

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

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

March Calendar

All House and Executive Board Meetings will be held virtually until further notice.

3/8—Ex.Bd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)
 3/8—571 proposed 2020-21 budget presented to ExBd
 3/8—Deadline for Local 571 Officer nominations
 3/18—Local 571 Convention
TBD—AFT PSRP

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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New Secretary Of Education Works With Teachers?

How refreshing and wonderful this will be. The nomination of Dr. Miguel A. Cardona as the Biden Administration US Secretary of Education



brought praise from the AFT and NEA. Joe Biden's administration choice reflects a shift from the previous Democratic administration who chose Chicago Public Schools CEO, Arne Duncan, as the US Secretary of Education. During that time, many controversial "reform" policies came to be including charter school expansion. Biden did not choose the person appearing to be the front-runner, past NEA president, Lily Eskelsen Garcia to lead the Education Department. Nevertheless, the

Cardona selection comes with positive reaction from the AFT Connecticut Meriden District Union President, Erin Benham, where a positive labor-management partnership existed. One of the biggest innovations that came from the partnership was a push to expand the school day at three elementary schools. The Union piloted the program in 2012 using an AFT Innovation Grant.

More recently, Jan Hochadel, AFT Connecticut President, expressed:

"When he was first appointed as Connecticut's education commissioner, Dr. Cardona outlined an overall vision of reimagining education here in Connecticut. Before the pandemic hit, he engaged educators on issues ranging from reducing standardized testing to ensuring equity for all students to closing the diversity gap in our schools."



Dr. Miguel A. Cardona

Dr. Cardona arrived in Meriden, Conn. prior to his attending Kindergarten along with his family from Puerto Rico. They lived in public housing and Cardona did not speak English as a young child. He learned English at school helping him to building bridges with his white peers and valuing relationships in his work. His Meriden community roots are deep and currently two of his own children attend the Meriden Public Schools.

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New Secretary Of Education Works With Teachers?

AFT President Randi Weingarten made the statement on Cardona's nomination:

"Miguel Cardona is not just a proud product of public schools—he's made strengthening public education and fighting for equity his life's work. With his experience as a student, fourth-grade teacher, principal, assistant superintendent and commissioner in Connecticut, Dr. Cardona—a former AFT member—will transform the Education Department to help students thrive, a reversal of the DeVos disaster of the last four years."

Speaking of DeVos who resigned a few days before the Biden-Harris inauguration, Weingarten, when hearing this, made a statement with only two words, "Good riddance."

We expect far more from Miguel Cardona and welcome him. Weingarten summed up the AFT's message:

"His commitment to public education, to our students and to listening to and respecting the wisdom of educators will be crucial as the Biden administration helps schools across America meet the social, emotional and instructional needs of students and moves to safely, responsibly and equitably reopen school buildings."

Press Release: January 21, 2021

AFT's Weingarten on President Biden's Executive Order on Safely Reopening Schools

WASHINGTON—American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten issued the following statement as President Joe Biden prepared to sign an executive order to formulate a national strategy to safely reopen schools in the first 100 days of his administration:

"Finally, we have a president who is committed to doing what educators, parents and students have yearned for since the first weeks of the pandemic—a real national plan to crush COVID that follows the science and secures the resources to make in-school learning safe.

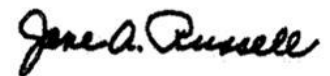
"All too often in this crisis, educators' concerns were dismissed or derided to downplay or minimize the virus. We are already seeing the opposite with the Biden administration: They recognize that safety is paramount, and we are working with them to relay the direct experience of teachers who've tried valiantly to educate their kids absent any federal leadership or support.

"This executive order will produce guidance that embeds and disseminates best practices—based on the science—for safe and effective in-person, remote and hybrid learning. It will source emergency supplies, such as personal protective equipment for schools and childcare providers. It will help establish early warning and screening systems—including testing and contact tracing—and require school districts to consult teachers and their unions to make these plans happen. It will kick-start the equitable rollout of vaccinations and accommodations for educators who need them.

"Crucially, we are grateful the president recognizes the pandemic is rapidly evolving, and that new variants and the latest science must continue to guide decision-making on reopening in the days and months to come.

"Yesterday was a new day in America. There will be daunting challenges, but President Biden, Vice President Harris and their administration are meeting the moment. This week's executive orders are a vital first step."

In unity,



Local 571 President



Take advantage of MetLife Legal Plans — a money-saving benefit available to Union members.



<https://unionpluslegal.com/>

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.

Dear Union Siblings,

For those of you who know me well, you know that I love traveling across America to baseball games at different ballparks. In the cities and towns that I visit, I love going to museums and other historic sites. Having been to multiple Civil Rights Museums and sites, one thing that has always struck me is the importance of Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till-Mobley, in the civil rights movement. Emmett Till's murder and Mamie Till-Mobley's open casket response is often cited as the start of the Civil Rights Movement. In essence Argo is at the center of the birthplace of this movement. With that in mind I would like to remind all of you of Black History Month and Black Lives Matter at School. The IFT passed several resolutions regarding this movement at its 2019 convention. Resources and the resolutions can be found here <https://www.ift-aft.org/blm>
Please consider doing something in your class regarding this movement (and continue it throughout your career).



For those of you unfamiliar with BLM at School, it is driven by four goals:

1. End Zero Tolerance Discipline in school, and implement restorative justice
2. Hire more Black Teachers
3. Mandate Black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
4. Fund counselors, not cops

In addition, there are 13 guiding principles as teaching points for the annual week of action

1. **Restorative Justice**-Intentionally building and nurturing a community that is bonded together through a struggle that is restorative, not depleting.
2. **Empathy**-Practice empathy to connect with others by building relationships built on mutual trust and understanding.
3. **Loving Engagement**-We embody and practice justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.
4. **Diversity**-We acknowledge, respect, and celebrate differences and commonalities.
5. **Globalism**-We see ourselves as part of the global Black family and are aware of the different ways we are impacted or privileged as Black people who exist in different parts of the world.
6. **Trans Affirming**-We are self-reflective and do the work required to dismantle cisgender privilege and uplift Black trans folk.
7. **Queer Affirming**-When we gather, we do so with the intention of free ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking.
8. **Collective Value**-We are guided by the fact that all Black lives matter.
9. **Intergenerational**-We cultivate an intergenerational and communal network free of ageism. We believe people of all ages can lead and learn.
10. **Black Families**-We make our spaces family friendly and enable parents to fully participate with their children.
11. **Black Villages**-We disrupt Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and "villages" that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable.
12. **Black Women**-We build a space that affirms Black women and is free of sexism, misogyny, and environments that are men centered.
13. **Unapologetically Black**-We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black lives matter, we need not qualify our position.



I am sure there is something on this list that you can do with your students in your curriculum or in the way you teach or counsel students. In addition, I am currently reading **Black Lives Matter at School** which discusses this movement. It is an excellent resource. Let us continue to work together towards racial justice.

In Unity,
 Kyle Stern



Legislative Director Report Max Schoenberg and Nicole Burr

The most significant piece of education legislation in Springfield right now is **HB 2170**, which has been passed by the state House and Senate and is expected to be signed into law. Its objective is to promote a safe, inclusive, equitable environment for all students. All levels of education served by Local 571 members will be impacted.

In early childhood education, the legislation will put the KIDS assessment into state law. Early intervention services will become available to students between their third birthday and when early childhood services are available. ISBE will be encouraged to find coaching and financial support for the early childhood workforce.

In high school education, there will be computer science standards adopted by ISBE by the end of 2021. Starting in 2022-23, students entering 9th grade will have a graduation requirement of one year of a course that includes intensive instruction in computer literacy. By 2023-24, all high schools in the state must offer at least one computer science course. Starting in 2028-29, students entering 9th grade will have a graduation requirement of completing two years of world language courses.

Also, in high school, there is a new policy on automatic advanced enrollment. Starting in 2023-24, students who meet or exceed state standards on a state assessment in English language arts, mathematics, or science qualify for automatic enrollment in the next most rigorous level of advanced coursework offered by their high schools.

More immediately, and affecting all levels of instruction, the legislation calls for ISBE to “adopt revised social science learning standards that are inclusive and reflective of all individuals in this country” by July 1, 2021. **The legislation also calls for the Illinois P20 Council to make recommendations for both short and long term COVID recovery strategies by the end of 2021.** Our Local President, Jane Russell, is on the Illinois P20 Council, so our Local will have a direct voice in this important discussion.

Jane Russell also serves on the Professional Review Panel, which is intended by this legislation to review the Evidence Based Funding model, and to determine how school districts can provide greater world language instruction and promote equity.

Local 571 members should take heart knowing that our interests in equity and inclusion, and in appropriate school funding to support students from early childhood through high school, will have a direct advocate on the Illinois P20 Council and the Professional Review Panel.



OFFICIAL ELECTIONS NOTICE 2021 LOCAL 571 EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS' ELECTION *****

Nominations are open to all Local 571 Union Members

Nominations are now being accepted for Local 571 Officers: a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Legal Defense Secretary, and a Financial Secretary. The term of office is two (2) years beginning July 1, 2021, 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 8, 2021.***

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. Retirees' ballots will be mailed to Local 571 retiree members by the U.S. Postal Service to their homes.

Interested individuals may request further information about the duties of the office by contacting Local 571 at 630-468-4098.



West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 Scholarship Opportunities



- ◇ **Mary Wheeler Scholarship**—Six \$3,000 one-time awards will be given to high school seniors graduating in 2021 whose parents or guardians are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571. Applicants must plan to continue their education full time in the Fall of 2021. Applications will be 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, 2021.*
- ◇ **Jo Ann Horowitz Scholarship**—Two \$1,500 one-time awards will be given in 2021 to current PSRPs who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571 and pursuing a BA/BS or MA/MS in an education-related field. Applications will be 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, 2021.*
- ◇ **Julienne Phillips Scholarship**—Two \$1,500 one-time awards will be given in 2021 to current licensed, practicing educators (teacher, social worker, counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, librarian, nurse, or instructional coach) who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571, and pursuing a masters degree in an education-related field. Applications will be 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, 2021.*
- ◇ **Maryann Karlovsky Scholarship**—Two \$1,500 one-time awards will be given in 2021 to current licensed, practicing educators (teacher, social worker, counselor, psychologist, speech pathologist, librarian, nurse, or instructional coach) who are members in good standing of the WSTU, Local 571 and pursuing a certificate or endorsement in an education-related field. Applications will be 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, 2021.*

Sunday — February 14

Happy Valentine's Day



Presidents Day 2021

Monday, February 15

"I am indebted to my father for living,
but to my teacher for living well."

Alexander the Great

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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