

# Educators Excellence

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### NYC Classroom Teachers March on City Hall to Call for an Evaluation Deal

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*With \$300 Million at Stake, Educators 4 Excellence Teachers Urge UFT and DOE to  
Finally Put System in Place*

**December 2, 2012 (New York, NY)**—With just six weeks left until New York City’s teacher evaluation system is due to the state, over one hundred classroom educators marched on City Hall Park this afternoon to demand the city and teachers union resolve their differences and negotiate a deal that is fair, multi-measured, and meaningful. The two sides must meet a January 17 deadline or lose \$300 million in state education funds. The teachers—members of the advocacy organization Educators 4 Excellence—want to make sure a deal is reached and that it includes measures supported by classroom teachers including multiple observations, fair benchmarks of student growth and student surveys. Today’s rally represents the first time educators have come together to call for a comprehensive evaluation system to better support their efforts in the classroom.

“New York City’s educators and students are being pushed towards our own version of a fiscal cliff,” said **Jemal Graham, a seven-year veteran math teacher at Eagle Academy for Young Men**. “If we allow ourselves to be pushed off of that cliff, it means losing almost \$300 million in funding for our schools.”

“If we assessed our students on a binary pass/fail scale, there would be rightful outrage. Then why is that same pass/fail system acceptable for us, our students’ teachers?” asked **Susan Keyock, a 13-year veteran special education teacher at Metropolitan High School in the South Bronx**. “The simple answer is: it is not. I was awarded tenure in New York after three years of drive-by observations by assistant principals in May or June. The principal never observed me once. The most valuable feedback I received was from my co-workers, who understood the challenges I was facing at a District 75 school, knew my students, and had the courage to give me strategies on how to better reach my kids.”

Educators 4 Excellence members, who number more than 7,000 in New York City, have been sounding off on the need for more effective evaluation for the past 18 months. Under the current evaluation system, New York City teachers receive one of only two ratings annually—satisfactory or unsatisfactory. There are no consistent measures that determine these ratings or any follow-up to support those who are struggling.

Last summer, an E4E policy group of a dozen classroom teachers issued recommendations for a more robust set of evaluation measures that provided a balanced approach to using student growth data, observations and the contributions teachers make to their school communities. Many of these concepts were incorporated into a statewide evaluation framework, the details of which the city and UFT are now negotiating.

“Teachers have been very vocal about the kind of support and feedback they want, to improve the quality of instruction they provide their students,” **said Jonathan Schleifer, Executive Director of E4E New York.** “We would expect the city and our union leaders to seriously consider these ideas as they continue their work at the bargaining table.”

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For far too long, education policy has been created without a critical voice at the table – the voice of classroom teachers.

**Educators 4 Excellence (E4E)**, a teacher-led organization, is changing this dynamic by placing the voices of teachers at the forefront of the conversations that shape our classrooms and careers. With a quickly growing national network of over 3,500 educators united by the E4E Declaration of Teachers’ Principles and Beliefs, E4E teachers can learn about education policy and research, network at E4E’s event series with like-minded colleagues and important education policymakers, and take action by advocating for teacher-created policy recommendations that lift student achievement and the teaching profession.

For more information, please visit [www.educators4excellence.org](http://www.educators4excellence.org).