

“Issues at Your School” – An email no NYC principal wants to receive

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Turning the tables. That's what progressive caucus UFT Solidarity began to do when members contact us that they are under warrantless attack. For almost a decade NYC DOE administrators had unfettered power to destroy careers. Problem with a teacher who grieves contractual violations or want to get rid of a pesky chapter leader? No problem. All a principal had to do was start building a paper trail of trumped up charges and fraudulent observations. Sometimes a simple phone call to the DOE's Office of Special Investigation (OSI) would do the trick. The teacher would be removed for months or years without knowing why they were removed. That's if they were tenured. If not, they would be discontinued and out in a few days. The union? The UFT has been absent in thwarting attacks against members and sometimes is actually involved in helping the members get railroaded See [\[UPDATED\] Bizarre Behavior Coming from Queens UFT Office](#).

So what is a member under attack to do? Well, luckily we live in the age of technology and have come up with some tools to fight back. This is how it works, *and it does work*. (Not all the time but it's getting better.)

At UFT Solidarity, we have collaborated on an email we send to administrators who are bullying and harassing our members. The email is written in a way where we let the administrator know that the members in their school and not sitting ducks and will have support. We let the administrator know that we are educating their staff on how to fight back and encourage them to support and not continue their

attacks. What we hope, or assume, happens is that the administrator sends it to their superintendent and DOE lawyers. In turn we hope that the superintendent and lawyers respond to the administrator with something like this:

“Oh no. We have seen these before and it can get ugly. Expect there to be [Freedom of Information Law](#) requests on your records such as time cards, financial records and emails. They even obtain video surveillance footage. Your staff is probably already secretly recording you. Expect stories of you to be added to social media with comments being added by staff, students and parents. You will be added to their Administrator’s in Need of Improvement (ANOI) list online if you have not been already. [uftsolidarity.org/anoi](#). Expect them to launch investigations on anything you have done that violates a chancellor’s regulation, policy or law. Investigators will be coming. Finally, expect a group of their members and your staff and students, albeit small, to be outside your school with flyers and signs. If you have not bought a Costco size bottle of Tylenol, then we suggest you do that.”

At least that is what we hope the lawyers tell the administrator and they second guess their future actions.

The Email:

Principal X,

Unfortunately your school has come to the attention of our teacher advocacy group. Apparently there are allegations of harassment and unwarranted attacks on educators at your school. As you could imagine, an atmosphere of workplace bullying and harassment is not conducive to a nurturing learning environment for our students.

Just as a courtesy, we are letting you know that we are educating your staff members with information on how to defend their careers so they may continue to instruct and nurture students to their fullest potential. Those tools can be in the form of legally audio recording, using the Freedom of Information Law to obtain information necessary to prove their allegations against you, organizing rallies and creating various social media articles.

Perhaps your best recourse would be to speak with the superintendent, your senior field counsel and Borough Support Center representative, to figure out ways to support educators rather than treading on their careers.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

UFT Solidarity

"Building a stronger union."



If you don't believe me, then you can perform an internet search on many of the administrators we have listed on our ANOI list. You can ask Principal Micheaux and AP Martinez of the Bronx. Ask Principal Adonna McFarland or Principal Namita Dwarka. Our list is over 100. Namita Dwarka and her school has been on the cover of the NY Post the last three days. The brave people responsible are UFT Solidarity members and supporters who have been following our playbook.

Also see our campaign page as our team and platform are growing. For this reason I have not been able to blog much here. My time has been spent building and organizing with great educator activists and enjoying time with my family. My sleeves are rolled up and we are ready to increase our work this September. Our ATR Alliance group is also growing and becoming more knowledgeable. A similar letter is being drafted for ATR Field Supervisors.

As we delve deeper into the [UFT 2016 campaign season](#), expect more push back in more schools. We will bring positive change one way or another. Improving the classroom settings will improve the classroom learning.

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