



For Immediate Release

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**NFT PRESIDENT LOUISE BOYD PREVAILS IN CHALLENGE
TO HARASSMENT CHARGE LEVELED BY NESHAMINY SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

Arbitrator Sustains Boyd's Actions on All Levels

LANGHORNE, PA (April 24, 2012) — Neshaminy Federation of Teachers President Louise Boyd prevailed this week in the lengthy battle that began in September 2010 when the Neshaminy School District alleged Boyd harassed a high school teacher who declined to honor the union's "work to contract" action and participated in the district's "Back To School Night" program.

The district alleged Ms. Boyd violated Neshaminy School Board Policy when Ms. Boyd (and another union representative) met with the teacher to ascertain if the teacher felt unjustly pressured by the district to attend Back To School Night.

In his Opinion and Award findings, Arbitrator Anthony F. Visco Jr., Esq., found that "Grievant Louise Boyd did not harass teacher (name deleted) on or about September 30, 2010 or at any other time."

NFT leaders said the Arbitrator's ruling was no surprise to them.

"Knowing all the facts, we were one hundred percent confident the Arbitrator would find in Louise's favor," said NFT Vice-President Anne Schmidt. "The district filed erroneous charges of harassment that were absurd. They put at risk the professional reputation of a dedicated, hard-working teacher employed by the district for more than 25 years. It is hard to avoid concluding that these charges may have something to do with Louise's position as the president of our Union and the sad fact that we are caught in a four-year battle without a contract," Schmidt

explained. “This is another clear-cut example of the district’s punitive approach to its certified staff. We cannot allow this district to break the law in an effort to break our union.”

Schmidt went on to explain the NFT’s position that it is the district that is doing whatever it can to harass the NFT – not the other way around.

“There’s been a clear pattern of intimidation, obstruction and harassment on the part of the district against the NFT since our contract expired in June 2008,” Schmidt stated. Looking back over the past two decades, we had to file only two Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) claims against the District, and we prevailed in both cases. But ever since the district failed to agree to a new contract, we’ve been forced to file more than six ULPs and 13 grievances. In the ULPs, we’ve prevailed in each of the three that have so far been settled and the other three are pending hearings. We’ve won three of 13 grievance arbitrations to date and we have reached a mutual agreement with the district on one, withdrawn one, and we are awaiting awards on the remaining eight—four of which have already been heard by arbitrators. It’s ironic that we read in the press that we keep filing charges against the district all in an effort to waste taxpayer dollars. I hope this latest case against Louise helps people see that it is the district that is wasting their tax dollars by trying to break the laws and violate our legally binding contract,” Schmidt says.

Boyd said she is relieved the grievance procedure is complete and that the Arbitrator found clearly in her favor on all counts.

“This is yet another example of what we’ve been saying for the past four years,” Boyd said. “There’s a reason we don’t have a contract – It is ‘entrenched opposition’ to a fair settlement on the part of the district. We’ve shown in each of our proposals that there are many ways we can reach a contract but they seem blind to those realities—instead they say ‘take it or leave it.’ We’re not willing to throw our membership under the bus when we know the district can do better. We urge the district to stop wasting our time and the taxpayer’s dollars with their endless litany of nonsense.”

NFT Vice President Jeff Dunkley added, “This district owes Louise a public apology. They’ve damaged her professional standing with their false charges of bullying and intimidation, and they were dead wrong. But I won’t hold my breath for their apology. Shame on them for what they tried to do to Louise.”

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