

TC3 adjunct faculty press union recognition

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DRYDEN — Organizers of the adjunct faculty association plan to ask the Tompkins Cortland Community College Board of Trustees once again for union recognition Thursday before taking the issue up with the state.

The college has formally announced its rejection of the request. In a statement Tuesday the college rejected a request by the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) union to recognize the TC3 Adjunct Association as a union, citing concerns the petition to unionize lacked the support of the majority of the 258 adjuncts.

But adjunct instructors are not impressed by the college's reaction.

"I find it disingenuous," Gregg Weatherby, an English adjunct instructor at the college and an organizer of the adjunct association, said of the statement.

The college refused the association's offer to officially count the petitions, Weatherby said. He declined to release the name of the elected official who had offered to count the petitions.

John Connors, the college provost and vice president, said the offer to have the official count the signatures came late last week after the college had already decided to reject the request and urge the association to instead turn to the New York Public Employment Relations Board.

The association plans to go to the Public Employment Relations Board, Weatherby said.

If the TC3 board does not recognize the union, the association and the state teachers union will ask that the college at least not interfere with the association's union certification from the relations board, said Julie Berman, a labor relations specialist with NYSUT.

The state teachers union is concerned TC3 will ultimately cause petitions to expire by forcing the association through a lengthy hearing process, Berman said.

TC3 has called for the relations board to take a vote among the adjuncts faculty, calling the vote "the fairest way to decide the issue."

"It is also the college's hope that the vote can happen as soon as possible so that we may have an answer as to where the majority of our adjuncts stand," Connors said.