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Erie County Moms for Liberty Points to NYSUT, Woke Agenda, for Teacher Shortages

Erie County, NY: Less than two weeks away from the start of the school year in Erie County, and schools are still dealing with staffing shortages. The Erie County chapter of Moms for Liberty is calling on NYSUT to refocus their efforts away from progressive politics to help retain teachers in WNY.

Just last week, Buffalo Public Schools announced over 250 teacher openings. That's in addition to a huge bus driver shortage that could leave over 3,000 students without transportation (Lynch, 2022). In Niagara Falls, the district currently has only 10 substitute teachers ready, versus 80 last year. The district also had to postpone the start date of the school year due to bus driver shortages (Minkiewicz, 2022). The Erie 1 BOCES Extended School Year (ESY) program that serves special education students un-enrolled half its students due to teacher shortages (Proia, 2022).

Jackie Best, Chair of the Erie County Chapter of Moms for Liberty, says it's time for the teachers' unions to refocus their efforts. "A union's role is to advocate for its members such as fighting for better pay and working conditions," says Best. "Instead, NYSUT focuses on Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI), LGBTQ rights, social justice, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)." In fact, the membership of Erie County's Moms for Liberty chapter includes local teachers who want change. One such teacher, who wishes to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, feels NYSUT is heavily to blame. "It is toxic teachers' unions that have alienated teachers with differing opinions and districts pushing a woke agenda that has done the most damage," she told Best. "It is not only creating a shortage of educators, but it is most importantly hurting our children and their futures."

A recent study of over 600 K-12 educators who are resigning concluded the same (Kinnett, 2022). Of those surveyed, nearly 95% of teachers claim their resignation is due to student behavior and progressive political activity (Diversity/Equity/Inclusion, Critical Race Theory, Gender Identity, etc.) required by their administration. This is in sharp contrast to the narrative pushed by teachers' unions which blame parents who have spoken out at school board meetings as politicizing education. In fact, only 1.4% of teachers surveyed noted parent demands as their reason for leaving.

"If teachers' unions and school administration would get back to the basics, it would benefit both teachers & students alike," said Best. "Our local chapter will be working with other chapters across the state to create this change."

Moms for Liberty is dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by unifying, educating and empowering parents to defend their parental rights at all levels of government. It was started in Florida by two moms, both of whom were school board members originally. The Erie County Chapter of Moms for Liberty is a registered 501(c)(4) organization that meets monthly. For more information, or for a comprehensive list of Moms for Liberty chapters, visit www.momsforliberty.org

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