



in his school on Jan. 2.

He sent a letter Jan. 15 to Mayor Bloomberg and Schools Chancellor Joel I. Klein demanding action and requesting a meeting. Later that day, he was told he was being put back into the rubber room. The charges were categorized as "abuse" stemming from an incident Jan. 8. Mr. Lewenstein said he does not know of any incident that could have resulted in the charges.

### Frustrated With UFT

He is also frustrated with what he believes has been inaction on the part of his union. "We got to the point where we decided we had to organize and do something for ourselves," he said.

The UFT had a meeting last fall with Teachers assigned to rubber rooms to discuss a list of demands they had presented to the DOE. Officials said they have been meeting with the DOE to implement several changes, such as mandating that the city tell Teachers the charges against them within 48 hours of re-assignment, unless the charges are criminal. The UFT also wants to establish an independent panel to review any charges within five days of re-assignment to assess whether the Teacher is truly a threat to the school community.

UFT President Randi Weingarten wrote a letter to several elected officials in response to a letter of complaint written to them by members of Teachers4Action about the rubber-room situation. "[T]he UFT is actively engaged with members in the TRCs and its legal department is advocating for them, making certain that members receive due process rights in a timely manner," the letter stated. "The discussions with the employer have been active and ongoing but there is not yet agreement on all matters."

### Co-Opted by Union?

Mr. Lewenstein said he believed that the UFT response undermined his group's efforts to get assistance from elected officials and protect themselves from what they see as the arbitrary discipline of the rubber rooms. He said he may include the UFT alongside Mr. Klein and Mr. Bloomberg as a defendant in the lawsuit.

"We are very determined to go ahead with this to see if a court will provide us with some relief," he said. "This is not sound educational policy, and it is affecting the instruction the kids get."



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