

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 17, 2021

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**RANK-AND-FILE MEMBERS OF THE UFT FORM UMBRELLA SLATE
TO CHALLENGE THE CURRENT RULING LEADERS OF THE UNION IN SPRING 2022 UFT ELECTIONS**

New York, New York: Throughout 2020 and 2021, UFT members have watched as their union failed to keep unsafe schools closed, failed to listen to its members, and failed to secure fair pay, benefits, and protections. Late night emails from UFT President Michael Mulgrew with empty rhetoric are commonplace, but classrooms are overcrowded and poorly ventilated, counseling departments are grossly understaffed, schools reopened with the same poor infrastructure, and the healthcare of retirees and new members has been sold to the highest bidder. The COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown has shown that educators need a responsive union leadership that is willing to mobilize members to improve working and learning conditions.

United for Change, a group of opposition caucuses, activist groups, and individual educators in the United Federation of Teachers is proud to announce a joint-slate coalition to challenge the 60-year reign of the UFT's Unity caucus in the upcoming 2022 UFT elections. United for Change is composed of school workers who want to see a fundamental shift at the top of their union after entrenched, increasingly undemocratic and unaccountable, single-party control. Coalition organizations include the Movement of Rank-and-File Educators (MORE), UFT Solidarity, New Action-UFT, the Independent Community of Educators (ICE-UFT), Educators of NYC (EONYC), Retiree Advocate-UFT, and a broad swath of new and veteran union activists. The coalition's platform includes calls for:

- Smaller class sizes with enforceable caps negotiated in the UFT contract
- More student support staff, including counselors, social workers, librarians, nurses & secretaries
- Fair pay and professional respect for all, including paraprofessionals, therapists, & untenured staff
- Safe working conditions & safe learning conditions
- More democracy within their union and more organizing support in chapters & districts
- A halt to the privatization of public education & healthcare
- Better healthcare for union members & their families

The joint slate will be announced at the UFT's Delegate Assembly at 52 Broadway on November 17th at 4:30 PM. Coalition activists at the delegate hall will speak about the new coalition.

Movement of Rank-and-File Educators Caucus member Annie Tan said, "I am inspired by the examples of Chicago and Los Angeles that won many more protections than New York because they have unions that listen to their teachers and members. I'm fighting for a union that will actually listen to us and won't back-door negotiate. As a former Chicago Teachers Union member, I know that we have power in numbers and that our voices matter. We are united for change for a better union that mobilizes our membership."

Eric Severson, a member of the **Solidarity Caucus** said, "UFT Solidarity's logo is 'we have your back.' We believe this new coalition does just this. We believe the union should spend more time listening to member concerns on contracts, working conditions, and job-related concerns, and less time lecturing the members that they serve by defending backroom deals."

Bennett Fischer of **Retiree Advocate** spoke about the UFT's role in switching city retirees to a privately administered Medicare Advantage Plan: "As a UFT retiree, I want a union that supports public education, public healthcare, and keeps retiree's Medicare public. I want a better union."

Micheal Shulman of the **New Action** caucus added that "Our union has failed us in the fight against COVID, failed to reduce class size, failed to fight to improve our unequal pensions, and failed against abusive administrators. We need a proactive union that fights to improve our working conditions and end our segregated school system."

The **Independent Community of Educators** looks forward to working in the upcoming union election with all of our coalition partners: "We have been aiming for a united opposition to Unity's mismanagement of our union since our founding in 2003."