



For Immediate Release

Bob Schiers
856.905.7851
Bob.Schiers@raspr.com

Dennis Boyle
856.905.7852
dennis.boyle@raspr.com

**Neshaminy Teachers Say ‘Nasty Rhetoric’
Undermines Education Mission**

December 21, 2010 - LANGHORNE, PA— Leaders of the Neshaminy Federation of Teachers today called for a return to civility among all concerned about students and learning in the Neshaminy public schools—regardless of the ongoing contract negotiations between the NFT and the school district.

“We have worked nearly three years without a contract,” said NFT President Louise Boyd, “and what we hear on a daily basis is nasty rhetoric from board members and a small faction of anti-union folks about how evil we are.

“I’m frustrated by the politicization of the issues and by the school district’s ‘look the other way’ attitude when it comes to public attacks on our membership,” she said. “It is harmful to Neshaminy students and their education to have a board member spewing venom against the teachers who are working to make a difference every day in the lives of the children in their classrooms.”

Instead, she said, Neshaminy school directors and administrators should be focused on finding common ground with teachers across the bargaining table. And, Boyd added, “School officials should recommit themselves to working together with classroom educators to set policies and priorities that will guarantee students continue to receive the quality education they and their parents have come to expect from the Neshaminy School District.”

Neshaminy teachers have a long history of collaboration with the school district, Boyd said. Collaboration—not conflict, she added, “is the best way to achieve our common goal of providing the best education possible to Neshaminy’s children.”

She noted that nearly all education scholars agree that cooperation and mutual respect are hallmarks of successful school systems. As a recent Rutgers University study concluded, school districts hoping to achieve improvement “must develop strong cultures of collaboration that inform approaches to planning and decision making.” Such collaboration, Saul A. Rubenstein and John E. McCarthy wrote, must cross a wide spectrum of areas, including curriculum, teacher development and evaluation, instructional methods, as well as hiring decisions by school boards and superintendents.

Teachers are focused on doing what’s right for their students, Boyd said. “Many of our efforts have actually saved money for the school district,” she added, “including data analysis training coordinated through the American Federation of Teachers over the last three years for teachers, principals and staff.”

The next negotiating session is scheduled for Dec. 28.

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