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To the Editor:

The last lines of Dan Janison's 3/13 thoughtful article "The politics of school" were at once validating and frustrating. In getting to the heart of the matter about what it takes to ensure public education fulfills its promise to nurture and develop an informed and active citizenry, the article concludes "Only ordinary citizens and not society's powerful ... could make that happen – a point now worth considering."

We agree. By and large, when "ordinary citizens" – educators, parents and students – receive the resources and support they need at home and in the classroom, the collective experience with public education in our state has been overwhelmingly positive. When problems arise in a school, it is those same local stakeholders who are best situated and informed to find solutions to achieve the desired outcomes.

Unfortunately, the Governor's myopic and cynical education agenda seeks to undermine local control, the time-tested foundation and strength of our system of public education. Contrary to advice of countless education experts and against the wishes of most parents, he would instead impose politically motivated strategies and systems from on high with little regard for what's really good for the students.

But "ordinary citizens" have taken note and they're taking action.

And therein lies our frustration. We find it remarkable that while one of your own columnists stresses the need for individual citizens to take action at this time of crisis for public education, *Newsday* utterly fails to report when people do just that.

Just last week more than 5,000 "ordinary citizens" – parents, students and educators – gathered at events in Patchogue and Westbury to speak out against the governor's education agenda, yet *Newsday*, which supports the governor's reforms, provided no coverage of the larger of these events and only scant mention of the other.

Contrast that with the half-page article *Newsday* chose to devote on page 17 of this Sunday's edition to a gathering of "more than a hundred parents and students" that rallied in support of the school tax credit, a cause *Newsday* supports. How is this either fair or balanced reporting of the news?

Every day, through actions large and small, countless people are standing up to support our public schools. Thousands of ordinary citizens across Long Island understand that the way to fix the problems that exist in some schools, is to build upon what we know works in the overwhelming majority of them. The politicians are aware of this. It would be nice if the Island's paper of record demonstrated some awareness of it as well.

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