



**Trumbull Public Schools Paraprofessionals
Local 222, #78**

Dear co-workers,

Most of you have known me for years. Do you remember a time when we lied or gave incorrect information or put us in a bad spot? We are elected by you... the members. We are elected to serve and do the best for all of us... for you.

Initially, I thought it was best to not inject my opinion about the UPSEU challenge. I have listened and done my research. After much consideration, and people asking for my opinion, my recommendation is to continue to support UE.

We have always been supportive of each other and, at the same time, been able to disagree with each other. UPSEU came in and has created such an unprincipled and divisive atmosphere... and just before negotiation time. They have created distrust amongst each other like never before. I guess it's really easy to tear people down and break them apart. It is not what we, as a union, should be about.

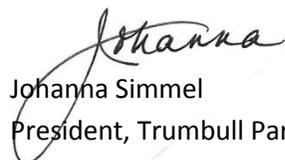
I believe that our interests as Trumbull paraprofessionals are best served by staying with our union - UE. We run our union and we get all the support we need from the local and national union. As President I am in touch with our UE representatives on a regular basis. They are always available and help us tremendously. They attend monthly membership and executive board meetings. They attend meetings with the administration whenever we need them. They lead our negotiations. When there are issues to be addressed they are very responsive and provide the staff and resources we've needed to solve problems and negotiate contracts. When we or the union representative assigned to us needs additional assistance (either legal or otherwise) the UE has provided it.

In UE the members make the decisions what is or is not in our contract and how we settle grievances. UPSEU provides no such protection and UPSEU lawyers or UPSEU bosses can settle a contract or a grievance without us. It is written just that way in the UPSEU constitution. This fact, more than any other, deeply troubles me and I would hope it does most of us. Do you really want someone else deciding if a contract is right for you or what issues or grievances are important?

Over the next few weeks we will be having meetings, handing out and mailing material (and organizational updates) about why we should stay with the UE and how we can make our union stronger and our contract better. Having a union is better than what UPSEU offers. With a union like UE you get legal assistance PLUS you get a whole array of other services, education, trainings, and other resources that UPSEU doesn't provide.

As we debate this issue in the weeks ahead please carefully consider what type of organization best serves the interests of Trumbull paraprofessionals and what we can do, together, to insure we do the best job we can for ourselves, our co-workers, and our families.

In Solidarity,



Johanna Simmel
President, Trumbull Paraprofessionals, UE Local 222, #78