

BEDFORD TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
POLITICAL ACTION REPORT – 3/13/14  
Submitted by: Mimi Warren

**Committee of 100:** Michael Groarke and Mimi Warren, along with 700 NYSUT members from around New York State attended Committee of 100 in Albany on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Committee of 100 provides the opportunity for NYSUT members to speak directly to legislators. Discussions included these key items:

- Additional school funding, K – 12
- Increase funding for SUNY, CUNY and Community Colleges
- Repeal the Tax Cap/change the super-majority vote
- **Funding for Teacher Centers – currently \$0 in the budget!**
- Restore funding lost to Gap Elimination Adjustment
- Moratorium on High Stakes Testing
- Ban on Pre-K through Second Grade Standardized Testing
- Additional Support for Pre-K Special Education Programs
- Funding for Full Day Universal Pre-K and Kindergarten
- Active Involvement in the Regent's Selection Process – 4 members are up for re-appointment in March

The Assembly has recently introduced a moratorium bill (A8929) that would reform many aspects of Common Core and testing, including: prohibiting for two school years the use of high-stakes tests for certain educator and student decisions; banning certain kindergarten and pre-kindergarten standardized tests; reducing testing for students; protecting student data, and increasing supports for students and teachers. Committee of 100 delegates took the opportunity to push the Senate to do the same.

**Thomas DiNapoli – State Comptroller:** Spoke to the NYSUT delegates at Committee of 100. DiNapoli commended NYSUT for lobbying activities and reminded delegates that the strength is in our numbers. NYSUT is 600,000 members strong! DiNapoli also spoke to the importance of keeping our retirees involved and engaged. Comptroller DiNapoli continued to speak about the profound difference public education had on his family, growing up in a household where his parents did not speak English. Comptroller DiNapoli encouraged delegates to talk with legislators and remind them where they came from as well and the opportunities afforded them through public education.

Comptroller DiNapoli also mentioned that upstate New York is not recovering fiscally at the same pace as downstate. His office has released fiscal stress monitoring reports which found 87 school districts out of 674 districts analyzed across the state are in some level of fiscal stress, resulting from a combination of factors including flat funding from the state and the property tax cap. This brings us back to the question of what sort of priority are we putting on public education in New York State. No group is better organized or prepared to continue this discussion with the legislators than New York State United Teachers so.....send those FAXES and make those phone calls!!!!

**Senator Greg Ball** recently voted against the confirmation of the 4 Board of Regents candidates nominated by the State Assembly. Please consider signing Senator Ball's petition regarding the implementation of the Common Core, which can be found at:

<http://www.nysenate.gov/webform/petition-stop-common-core-new-york-state>

Did you know – even though funding was increased by almost \$1 billion last year, NYS still lost more than 3,500 educator jobs?

**NYSUT:** Please take a moment to download the NYSUT app: NYSUT MAC. This app gives you direct access to the Member Action Center and allows you to send Faxes in an instant! Sending Faxes couldn't be easier. There is NO funding for Teacher Centers in the Governor's current budget for 2014-2015, but there is a FAX at NYSUT MAC. Please take one minute to send it every day.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014:** join in **Day of Solidarity** to remember the women and men who lost their lives in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire on March 12, 1911, one of the deadliest industrial disasters in the history of the state of New York. Wear your Union shirt, teach labor lessons and promote awareness of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. 146 garment workers lost their lives that day. The oldest was 43, the youngest 14. The Westchester Putnam Central Labor Body will hold a Worker's Memorial Day Vigil on April 29<sup>th</sup> to remember all those who have lost their lives on the job.

**ACTION AT MRS. GREENS, Mt. Kisco:** 9 workers were fired from Mrs. Greens in Mt. Kisco for supporting union organizing and union activities. If you shop there and are missing some of your favorite employees, now you know why. Please take the time to stand with these workers. The picket line is typically up Monday through Saturday, 10:00AM to 4:00PM. The address is 666 Lexington Ave. If you are unable to join the picket line, please consider boycotting Mrs. Greens. Don't forget to stop in and tell them you are a union member and you would like to see the former employees return to their jobs.

