



United Teachers of New Orleans

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Morris Jeff teachers present collective bargaining petition

(New Orleans – March 2, 2015) Teachers at Morris Jeff Community School today petitioned their administration and board to recognize the United Teachers of New Orleans as their representative and to begin negotiations on a collective bargaining agreement.

Over 80 percent of the faculty signed the petition circulated by Morris Jeff United Educators. Teacher Aaron Forbes called the movement to win a contract “a chance to shape a better model, to empower teachers and to create a better future for the children of the city.”

Teachers said their request for a mutual agreement with the school’s board on their professional rights and responsibilities is driven by guiding principles.

One of those is job security. “On a personal level,” said teacher Meghan Johnson, “the union provides a safe space for each individual to feel part of a bigger collaborating force that wants to make teaching sustainable and our school the best it can be.”

Teachers agree that a contract will help build a stable community at Morris Jeff. “The union is important because it protects and furthers the interest of our community,” said after school program director Thomas Lofton. “Parents, teachers and kids have a stronger voice when we are united.”

In addition, teachers agree, a contract will build better avenues for consistent communication.

“Being a classroom teacher can be isolating,” said teacher Tiana Nobile. “The union provides us with an opportunity to communicate and collaborate. Together we are stronger as we strive to offer all our students the best education possible.”

Formalizing the relationship between teachers and administrators will support and strengthen the school’s mission to provide a quality education for children in the community, teachers believe.

“It is rewarding and refreshing,” said teacher Alayna Mayberry, “to be part of a responsive community that has forged a partnership between educators, administration and our board in order to best serve our students and their families.

The purpose of a formal agreement between the Morris Jeff board and teachers is to fully develop teachers’ talents, employ the best practices of the profession and sustain a long-term dedication to education.