



**Statement of Karen Aronowitz, President
United Teachers of Dade
August 28, 2008**

On behalf of the dedicated educational professionals we represent we want to congratulate the board members who were re-elected. We also want to congratulate Larry Feldman, a fellow educator and our newest board member on his election. And finally, we want to thank Evelyn Greer for her service to our public schools. You have much to be proud of.

It's time to put the election behind us and come together on behalf of our children. Teachers and education support professionals have always been focused on our children. We will continue to do so, no matter how daunting the task. Our children's education and community's future is more important than any one of us. The mission is about our children and our community.

We have always done everything possible to work with the superintendent, the administration and the school board, to reach common ground. That will never change. I can promise you that.

UTD is here and will always be here to help our community reach common ground. We need to move beyond 5-4 board votes. We need to reach a broader, more enduring consensus.

I also can promise that we will ensure that the school board and superintendent keep their promise. We can not allow our teachers' pay to be cut, teachers to be fired or to be disrespected. UTD does not accept this and our community does not accept this.

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We know there are ways the board and the administration can save money and fulfill its obligations to our teachers and education support professionals. Let's now all move forward together -- UTD, this superintendent and the entire school board. Let's resolve this issue and put it behind us.

We are calling on the board and administration to immediately re-open a dialogue with UTD. We want to meet with you and again show how we can save money and fund your contractual obligations.

We can do this. It's not too late.

But to succeed, you must stop viewing your teachers as part of the problem. We are part of the solution.

To succeed, we also urge you to hire a budget czar who can guide the budget process. The board approved the hiring of a budget czar. It's now time to act on this item.

We are confident that with a renewed spirit of cooperation, of common purpose, we can quickly put this issue behind us.

We owe it to our children and our community to do so.

Thank you very much.



**Karen Aronowitz
President**