

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pressure mounts on Kean Trustees: 'Farahi Must Go'
Staff unions united; students petition for Kean President's removal

UNION, NJ...University faculty and staff are calling on the Kean University Board of Trustees to remove President Dawood Farahi alleging that he has falsified numerous claims on his resume. After a contentious public meeting last week, students started a petition to remove the President. The membership of the Kean Federation of Teachers (KFT), an American Federation of Teachers local, which represents faculty, librarians and professional staff, voted unanimously to call for President Farahi's resignation. Another staff union, the International Federation of Professional, Technical Engineers (IFPTE), local 195, which represents approximately 135 janitors, skilled-trades workers and security officers has joined the call to remove President Farahi.

Quoting from the University's Academic Integrity Policy at last week's crowded Trustee meeting, junior Ashley Kraus, from Vernon asked of Dr. Farahi, "If we have to abide by it, shouldn't you?" Students have launched a petition drive calling for the "immediate removal of Dr. Dawood Farahi from his position as President of Kean University."

IFPTE's Steve Pinto, a 30-plus-year university mechanic, is calling on the Trustees to act to restore community faith in the university and for basic fairness. "If one of the workers in my unit had been caught falsifying an employment application, he would be immediately fired," said Pinto. "If we do not hold those who are supposed to lead us to the same standards as we hold other workers, we lose any credibility."

Kean Federation of Teachers President Dr. James A. Castiglione points out that the Unions are acting as guardians of the public trust and institutional integrity. Noting that he initially brought the allegations of fraud to the Trustees' attention in November, he remains concerned that the current investigation is being conducted by a firm Farahi initially recommended for hire. "The evidence presented suggests this is a three-decade long spree of resume fraud," said Castiglione. "If the Trustees are to uphold their fiduciary responsibilities and prevent the damage these allegations have on impending Middle States accreditation and NCAA reviews, they have no choice but to restore responsible leadership immediately."

[MORE]

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PAGE TWO: Pressure mounts on Kean Trustees: 'Farahi Must Go'

American Federation of Teachers New Jersey (AFTNJ) President Donna M. Chiera called for the Trustees to look closely at the overwhelming evidence provided by the KFT. "We support our members in standing up for the integrity of their institution," said Chiera. "If the Trustees opt to continue Dr. Farahi's Presidency, they should make public whatever evidence they reviewed to arrive at their decision. Otherwise the public will likely continue to consider Dr. Farahi with suspicion and Kean's otherwise fine reputation will suffer."

The Kean Trustees are scheduled to meet Wednesday to discuss the allegations regarding the President's academic credentials. The board anticipates taking action at this meeting, according to their web site.

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About the Kean Federation of Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO

Established in 1978, the Kean Federation of Teachers (KFT) is a union of approximately 500 professors, professional staff and librarians. KFT Local 2187 is a member of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the American Federation of Teachers New Jersey (AFTNJ) and of the AFL-CIO. The KFT is one of the locals under the Council of New Jersey State College/University Locals (CNJSCL), the statewide bargaining agent for more than 8,000 professional employees in 11 state college locals in New Jersey.

We protect and advance the terms and conditions of employment for our members, professional educators and staff committed to their students and to their support by Kean University. The KFT is a democratic, inclusive, strong union local with over 80% membership. We are proud of our members' work with their students and for the union.