



Brandeis HS



MS 399X

STOP NYC SCHOOL CLOSINGS!

May 14, Thursday

4:00pm - Assemble at Battery Park (Trains to Bowling Green)

4:30pm - March to Dept. of Education

5:30pm - Picket the Dept. of Education

(Chambers & B'way – Trains to B'klyn Bridge or Chambers)

Protest Tweed & the Mayor

**Fully Support Neighborhood Schools - Restore Teacher Seniority Rights
No Mayoral Control - Smaller Class Sizes - Stop High Stakes Testing**

The UFT Contract MUST address these demands!

Endorsers: Independent Community of Educators – ICE/uft, NYCoRE -New York Collective of Radical Educators, TAGNYC, Teachers for a Just Contract - TJC/uft, Teachers Unite, Roots Revisited, S.E.E.D.S., NY Coalition for Neighborhood School Control, Black New Yorkers for Educational Excellence - BNYEE, People Power Coalition, FMPR (Federacion de Maestros de Puerto Rico) Support Committee, iCOPE - Independent Commission on Public Education, ...

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Sponsor:
Grassroots Education Movement (GEM)

FIX PUBLIC SCHOOLS: DON'T PRIVATIZE!

The Bloomberg/Klein Dept. of Education (DOE) are removing the "PUBLIC" from **NYC** public education. The defenders of unchecked privatization, like those involved in the current downfall of corporations— have now set their sights on education. Greed and corruption have brought our economy into recession; what will they bring to our children?

Since the Mayor took control of the DOE in 2003, the abuses of undemocratic power are evident:

- Charter schools have become the new "voucher" programs of today: repackaged and resold. Companies like Wal-Mart, the hedge fund - Plainfield Asset Management, and countless conservative think tanks have donated to its promotion. And what strange bedfellows have emerged: Newt Gingrich, Al Sharpton, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and even the UFT's Randi Weingarten. Public schools have long been the prize of greedy privateers, and this time, using the rhetoric of the civil rights movement, they are convincing those unaware of their true intent. Never mind that a AFT study of NAEP data on charter schools have shown a significant DECREASE in reading and math scores compared to public schools.
- The weapon of choice has been standardized high stakes testing. In the last 2 years, the DOE spent a total of \$235 million on data gathering and testing for schools, students, and teachers. Money that could have been used for smaller class sizes, textbooks, and after school programs has instead been funneled into the cult of labeling schools as failing. How coincidental that corporations are contracted to assess our schools as failures, thus paving the way for even more influx of corporate control in the form of charter schools.
- The multitude of school closings have left 1700 seasoned veteran teachers (ATRs) without permanent teaching posts. Due to changes in school budgets, principal control, and the DOE's scheduling of new teacher job fairs ahead of the ATRs, the Mayor is tactically filling schools with inexperienced teachers, who learn more about obedience to dictatorial mandates, than about sound teaching from seasoned colleagues.
- Since taking over the DOE in 2003, Bloomberg's administration has touted real gains in student performance based on "city" statistics. Yet these same defenders of the almighty data scorned the results of the NAEP testing that found no significant gains in NYC's 8th grade reading and math scores. Instead of supporting and funding needy schools, Bloomberg's main tactic of pressuring principals to perform at all costs have brought social promotion to negligent heights. It is now legal to give a year's worth of credit to students who sit for a few days of "recovery" classes. Furthermore, important subjects like history, art, music, and physical education are cut, to slavishly drill for high stakes (and often dumbed-down) tests.
- Let's not forget the money. In 2000, there were 7 no-bid contracts by the DOE that cost the city \$693,000 dollars. Under Bloomberg's reign, the fiscal year 2008 saw 944 no-bid contracts totaling 1.9 billion dollars. Comptroller Thompson has decried the lack of transparency in the DOE (unlike every other city agency). There is no oversight in DOE spending, and the mayor likes it that way.

Mayoral Control is up for renewal in June by the state legislature. The forces of privatization are making a nationwide campaign to push their privatization agenda. The good news is: protests are sprouting everywhere and the truth is being spread. Come out on May 14th. Join parents, teachers, students and concerned New Yorkers to keep our children's educationPUBLIC!!!

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