

To the editor:

Michael Solomon is exactly what we need on the Board of the Bedford Central School District. Not only does he have 22 year of experience working in public sector finance, but he was one of only six members of the “Suozi Commission” appointed by then governor Elliot Spitzer in 2008. The Suozzi Commission spent countless hours in public hearings statewide reviewing the state of New York’s public education system and put forth a number of recommendations to reform the system. We are fortunate to have someone of Mike’s background and experience who is willing to volunteer his time as the battle against the entrenched unions in Bedford, and across the state, may end up going to Albany to ultimately get resolved.

Mike Solomon clearly understands that in order to continue to provide a high quality educational product at an affordable cost, we must change the way we have been operating. This includes, among other things, more flexible work rules from teachers and the elimination of automatic pay raises for all on an annual basis. Some of these initiatives are being pursued by the BOE in their proposed contract with the Bedford Teachers Association, but as we have heard from other contributors to this paper, the Triborough provision to the Taylor Law makes it almost impossible to get anything substantive done with BTA.

This is where Mike’s experience on a statewide level becomes invaluable to the Board of the BCSD. In addition to working with the BTA on a local level, we need to have an effort focused on amending the Triborough provision. For those of us who have been involved in this process over the last couple of years, it is evident that amending the Triborough provision is a critical component to lowering property taxes and rationalizing the cost of public education in this state. Once again, some of this work has begun, but clearly we would benefit from the contributions of a board member who has experience and connections on a statewide level. For those who care about maintaining quality education at an affordable cost, I highly encourage you to vote for Mike Solomon on Tuesday May 18.

Scott Vallar

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