

**Resolution to Reimagine School Governance of New York City Schools**

WHEREAS, in 2002, the Mayor of NYC was granted control of NYC schools, being given the power to appoint the city's school chancellor and a majority of members to the City Board of Education (unofficially known as the Panel for Education Policy or PEP);

WHEREAS, the law authorizing Mayor full control of NYC schools is set to expire on June 30th of 2022;

WHEREAS, the City Board, which does have the power to enact policy, continues to remain an almost entirely appointed Board that has been referred to as the Mayor's rubber stamp;

WHEREAS, legislators, parents and families, education advocates, educators have been questioning the effectiveness of mayoral control for nearly two decades and agree that more power must be given to the parents and families of New York City public school students, and a move toward a new, more democratic form of school governance is required;

Whereas, the UFT has a long-standing policy since 2013, passed by the delegate assembly, to support a Board of Education/Panel of Educational Policy, that consists of 13 members, of which five are appointed by the mayor in an attempt to place limits on mayoral control of New York City public schools and so that the Mayor has no clear path to control over those on the board;

Whereas, our union President, on various occasions, has publicly expressed the following sentiment: "We need a change. Parents and educators need more voice. A single person in control, with few checks and balances, is not good for our school system."

Whereas unilateral mayoral control has eliminated the first rung of democracy commonly enjoyed by most parents and families across New York State and nationally, effectively disenfranchising NYC parents, families and students, 70% of whom are poor and 85% of are Black, Latinx and Asian;

Whereas, mayoral control of New York City schools was instituted 20 years ago by the state legislature and has been renewed continuously without a detailed, comprehensive audit of its finances and efficacy;

Whereas, that such a comprehensive public review falls under the Legislature's fiduciary duty of oversight and furthermore, is needed in order for people to make informed decisions in reimagining school governance of our city's schools with a human rights based system of democratic governance;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the United Federation of Teachers supports calls made by our city's families and communities that the NYS Legislature create a task force to conduct a comprehensive study on school governance in New York City, and develop recommendations with participation by all rights-holders on an alternative school governance structure, before the legislature decides on the matter of mayoral control in June of 2022 and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said study conducted by NYS Legislature also include a comprehensive audit of the spending and educational policies enacted during mayoral control with the findings and data being made available through a public and searchable database and;**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will immediately create a local joint committee, in cooperation with other city schools' community stakeholders, to create and present an action plan to lobby the State Legislature and Governor to implement proposed changes before the statute of mayoral control expires in June of 2022 and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support legislative changes to make the Department of Education a city agency subject to all city and state laws, and where the NYC Comptroller can conduct regular audits of the NYC Department of Education, as is done with all other city agencies, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will support legislative changes to the tenure and composition of the Board of Education/PEP so that the board will be represented by mostly elected and appointed parents of New York City students, and not a majority of mayoral and borough president appointees, and**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will also support legislative changes to empower local school district community boards and school leadership teams in more meaningful and democratic ways so as to give our communities greater voice and determination over the decisions affecting their local schools in such domains as zoning, building utilization, school closures and the hiring of principals and superintendents.**

**Resolution to Improve Compensation Packages for Tier 6 Members**

Whereas, UFT-represented employees have contracts which are collectively bargained, such that UFT-represented employees with the same job titles share the same pay scales.

Whereas, retirement benefits, which are also central to any compensation program, are not collectively bargained and are in fact tiered, such that two UFT-represented employees with roughly the same amount of experience can have vastly different benefits to look forward to upon retirement.

Whereas, specifically, any UFT member who joined the Teachers Retirement System after March 31, 2012 is entered in the Tier 6 pension system; and, have reduced benefits, a longer vesting period, and more severe penalties for early retirement, compared to members in Tier 4 (who themselves have reduced benefits compared to those in Tier 1).

Whereas, many other city agencies such as police, fire, sanitation can retire with full pensions after 22 years of service,

Whereas, despite reduced benefits, Tier 6 members are forced to contribute to their pensions as long as they are working, while members of Tier 4 stop contributing after 10 years of service; and Whereas, Tier 6 member rate contributions increase as their salaries increase and go as high as 6% of their salary, while Tier 4 member rate contributions are locked in at 3 % (and end after 10 years).

Whereas, the result of decreased benefits and increased payment for receipt of said benefits means that Tier 6 members receive less overall compensation than peers in Tier 4.

Whereas, in the past the UFT has previously lobbied for pension improvements with some success (e.g. a 25-55 option for Tier 4 members); and Whereas, legislators in New York State are majority Democrats now, but might not always be in the future.

Whereas the first group of Tier 6 UFT members will soon reach their 10 year mark and thus begin contributing beyond what was expected of their peers in Tier 4, making action on pension reconciliation urgent.

Whereas, failure to lobby on behalf of our Tier 6 members now may not only harm our Tier 6 members, but may result in us being forced into a defensive position in coming years if new inferior tiers are introduced for future UFT members.

**Therefore, be it resolved: the UFT will begin an immediate and aggressive lobbying campaign to the City and the State to improve Tier 6 to the level of Tier 4.**

Our Retirement Tiers and You	Mayoral Control and You
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Because of the longer vesting schedule (10 years), only a small fraction of members hired into Tier 6 will ever qualify for their pension. Moreover, retiring before the age of 63 results in severe penalties for Tier 6 members.</li> <li>Because contributions are higher for Tier 6 members, the few who make it to retirement not only will collect less in benefits, they effectively take home less pay while in-service.</li> <li>Tier 6 hires now make up a large percentage of in-service UFT members. All of our students who become teachers after graduating will be Tier 6, if not worse, unless we are aggressive with a campaign to reverse what was lost.</li> <li>Our severe teacher shortage is impacted by the fact that our benefits are deteriorating. Improving Tier 6 could help us attract educators to the profession, including in hard to staff areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Some of the failures unilateral mayoral control has brought our our professions and school communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Normalizing of co-located schools, push-in of charter schools and privatization of public education</li> <li>Elimination or reduction of civics, arts, music, foreign language, athletic, vocational course and adult education</li> <li>The closure of comprehensive and vocational schools</li> <li>Imposition of high-stakes testing and “value added” assessments for all students, pedagogues, and schools in place of learner, child centered pedagogy.</li> <li>Pushing out of senior, seasoned teachers through assignment into the Absent Teacher Reserve (ATR) without due process</li> <li>The contracting out of technology and professional development with consultants, without transparency and bypassing local expertise</li> <li>Refusal to comply to legal standards for class sizes</li> <li>Continued neglect of infrastructure</li> <li>Inadequate and confusing response to the COVID pandemic</li> </ul>