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Bloomberg's Stubbornness Costs NYC \$450 Million in Education Aid



01/18/2013 | [Mike Hall](#)

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New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg already has shown he is willing to put the safety of schoolchildren at risk in forcing a strike by the city's **school bus drivers** (<http://www.aflcio.org/Blog/Organizing-Bargaining/Safety-s-Core-Issue-in-N.Y.C.-School-Bus-Strike>). Now, Bloomberg has shown he is willing to throw away \$450 million in state and federal education aid by breaking off talks with the United Federation of Teachers (**UFT** (<http://www.uft.org/>)) over a new evaluation system.

Bloomberg faced a midnight Thursday deadline to reach agreement on a new teacher evaluation system under a new state rule or lose \$250 million in direct state aid and another \$200 million in state and federal grants. Out of more than 700 school districts in the state, only New York City and three small districts missed the deadline.

UFT President Michael Mulgrew says Bloomberg “only wants to play politics with our children.”

Thousands of parents have gotten a lesson this week, as the mayor's ‘my way or the highway’ approach has left thousands of schoolchildren stranded at curbs across the city by the school bus strike. That same stubborn attitude on the mayor's part now means that our schools will suffer a loss of millions of dollars in state aid.

New York State AFL-CIO (<http://nysaflcio.org/>) President Mario Cilento says Bloomberg “is displaying a shocking inability to lead, and children are paying the price.”

Once again, the mayor has failed New York City schoolchildren. First, he threw the lives of children and their parents in turmoil through his unwillingness to include critical safeguards in school bus bids, and now as the teacher evaluation agreement falls apart, he is costing city schools millions of dollars in desperately needed aid.

Meanwhile, some 8,000 Amalgamated Transit Union (**ATU (<http://www.atu.org/>)**) Local 1181 school bus drivers and monitors **remain on strike (<http://www.aflcio.org/Blog/Organizing-Bargaining/Safety-s-Core-Issue-in-N.Y.C.-School-Bus-Strike>)** over the fact that Bloomberg refuses to require provisions in upcoming competitive bids for operating the yellow bus system that proven, experienced and trained drivers and bus monitors retain their jobs.

In a Jan. 17 column, **New York Daily News (<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/gonzalez-mayor-stop-blaming-bus-workers-article-1.1242198>)** columnist Juan Gonzalez takes Bloomberg to task for his handling of the school bus issue.

The mayor's claims that he wants to protect competitive bidding seem hypocritical after his history of violating or ignoring such rules. He also fails to look at the reasons for rising bus costs that have nothing to do with the workers trying to protect their livelihood.

You can support the drivers' call for school bus safety by calling Bloomberg's office at **1-888-833-7428** or text “**Safety1st**” to **877877**.

For more info and to sign a petition, visit: **[nysaflcio.org/Safety1st \(<http://www.nysaflcio.org/Safety1st>\)](http://www.nysaflcio.org/Safety1st)**.

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