

West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571, IFT, AFT, AFL-CIO

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

March Calendar

3/9—Ex.Bd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)
 3/9—571 proposed 2020-21 budget presented to Ex.Bd
 3/9—Deadline for 571 Area Trustee Nominations
 3/9—AFT Convention delegate ballots ready for pickup

Union Messenger

Jane Russell, President
 Rachel Esposito, Vice President
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary
 Jonathan Pazol, Financial Secretary
 Brett Blair, Legal Defense Secretary
 Julie McShane, COPE/PAC Chairperson
 Tom Smith, IFT Field Service Director
 Arnavaz Mistry-Mujthaba, IFT Field Service Director
 Julie Masterton, Membership Secretary
 Patty Clancy, Office Secretary
 Andrew Bendelow,
 571 Web Administrator
 Robin Hancock,
 571 Union Messenger Editor



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Newest US Supreme Court Case: Public School Funding Could Be Diverted

And so, it begins again or rather continues into 2020.

Most of you recognize the now infamous *Janus v. AFSCME* case that went to the U.S. Supreme Court. The court decision in July 2018, changed public sector union membership which right-wing groups touted as the death of Unions.



However, a more “under the radar” case, *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*, which was heard on January 22, 2020 in the U.S. Supreme Court, is far more insidious as it could result in a massive expansion of public funding for private religious schools. Like Illinois, Montana has an education tax credit program that allows tax credits to individuals and corporations that donated to private school scholarship groups. The Montana constitution bars public dollars for religious schools and most of the schools participating in the tax credit program were religious schools. The Montana Supreme Court found the tax credit program unconstitutional and stopped the program in 2018. The *Espinoza* case seeks to overturn the Montana Supreme Court ruling.

The right-wing Institute for Justice whose funders include Koch Industries and Walmart and the family foundation of Education Secretary Nancy DeVos, want the states to be able to fund religious schools. Like the *Janus* case, the First Amendment “freedom of exercise” clause is being invoked to defend their position. Religious schools are not subject to the same anti-discrimination policies as public schools and allow exclusion of students and employees based on sexual orientation or religious grounds.

If the Supreme Court rules in the plaintiffs’ favor, 38 states including Montana, whose constitutions ban the provision of use of public funds for religious schools, will be affected. Over 65 percent of private schools are religious and of those, over 78 percent are Christian.

The AFT filed an amicus brief in the *Espinoza* case. The alarm should be sounded because the outcome could be devastating to education and play a major role in disintegrating the U.S. doctrine of the separation of church and state. AFT President Randi Weingarten said, “It would turn [the separation of church and state] on its head. It will basically change over 200 years of practice in the United States.”

cont. on pg. 6

Everyday Emotions and Major Meltdowns

By Bonnie Saracco

AFT's Trauma Toolkit presents valuable information to help us identify students who have experienced trauma and to deal with their developmental delays. It also provides evidence-based strategies to help these students cope with their emotions and meltdowns.

Students who have suffered significant trauma live in a continuous cycle of **"fight, flight, or freeze."** They can escape it by practicing self-regulation skills to manage their feelings. This starts with the awareness that triggered physical symptoms, such as shortness of breath and a racing heart, are reactions to stress and that there are proven ways to diminish them.



Traumatized children often react to stress with a limited set of unproductive behaviors such as running, daydreaming, inappropriate drug use, and self-harm. We must make them aware of the mind-body connection and then help them practice healthier coping skills.

The Trauma Toolkit presents three key strategies to do this. **Begin by having students verbally connect their physical reactions with their stress.** For example, help a child say "When I get angry I curl my hands into fists and sometimes even hit things." Then provide them an opportunity to employ an alternative response, such as deep breathing or participation in a 60 second "dance party" with the whole class. It is also very helpful to continue to practice these responses after the stressful situation has passed.

The Trauma Toolkit suggests the Action Plan of creating a classroom safe space where students can go when they are feeling overwhelmed. It suggests that students be involved in choosing the space, naming it, and deciding what will be there. Clay, stress balls, coloring supplies, and journals can all be calming.

We also need tools to deal with the even more challenging situation of student meltdowns. These can include student over-reactions such as aggression and total shutdowns. Simple requests, tones of voice, facial expressions, and proximity often trigger meltdowns in those students who cannot distinguish between real and imagined threats.

The Trauma Toolbox suggests ways for teachers to deal with student meltdowns, beginning with referral to the school counselor. Helping a student deal with this level of anxiety is a formidable challenge, and a professional therapist can help. It is also crucial to maintain a culture of classroom safety and understanding where naming and discussing emotions is common and valued. Also, calming techniques should be practiced regularly.

The Action Plan suggested for dealing with student meltdowns is **"5-4-3-2-1."** Therapists use this technique to help traumatized people connect to the present moment. There are five steps: name five things you see in the room, name four things you can feel right now (such as feet touching the floor or air in a nose), name three things you can hear right now, name two things you can smell right now (or two smells that you like), and name one thing you like about yourself.

Next month we will talk about what research says about helping those students who have experienced the most severe trauma, and the guidelines for connecting students with counselors and social workers.

Friday
February 14

HAPPY
Valentine's
DAY

Resources for Black Lives Matter at School Week—February 3 - 7, 2020



Last year at our statewide convention, delegates to the Illinois Federation of Teachers voted to support the Black Lives Matter at School campaign. The resolution ([Resolution 25](#)) was submitted by Chicago Teachers Union (Local 1). Black Lives Matter at School Week occurs during the first week of Black History Month

For more information, visit: <https://blacklivesmatteratschool.com/about/>

KNOW YOUR WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

by Tom Smith and Arnavaz Mistry-Mujthaba

Periodically, employees may be required to meet with a representative of the Administration regarding disciplinary issues. Starting in the 1970s the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), Illinois Education Labor Relations Board (IELRB), and the U.S. Supreme Court have issued decisions supporting what is known as an employee's "Weingarten Rights." Any time you find yourself facing a meeting with any agent of the Administration and reasonably believe this meeting could result in disciplinary action against you, these rights apply. It is not necessary that the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) include these rights for you to be protected; however, the CBA may include broader rights than the statute provides, so it is important to know your CBA.

1. Any time you are called to a meeting with your Administration, you should know the nature of the meeting beforehand. If the person calling this meeting does not volunteer this information, ask.
2. If you reasonably believe the nature of the meeting is disciplinary, respectfully request that a Union representative be present. Interrupt this meeting, if necessary.
3. The Administration now faces three options:
 - a. Stop the questioning until the Union representative arrives,
 - b. Cancel the meeting, or
 - c. Give you the choice of ending the meeting or continuing without representation.
4. Do not continue the meeting without Union representation.
5. If the Administration insists that the meeting continue without representation, an unfair labor practice has been committed. You have the option of keeping silent or leaving the meeting. Inform the Union at once and memorialize in writing management's denial of your Weingarten rights.

When you meet with the Administration and the Union representative, the Administration must afford you certain privileges.

1. The Administration must inform the Union representative of the subject of the meeting.
2. The Union representative must be given adequate opportunity for the representative to take you aside for a consultation before the meeting.
3. During the meeting, the representative has the right to interrupt to clarify confusing questions or to end intimidation.
4. The Union may give you advice on how to answer any question.
5. The Union may add information at the end of the meeting to support your position.

The biggest mistake employees make is to meet without the Union being present. Your Union leadership will provide you with a Weingarten rights card. Please keep this card handy, take it with you into a meeting, refer to the back if necessary, and do not hesitate to contact a Union representative. Always remember that exercising these rights and securing appropriate Union representation rest solely with you. The Administration is under no obligation to read you your Weingarten Rights. You must initiate these rights to enjoy the protections which are yours by law.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A UNION MEMBER

As a Union member you are entitled to a number of benefits. One such benefit is the right to have Union representation and/or assistance in resolving disputes that arise out of the work place. This benefit is summarized below.

- You have the right to legal assistance in controversies that arise from incidents occurring in conjunction with your job. The Union determines the level of legal support that will be provided.
- You have the right to file a grievance over violations of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) by your employer.
- You have the right to Union assistance in processing and resolving any grievance over a violation of the CBA.
- You have the right to appeal any denial of Union assistance in exercising the aforementioned rights to the Local 571 Executive Board.
- You have the right to appeal a denial of assistance by the 571 Executive Board to the Local 571 House of Representatives.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding these rights or the implementation thereof, please call the Local 571 office at 630-468-4098.



Reminder!

LOCAL 571 EXECUTIVE BOARD AREA TRUSTEES ELECTION

Nominations are now being accepted for Local 571 Executive Board Area Trustees. The Executive Board of Local 571 shall consist of the Officers of Local 571 which include four (4) Area Trustees, at least one of whom is a PSRP member, and the Local 571 Council Presidents who serve as Trustees. All Local 571 members are eligible to be nominated as Local 571 Area Trustees. The term of office is two (2) years beginning July 1, 2020, and by virtue of their election, they shall be elected also as delegates to the AFT and IFT Conventions. Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before March 9, 2020. Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in each Council of the West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) and location(s) that voting will take place. Interested individuals may request further information about the duties of the office by contacting Julie Masterton at jmasterton@ift-aft.org. Retired members' ballots will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service to their homes.

Key Dates for the March 17, 2020 Presidential Primary Election


Date	Event
3/1/2020	Last day to register to vote by online application
3/2/2020	First day of early voting
3/12/2020	Last day to request a mail ballot , including military and overseas voters
3/16/2020	Last day of early voting
3/16/2020	Last day of grace period registration and voting
3/17/2020	Last day mail ballots can be postmarked
3/17/2020	Election Day

Local 571 Scholarship Opportunities

- **Mary Wheeler Scholarship** - Six (6) \$2,950 one-time awards will be given to high school seniors graduating in 2020 whose parents or guardians are members in good standing of Local 571. Applicants must plan to continue their education full time in the Fall of 2020. Applications are available at www.wstu571.org, Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. ***All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2020.***
- **Julienne Phillips Memorial Scholarship for Current Educators** - Two (2) \$1,475 one-time awards will be given to current licensed educators (teacher, social worker, counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, librarian, instructional coach or nurse) who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571, and pursuing a degree, endorsement, or certificate through graduate coursework. Applications are available at www.wstu571.org, Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. ***All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2020.***
- **Horowitz and Karlovsky Scholarship** - Two (2) \$2,950 awards will be given in 2020 to current undergraduate college/university students pursuing a career in teaching (K-12) or in Women/Gender Studies. Applicants must be entering their junior or senior year and have been accepted into their program of study. Eligible recipients include any

member in good standing or the child/grandchild of a member in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571. Applications are available at

www.wstu571.org, Local 571's Facebook page, or by calling 630-468-4098. ***All application materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2020.***

**Census
2020** 
MAKE SURE ILLINOIS COUNTS.
ILLINOISCensus2020.com

Census Day is April 1, 2020.

The most important thing you can do is respond to the census questionnaire when you receive it. To learn more, visit:

<https://www.illinoiscensus2020.com/>



Student Debt Clinic

(For Union Members Only)

- WHEN:** Tuesday, March 3, 2020
- TIME:** 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- WHERE:** Robert M. Healey Conference Center
500 Oakmont Lane
Westmont, IL 60559
Entrance D and/or E
- COST:** Free to Union members
- R.S.V.P.:** If you wish to participate, contact Patty Clancy by phone at 630-468-4083 or by e-mail at pclancy@ift-aft.org by **February 27th**.
- OTHER:** A light dinner will be served.
- IMPORTANT:** Anyone who signs up to attend the workshop but finds they are unable to attend, must notify Patty Clancy by 5:30 p.m. on February 27th or possibly be charged \$15 for the cost of the dinner.

AFT Civil, Human & Women's Rights

The AFT held its Civil, Human and Women's Rights Conference in historic Montgomery, Alabama in October. The attendees pledged to persist in the fight against racism, discrimination and exclusion, and for equity, justice and democracy—as the conference title announced, “Fighting for a Better Life and a Voice at Work and in Our Democracy in the Not-So-New Jane and Jim Crow Era.”

Isadora Parrini, Elmhurst Council, describes her takeaway from the conference.

“Attending the 2019 AFT Civil, Human & Women's Rights Conference was educational, inspirational, and galvanizing. I came to understand the power we have to affect change and most importantly that we must not be deterred in our refusal to accept the status quo.”

“That phrase—*now isn't the right time*—that dismissive statement is to be disregarded. It will never be “the right time” according to someone.” Nicole Watkins, Field Organizer, Planned Parenthood Generation Action at the University of Alabama



Local 571
Professional
Development
Course



English Language Learners 101 Spring 2020

We encourage members to register for the Local 571 professional development class being offered this spring. The 5-session class is \$50 and for Union Members Only. Cost includes materials and a light dinner each day. **NOTE:** For an additional cost, participants can earn one GSU graduate credit hour. Signup and payment for graduate credit hour is due on the first day of class. The classes will be held at the Robert M. Healey Conference Center in Westmont, IL 60559.

Classes will be held :
March 3rd, 5th, 10th, 12th and 17th
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
15 PD hours—5 sessions—registration deadline is February 17th.

Course Description: ELL 101 Planning for Student Success—How is teaching ELLs to read different than teaching for mainstream students? What are effective instructional practices to make content comprehensible for English learners?

For more information, see the Local 571 website: www.wstu571.org where you will find information about the class and a registration form. You may also contact Patty Clancy by phone at 630-468-4083 or at pclancy@ift-aft.org.



**Monday
February
17**

cont. from pg. 1 **Newest US Supreme Court Case—Public School Funding Could Be Diverted**

Weingarten also states “If you peel back the layers, you see that the real agenda here is to silence parents, to silence teachers, silence students, and silence those who are trying to make the public schools that our kids want to go to.”

Stay tuned. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling is expected by the end of July.

In unity,

Jane A. Russell

Local 571 President



Important Notice Local 571 New Position Available

WSTU Local 571 is hiring up to three Legislative Directors for the 2020-21 school year. The positions are open to WSTU Local 571 members. If you are interested in reviewing the job description, qualifications, duties and responsibilities as well as stipend and reimbursement, go to the website, WSTU571.org or contact Local 571 President Jane Russell, jrussell@ift-aft.org or (630) 468-4043.

Application/resume is due no later than March 4, 2020, and should be requested from President Jane Russell by either e-mail or phone.

CELEBRATING

**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**

Know the past, shape the future.

FEBRUARY 2020

Did you know that former President Barack and Michelle Obama are both Grammy award winners?

Michelle Obama won the Best Spoken Word Album category for the audio recording of her bestselling memoir, “Becoming,” at this year’s Grammy ceremony.

He walked away with awards in the same category twice before — in 2006, for the abridged reading of his memoir, “Dreams from My Father,” and again in 2008, for “The Audacity of Hope.”

AUTO BUYING SERVICE



AUTO BUYING

Helping union members and their families find the right new or used car or truck.



Get the car you’ve always wanted with the **Union Plus Auto Buying Service**, administered by TrueCar. Save time and money with upfront pricing online, a free Carfax report for most vehicles, and rebates on new union made vehicles.

<https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/auto>

What's Missing from the Messenger?

Is there something innovative or exciting happening at your school? If so, we want to hear from you!

Email your news to Robin Hancock at: 571editor@gmail.com

**We Want To Hear
From You**



We're on the Web!!!
www.wstu571.org

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