



CHARTER SCHOOL: Protest over union planned today

Staff Reports

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— Teachers at the Niagara Charter School are getting union representation under a recent court ruling, but that doesn't mean all of them are happy about it.

Members of the charter school's instructional staff are planning to protest a recent court decision that allowed them to be represented at the bargaining table by the Niagara-Wheatfield Teachers Association, which represents teachers in other schools within the Niagara-Wheatfield School District.

Staff members from Niagara Charter School issued a press release Monday announcing plans to picket from 4:30-5 p.m. today outside the charter school on Lockport Road.

The instructional staff at Niagara Charter School is not unionized.

In a recent ruling, Administrative Law Judge M. Lynn Fitzgerald recognized the Niagara-Wheatfield Teacher's Association as the bargaining unit for the charter school, citing a section of New York's charter school law that provides union representation for teachers working at charter schools where enrollment exceeds 250 children in the first two years of operation.

Laurie Munzert, a second-grade teacher at Niagara Charter School, said staff members have not wanted union representation since the first day the school opened and they have voted against union representation. She also said the local representative from the New York State United Teachers has not cooperated with requests from teachers for the creation of a bargaining committee and has not been responsive to the concerns of instructional members at the charter school.

She said the union leader is leaving the impression the union intends to press on, even if it does not have support from charter school teachers.

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