said as he 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 Warrens 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?"

"Yes," Don and Julie replied hesitantly.

"We came to thank you," said the young woman, tears welling in her eyes.

"Thank us for what?" replied Don.

"I'm Michael Warren, the boy whose life you saved," the young man said, his voice almost breaking.

"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.

"Mom passed away last month; but before she died, she told us that you had made her promise that she would never tell us that you – our teachers, had given us the tickets and money to go to the hospital in San Diego," he said.

Nicole, unable to contain her emotions any longer, threw her arms around Don and Julie, as did Michael.

It was one 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 softly.

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, Julie, Michael and Nicole 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 Nicoles 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 lives. It was they 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

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

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

BTF Supports EPIC Programs

On behalf of the 2016 Board of Directors and staff of EPIC-Every Person Influences Children, I extend our sincerest gratitude for your support of this year's Heroes Reception, which brought together over 200 people to celebrate the work of our organizations over the past 36 years and to honor those who significantly helped us along the way.

Thank you for purchasing a half-page program ad for \$300. These funds will help us continue our work with families to ensure that children of all backgrounds are raised and nurtured to become responsible and capable adults. EPIC provides year round programming in: Parenting Education, including Ready, Set, Parent!, Families in Transition, and Just For Teens; Family Engagement, encouraging early literacy and building parents' capacity to be more actively involved in their children's education; and Youth Services, building self-confidence in inner-city teens and guiding them to make the right choices in life.

On behalf of everyone at EPIC, thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Michelle Urbanczyk, president

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.

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

WESTHERR Select
Vehicle Purchase Plan
V.I.P. Vehicle Shopping

Auto Buying Benefit
 For Buffalo Teachers Federation members and their families

Save TIME **V.I.P. Concierge Shopping Assistance.**
 Save MONEY **V.I.P. "Below Market" Preferred Pricing.**
 Get MORE **V.I.P. Privileges, Perks, Service Discounts, & much more.**

20 NEW Brands • Over 1,800 USED Vehicles
 Contact your Select Benefit Concierge

Appointment Required. | 716-202-3091
 westherrSelect.com

Divorce Mediation

- An alternative to an emotionally charged and financially costly process
- Creating Equitable Financial Settlements in a Divorce
- Compassionate and Trustworthy
- Experienced

As a Mediation Attorney, Nadia concentrates on separating couples with care and kindness, and as a Divorce Financial Specialist, she makes sure couples' financial decisions are fully thought out, fair, balanced, and stand the test of time.

Nadia N. Shahram, Esq.
 Attorney and Divorce Financial Specialist
 Tel: (716) 565-1299
 attorneynadia@gmail.com

Matrimonial Mediation Center of Buffalo, Inc.
 Northtown Location: 5500 Main Street Suite 216, Williamsville, NY 14221
 Southtown Location: 3915 N. Buffalo Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127

834-3511
Eyewear Unlimited
 1480 Hertel Avenue @ Sterling Avenue

100% Total Coverage*
 Complete Frame & Lens Coverage for BTF & Dependents
 Single Vision or Flat-Top 28
 * Plastic lenses power to ± .400 SPH. • with ± .200 CYC.
 Choose from a Special Selection of Frames.
 Tints extra. Not Good with other offers.

Greg Mucha
 Optician
 Call Today for An Appointment With our Optometrist!

Joe Frandina
 Optician
 Call Today for An Appointment With our Optometrist!

Joe is the Husband of BTF member Barbara Polino Frandina

Proudly Helping Buffalo School Employees Since 1972

You Can Retire Financially Independent

Account Benefits:

- Professional local guidance
- Wide fund selection available
- Simple quarterly statements
- Free online access
- Easy Access Loans
- Low investment threshold
- No load funds
- No per fund ticket fee
- Minimal management & annual fees

SGROI FINANCIAL

Plan...Protect...Invest...
It's your TSA/403b...We can help.

Sgroi Financial, LLC
 965 Union Road, West Seneca, NY 14224 716-674-6700 www.sgroifinancial.com
 Securities offered through Cadaret, Grant & Co., Inc., member FINRA/SIPC. Sgroi Financial and Cadaret, Grant & Co., Inc. are separate entities.

BTF 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

BTF Headquarters Staff

Philip Rumore, *President*
 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*

Visit Our Updated Website
www.btfny.org

PROVOCATOR

BTF Provocator Staff
 Rebecca Pordum, *managing editor*
 Chris Salamone, *editor*
 Joseph Montante, *photo editor*

The **Provocator** is the official publication of the Buffalo Teachers Federation. It will be published during the 2016-2017 school year as a service to BTF members and interested parties in the community. Subscription price is included in BTF dues.

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

Advertising: Rates and anticipated publishing schedule may be requested from the BTF, 716-881-5400, FAX 716-881-6678. Although advertising is screened, advertising does not imply BTF endorsement of the product, service or the views expressed. Your patronage of our advertisers is appreciated.

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

December 2016
 Volume 45, No. 3
 Circulation 5000

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

The Executive Officers
Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc.

We have audited the accompanying balance sheets of Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc. as of August 31, 2015 and 2014, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Buffalo Teachers Federation, Inc. as of August 31, 2015 and 2014, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.



February 8, 2016

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Balance Sheets

August 31,	2015	2014
Assets		
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 213,102	\$ 271,531
Receivables (Note 2)	289,787	230,840
Prepaid expenses	20,982	14,497
Investments (Note 3)	3,065,327	3,175,015
	<u>3,589,198</u>	<u>3,691,883</u>
Property and equipment, net (Note 4)	63,640	55,194
	<u>\$ 3,652,838</u>	<u>\$ 3,747,077</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities:		
Current portion of accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6)	\$ 32,600	\$ 24,400
Accounts payable	21,007	83,588
Accrued expenses	111,806	108,156
Payable to affiliate (Note 5)	557,075	557,075
	<u>722,488</u>	<u>773,219</u>
Accrued post-retirement health care benefits (Note 6)	1,162,078	1,261,797
Net assets - unrestricted	1,768,272	1,712,061
	<u>\$ 3,652,838</u>	<u>\$ 3,747,077</u>

See accompanying notes.

2

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Activities

For the years ended August 31,	2015	2014
Revenue:		
Member dues	\$ 3,126,976	\$ 3,178,242
Investment income (loss) (Note 3)	(56,994)	418,901
Rent	121,212	118,872
Advertising and other	14,812	9,953
Total revenue	<u>3,206,006</u>	<u>3,725,968</u>
Expenses:		
Per capita dues	2,067,583	2,046,732
Personnel (see page 9)	795,707	991,219
Activities and programs (see page 9)	172,625	205,010
Other administrative (see page 10)	265,720	281,574
Total expenses	<u>3,301,635</u>	<u>3,524,535</u>
Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenses	(95,629)	201,433
Post-retirement health care benefit obligation (Note 6)	151,840	1,524,022
Change in net assets	56,211	1,725,455
Net assets (deficiency) - beginning	1,712,061	(13,394)
Net assets - ending	<u>\$ 1,768,272</u>	<u>\$ 1,712,061</u>

See accompanying notes.

3

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION, INC.

Statements of Cash Flows

For the years ended August 31,	2015	2014
Operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ 56,211	\$ 1,725,455
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash flows from operating activities:		
Depreciation	10,847	19,020
Net (gain) loss on investments	139,625	(330,447)
Changes in other operating assets and liabilities:		
Receivables	(58,947)	(1,026)
Prepaid expenses	(6,485)	3,823
Accounts payable	(62,581)	64,195
Accrued expenses	3,650	6,366
Accrued postretirement health care benefits	(91,519)	(1,335,163)
Net operating activities	<u>(9,199)</u>	<u>152,223</u>
Investing activities:		
Purchase of property and equipment	(19,293)	(8,635)
Purchase of investments	(7,762,714)	(7,020,037)
Proceeds from sale of investments	7,732,777	6,867,591
Net investing activities	<u>(49,230)</u>	<u>(161,081)</u>
Net change in cash	(58,429)	(8,858)
Cash - beginning	271,531	280,389
Cash - ending	<u>\$ 213,102</u>	<u>\$ 271,531</u>

See accompanying notes.

4

Notes to Financial Statements

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies:

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.

Investments:

Investments are stated at fair value as determined by 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. The Federation believes it is no longer subject to examination by Federal and State taxing authorities for years prior to 2012.

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 could differ from those estimates.

Subsequent Events:

The Federation has evaluated events and transactions for potential recognition or disclosure in the financial statements through February 8, 2016 (the date the financial statements were available to be issued).

2. Receivables:

	2015	2014
Affiliate (Note 5)	\$ 117,503	\$ 61,646
National and State Organization	89,264	76,702
Member loans	80,890	87,140
Interest	2,130	1,330
Other	-	4,022
	<u>\$ 289,787</u>	<u>\$ 230,840</u>

3. Investments:

	2015	2014
U.S. Government securities	\$ 4,098	\$ 5,241
Common stock	809,454	823,566
Mutual funds	995,233	1,086,532
Corporate bonds	72,061	127,959
Certificates of deposit	732,236	540,721
Money market	<u>452,245</u>	<u>590,996</u>
	<u>\$ 3,065,327</u>	<u>\$ 3,175,015</u>

Investment income (loss) is as follows:

	2015	2014
Interest and dividends	\$ 82,631	\$ 88,454
Net gains (losses)	<u>(139,625)</u>	<u>330,447</u>
	<u>\$ (56,994)</u>	<u>\$ 418,901</u>

4. Property and Equipment:

	2015	2014
Land	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Building and improvements	412,860	402,642
Office furniture and equipment	180,325	171,250
Computer	76,284	76,284
	<u>694,469</u>	<u>675,176</u>
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>630,829</u>	<u>619,982</u>
	<u>\$ 63,640</u>	<u>\$ 55,194</u>

5. 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 the year ended August 31, 2015 and \$16,000 for the year ended August 31, 2014.

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, 2015 and 2014 included in receivables were \$117,503 and \$61,646.

During 2001, the Federation received \$917,075 to pay for SBF benefits and any future Federation legal, consultant and administrative costs in connection with a back pay settlement pursuant to the provisions of a teachers' contract settlement. Amounts due to SBF under this settlement totaled \$557,075 at August 31, 2015 and 2014.

6. Post-Retirement Health Care Benefits:

The Federation provides postretirement health care benefits to all retirees who attain age 55 with fifteen years of service. The benefits are noncontributory in nature, and it is the Federation's practice to fund these benefits as incurred. During 2014, the plan changed the type of health insurance to be provided to the participants. 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, 2015 and 2014 is as follows:

	2015	2014
Accumulated postretirement benefit obligation (APBO)	\$ 1,194,678	\$ 1,286,197
Accrued postretirement benefit obligation (benefit liability)	1,194,678	1,286,197
Accumulated adjustment increase to net assets	(710,757)	(558,917)
Benefit cost	84,491	235,299
Benefits paid	24,170	46,440

At August 31, 2015 and 2014, the following items included as adjustments to net assets available for benefits had not yet been recognized as components to benefit cost:

	2015	2014
Net (gain) loss	<u>\$ (710,757)</u>	<u>\$ (558,917)</u>

	2015	2014
Weighted-average assumptions used to determine benefit liability:		
Yearly health care premium increases	6%	5% - 12%
Discount rate	4.25%	4.25%
Weighted-average assumptions used to determine net periodic benefit cost:		
Discount rate	4.25%	4.25%

For 2015, yearly health care premium increases were estimated at 6% per year for all subsequent years. For 2014, health care premium increases were estimated at 12% for the first year, then grading down by 1% for each subsequent year until a floor of 5% is reached.

Expected future annual benefit payments:

	2015	2014
2016	\$ 32,600	
2017	33,100	
2018	33,500	
2019	33,700	
2020	33,700	
2021-2025	<u>224,700</u>	
	<u>\$ 391,300</u>	

For 2015, a 1% increase in the trend rate for health care costs would have increased the APBO by approximately \$319,000.

Restore Your Confidence

Hair loss is no longer something you have to accept.



Before Hair Transplantation / After Hair Transplantation
An actual 30 year old patient of Dr. Neiman. *Individual results may vary



Dr. Joseph B. Neiman
Board Certified Dermatologist



Call (716) 688-0020 for your FREE consultation!

Providing WNY Exceptional Patient Care Since 1980

- Hair Transplantation
- Micro-needling
- Facials
- Microdermabrasion
- Chemical Peels
- Spider Vein Treatment

www.NeimanDermatology.com

ORCHARD PARK | ELMWOOD VILLAGE | NIAGARA FALLS | WILLIAMSVILLE

ECVA: focused on your eyesight.

Drs. Cotter, Holmwood, Montesanti and Pfohl have many years of experience in eye care, surgery and treatment, including:

- laser-assisted cataract surgery
- LASIK
- premium multifocal and toric lens implants (the first in WNY to offer Symphony Next Generation Multifocal IOL!)
- comprehensive glaucoma management
- our doctors are here for you before, during AND after surgery



Total eye care. Caring professionals.
631.EYES (3937) ECVAeyecare.com



Charles San George



EST. 1985



Charles San George II O.D.

Sheridan / Delaware Plaza Across From Tops
874-4600
Convenient Parking

100% Coverage for Teachers and Dependents

Monday through Fri: 9:30AM - 6:00PM We Supply and Submit Your Forms

Saturdays: 9:30AM - 2:00PM

Eye Examinations by Appointment - Evenings Available

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.

- Bruce C. Allen
- Carol M. Batt
- Bertron Carter
- Robert Alan Davis
- Diane DelSanto
- Richard (Dick) Fisher
- Elizabeth A. (Betsy) Flynn
- B. John Harris
- Thomas C. Harris
- Lucille Higgs (Jones)
- Luann F. Joy-Woods
- Geraldine S. Kocher
- Dr. Gertrude Krawitz
- Ruth E. Lampe
- Patricia A. Mahoney
- Marie J. Maida
- Robert McCarthy
- Wally Mucha
- Clyde B. Murphy
- Parmalier D. Murphy
- Norma Patterson
- Candice A. Pawlewski
- Denise Rivers
- Mariya Shanahan
- Corinne Sindo
- Eleanor Thompson Stillman
- Joseph M. Taibbi
- Barbara Winkler
- James C. Yuhnke

PROVOCATOR

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION
271 PORTER AVENUE
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14201
716-881-5400



Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 824
Buffalo, NY

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/position: _____

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.