



TEACHERS FOR A
JUST CONTRACT
Not just an opposition, an alternative.

www.TeachersforaJustContract.org
P.O.B. 545, New York, N.Y. 10028

JustContractUFT@aol.com
212 831 3408

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The UFT Leadership Must Organize Us to Protect
Job Security for All UFT Members!
No Layoffs!
No Concessions!
Protect Seniority!
Full Job Rights for ATRs!

Because of budget cuts, Mayor Bloomberg has been projecting thousands of teacher layoffs for the fall. The state budget crisis is real. We could be headed for layoffs, or the threat of layoffs could be used as “political cover” for the City and the UFT leadership to accept devastating concessions we would never otherwise tolerate, such as putting a limit on the time you can remain an ATR before being terminated.

The state’s budget crisis could be solved with the tax on the richest of the rich. But politicians could be forced to pass such a tax only by a stronger movement of unions and communities than we’ve seen in decades. That is the only kind the “powers-that-be” will take seriously.

What is the UFT leadership’s strategy for

preventing budget cuts? Emails, faxes and phonecalls. This is ridiculously inadequate. This “electronic activism” will pave the way, not for full restoration of budget cuts, but a deal to prevent layoffs through givebacks. We agree that the priority is to keep us unified by protecting all members from job loss. However, we call for a powerful strategy of mobilization and “street heat” that will stop both layoffs and concessions.

We are not talking about standing around for another afternoon surrounded by “pens” like animals in a zoo, as we have been at recent union demonstrations at City Hall. We are talking about lots of local rallies and massive marches and demonstrations that overwhelm the Bloomberg administration and stop “business as usual” before it stops us. We are talking about a united mobilization with

other unions and with community groups.

The tragic truth is that our union today is so demobilized, its power so eroded that it will take tremendous effort to get us fit to wage the campaign that is needed. Because of the UFT leadership's givebacks, especially in the 2005 contract, our union's relevance to the day-to-day lives of members is steadily falling. That's why less than 25% of active members even bothered to vote in the just-concluded citywide UFT elections. Because we're so out of shape, the level of activity needed to achieve our goals can sound unrealistic. However, unless we start developing our militancy, and building alliances with other unions and communities, there will be layoffs, or serious givebacks, or both. The Transport Workers Union, which is also facing layoffs, would be a natural and powerful ally in this struggle.



Our union is a long way from having the ability to do this, but even in today's anti-union political climate, we can see employees winning victories against management and politicians. Florida teachers used a "sick out" to force Governor Crist to veto a bill that would have weakened tenure and based their pay on so-called "merit." In our own city, building workers just won a raise with no givebacks by showing they were ready and willing to hold an effective strike.

If this sounds good to you, please contact us. We are Teachers for a Just Contract, a caucus within the UFT. We started in 1992, and we have been fighting for better contracts, and a more militant, democratic union, since then. You can find more information on our website, www.TeachersforaJustContract.org. Email us at JustContract@yahoo.com, call us at 212-831-3408, or mail the coupon below to *Teachers for a Just Contract, POB 545, N.Y., NY 10028*.

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