

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

# Union Messenger

## "A Union of Professionals"

### WSTU March Calendar

3/14—Ex.Bd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)  
 3/14—571 proposed 2020-21 budget presented to Ex.Bd  
 3/14—Deadline for 571 Area Trustee nomination  
 3/14—Deadline for IFT Convention Delegate Nomination

### Union Messenger

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 Robin Hancock,  
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### Teaching Joy In Our Classrooms

Does your curricula allow space to show images and discuss examples of joy from the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) histories? Does the curriculum include examples of powerful and meaningful contributions made by BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other underrepresented communities?



In our History books and in the media, as a society we are bombarded with images and stories of the negative and traumatic experiences surrounding our BIPOC population. Our students can tell us about the negative side of Black history such as slavery and segregation, and of course, these topics are very important to discuss. But when this is the only part of Black history discussed in schools, it can cause fatigue and stress to our students, especially our students of color.

All students should be able to see themselves represented in our schools in a positive way. Making space to celebrate the joy of our BIPOC and other underrepresented communities will have a powerful impact on our students. Even during horrific times in history, people find joy and hope in art, music, and many other ways. People can survive challenging times and find liberation and hope. Celebrating the joy in our BIPOC history and curriculum must be a fundamental part of our education system. Don't teach Black history only in February; we must devote ourselves to breaking down existing institutional barriers and offer a strong, inclusive representation of our world's history for our students.

I am very proud of the work equity and diversity committees are accomplishing in many of our councils. Collectively, we recognize the importance of educating and challenging our youth to look at the world through many different perspectives. Our councils are working in a variety of ways with their districts to diversify curriculum, discussing hiring procedures, and reviewing and updating district policies to meet the diverse needs of our students and staff.

*continued on page 3*



## West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 Scholarship Opportunities



- ◇ **Mary Wheeler Scholarship**—Six \$3,100 one-time awards will be given to high school seniors graduating in 2022 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 2022. Applications will be available at <https://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, 2022.*
- ◇ **Jo Ann Horowitz Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 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 <https://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, 2022.*
- ◇ **Julienne Phillips Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 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 <https://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, 2022.*
- ◇ **Maryann Karlovsky Scholarship**—Two \$1,550 one-time awards will be given in 2022 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 <https://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, 2022.*

## PROVISO TEACHERS CARE

"EDUCATING THE FUTURE, ONE STUDENT AT A TIME"



The West Suburban Teachers Union—Local 571 stands in solidarity with our members in the Proviso district, who despite their best efforts have been unable to negotiate a fair and equitable contract. We hope you will "like" their Facebook page, reach out to your colleagues there and support their efforts by using the hashtag: [#Provisoteacherscare](https://www.facebook.com/Proviso-Teachers-Care-102257825444442)

For more information, please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Proviso-Teachers-Care-102257825444442>

## Retiree Corner — Local #571 Retirees – Newbies, Finally Settled In, or Yikes (can't be retired that long)! A bit of important information for ALL of you

Your Retiree Council needs your HELP! We would like to start a committee to plan informational and/or fun activities for the year. The Committee will meet once or twice a year. The first meeting would be in February with date, location, and time to be determined. Please email Alice Kautsky if you would like to be part of the committee @ [akautsky@comcast.net](mailto:akautsky@comcast.net)

- Local 571 will be using "Electronic Voting" for AFT and IFT Convention Delegates. Ballots will be sent to your personal email. Information regarding electronic voting will be sent out to keep you updated on any elections that may occur.



- Just a reminder to order your 4 Free Covid-19 Tests @ [COVIDTests.gov](https://COVIDTests.gov). It's really easy!

### Teaching Joy in Our Classrooms (cont'd from page 1)

How do I get started in this work? One place to start is by forming an alliance with parents, community members, students, the Union, and our district. We should hear from all stake-holders what changes they would like to see in our schools. Forming this alliance with the community will help to advance our commitment to presenting a well-balanced and equitable curriculum across all subject areas.

With all the challenges this work brings, the work can seem overwhelming and never-ending, and to some degree, it is. We must continuously evaluate and assess our procedures, policies, and curriculum to continue our mission to offer a diverse and equitable education to all students. To quote Maya Angelou: **"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."** If you have questions about this work or need more guidance, please contact your council president or Local 571.

Rachel Esposito  
President  
West Suburban Teachers Union



Monday—February 14



Presidents' Day is observed annually on the third Monday in February. In 2022, Presidents' Day will be celebrated on **Monday, February 21.**



Legislative Director Report  
February 2022 Union Messenger  
Max Schoenberg

Although Governor Pritzker vetoed HB 2778, the IFT helped reach an agreement with the Governor to sign new legislation to provide paid sick leave for educators affected by COVID absences.

As of this writing, the new legislation has not yet been introduced, but the IFT press release describes the basic concept:

If you are fully vaccinated (one dose of J&J or two doses of Pfizer or Moderna), or you become fully vaccinated within five weeks of the date the eventual legislation is signed into law, then you will have access to paid leave for absences from school required because of COVID isolation or quarantine as a close contact. The paid leave will also be available if you are absent because you are caring for a child who is required to isolate or quarantine.

The paid leave provisions will restore lost sick days used by school employees retroactive to the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, and will protect school employees against future lost sick days during the remainder of this school year for the reasons mentioned above, if the employees are fully vaccinated or become fully vaccinated within five weeks of when the law is enacted.

The legislation is also expected to include wage protections for all hourly employees against any days within the 2021-22 year in which hourly employees might have lost hours due to remote learning.

At the present time, booster doses are not required to be considered “fully vaccinated”.

As of this writing, we do not know when the legislation will be introduced or signed, nor how each school district will administer the paid leave. It is reasonable to assume that educators should plan to (a) become fully vaccinated if not already done, if they intend to access this new benefit, and (b) find documentation, such as a test result or notice from a health department, that confirms the COVID-related nature of absences for themselves or their children.

**Illinois Federation  
of Teachers  
(IFT)  
Convention Delegates**



Nominations are now being accepted for delegates to the Illinois Federation of Teachers Convention that will convene in St. Louis, MO on October 21-23, 2022. All Local 571 members are eligible to be nominated as delegates to this convention. Including the ten (10) Officers and Area Trustees of Local 571 who became delegates by virtue of being elected to office, The number of delegates to be elected to this convention will be up to fifty-five (55). Ballots will be counted, and candidates will be ranked by the number of ballots received. Allowing for the ten (10) Officers and Area Trustees, the forty-five (45) candidates with the most votes will be declared delegates. The remaining candidates will be declared alternate delegates; and should any delegate (s) notify the Local of an inability to fulfill the duties of delegate, these alternate delegates will be selected in rank order of votes received to serve in place of the delegate who is unable to serve. Delegates who attend the convention will be reimbursed for expenses up to \$680/delegate. ***Nominations must be printed or typed (name and Council) and received in the Local 571 office on or before March 14, 2022 by end of business day. They can be emailed to Patty Clancy @ [pclancy@ift-aft.org](mailto:pclancy@ift-aft.org)***

Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in May 2022 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) that voting will take place. Retirees' ballots will be mailed to 571 retiree members via U.S. Postal Service.



## 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.**

## Local 571 Executive Board Area Trustees Nominations



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, 2022, 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 14, 2022 by end of business day. They can be emailed to Patty Clancy @ [pclancy@ift-aft.org](mailto:pclancy@ift-aft.org)***

Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in May 2022 via secret ballot. Council leaders will notify members of the date(s) that voting will take place. Interested individuals may request further information about the duties of the office by contacting Local 571. Retired members' ballots will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service to their homes.



Members fighting powerfully for a **strong union** and **the future we all deserve.**

**Dr. Monique Redeaux-Smith, IFT Director**

### **of Professional Issues**

The new year has barely begun, but the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is already hard at work trying to justify their proposal to increase K-8 testing – in the midst of a major pandemic surge.

On Monday, ISBE resent a long, complex [survey](#) about assessments to education stakeholders under the guise of "community engagement." They have not provided opportunities for stakeholders to learn or ask questions about their interim testing plan. **We urge you to be cautious about your responses to this survey.**

As your union, the IFT will continue to advocate for a balanced and equitable assessment system.

We **support** an assessment system that:

Builds on students' cultures, knowledge, and experiences and encourages them to use what they learn in school to solve real world problems that impact them.

- Uses high-quality, authentic classroom assessments every day, throughout the day, as part of the curriculum. It allows teachers to teach curriculum while letting students practice and get timely and relevant feedback from their teacher and each other to deepen their learning. Allows students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. The pandemic highlighted the limitations of standardized testing. Answering multiple choice questions is only one limited way to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

We **oppose**:

- Interim or "through year" testing created by commercial testing vendors that are administered multiple times throughout the school year. After a decade of using these tests, there is NO EVIDENCE that interim testing improves teaching and learning. In fact, recent research from Illinois' largest school districts suggests that interim testing has a negative impact on student growth.
- Increased high-stakes, standardized testing. Replacing the end-of-year summative test with three tests throughout the year increases high-stakes testing and results in more frequent disruptions to real learning.
- Standardized testing for K-2 students. This is developmentally inappropriate for our youngest learners. An assessment system based solely on standardized test scores.

To help inform your responses to ISBE's survey, the IFT has created a [new website](#) on assessments. The site includes information and resources, including this [fact sheet about ISBE's claims vs. reality](#) when it comes to their assessment proposal.

Now more than ever, Illinois educators and families need relief and support, not increased testing and reduced instruction time!

Be assured that the IFT is working tirelessly on your behalf to stop this ill-advised change to assessments. **Please watch your inbox for updates and ways you can help!**



NEWS | BENEFITS | POLITICAL ADVOCACY | CAMPAIGNS | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Dear IFT member,

After weeks of productive conversations with Governor Pritzker and our partners in the Illinois Education Association (IEA), **I'm excited to announce that our union has reached an agreement on [important legislation](#) that will protect all vaccinated educators and staff at public schools, universities and community colleges from unfair loss of sick time or pay as a result of COVID-related illness or exposure.**

The negotiations centered around House Bill 2778, which passed the General Assembly in November and extended benefits to all employees regardless of vaccination status. In order to further incentivize educators and staff to get vaccinated – our best defense in this pandemic – the governor enlisted the IFT and IEA to work with him to craft a new version of the bill that provides benefits to those who are vaccinated or who get vaccinated within five weeks of the legislation being enacted. As a result of these negotiations, the governor today vetoed HB 2778 and pledged his support for the new agreement.

In a press release, the governor explained that educators and school staff, “...*deserve to be able to take the time they need to respond to the ongoing devastating impacts the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have on them and their families. This collaborative initiative will provide paid administrative leave for education employees who, despite doing all they can to keep themselves and their communities safe, continue to have their lives and livelihoods disrupted by COVID-19.*”

Specifically, the bill provides:

- **Paid administrative leave for all public school, community college and university employees** who are fully vaccinated or become fully vaccinated (within five weeks of the effective date of the Act) if you or your child are required to be excluded from school because of a positive COVID-19 test result, close contact with a person who had a confirmed case of COVID-19, or for COVID-19 symptoms in accordance with employer policy.
- **Restoration of sick leave for educational employees** who are fully vaccinated or become fully vaccinated (within five weeks of the effective date of the Act) and who have previously used their sick time because they or their child could not go to school because of a positive COVID-19 test result, close contact with a person who had a confirmed case of COVID-19, or for COVID-19 symptoms in accordance with employer policy.
- **Wage protections for all hourly school employees** in the event their school must close due to COVID-19 concerns.

The pandemic has been physically, emotionally, and economically challenging for us all, and certainly no less so for educators, school staff, and their families. **Rest assured that IFT will be a powerful advocate for this legislation and the protections it provides.**

Watch your inbox and the [IFT website](#) for updates in the days ahead. In the meantime, review this [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document for more information. If you have additional questions, please contact your [IFT field service director](#).

As always, I thank you for all you do and for your commitment to keeping schools open and students and communities safe at this difficult time.

In unity,

Dan Montgomery, IFT President

## Black History Month Early Chicago: The Great Migration

The Great Migration was the largest mass movement in American history. It began in 1915 and continued into the 1970s. During this national upheaval, more than 7 million blacks left the South and headed north and west. To Southern blacks, Chicago was the "Promised Land." Stories of big city life — jobs with good wages, homes with running water, and basic freedoms denied to blacks in the South — made the Northern city a prime destination for blacks coming from below the Mason-Dixon line. Five hundred thousand African Americans ultimately moved to Chicago. In the first wave of migration between 1915 and 1940 Chicago's black population more than doubled.

The Great Migration was prompted, in part, by the impact of World War I. Workers were needed to keep Chicago's factories rolling. Immigration restrictions imposed in the 1920s further opened factory jobs with better pay to black workers. The Chicago Defender, the city's leading black newspaper, waged an extensive campaign encouraging blacks to move north. Starting in 1916, the paper published stories about Southerners who had "made it" in the city. For help with travel, housing, and jobs, the paper printed lists of churches and

other organizations to which potential immigrants could write. And for those already in Chicago, the Defender routinely printed rules of conduct to help new arrivals adjust and avoid conflict. Tips such as "Don't allow yourself to be drawn into street brawls" and "Don't use liberty to do what you please" were intended to bridge the black community's increasing range of social behavior.

Significant numbers of blacks who moved to the city did improve their lives and social condition, but Chicago was not prepared to embrace Southern blacks with fully open arms. Crowded tenement housing, limited educational opportunities, violence, discrimination, segregation, indifference from city government — these were all part of the city experience for "new" blacks. But the Great Migration also changed the city and the black community in unexpected and far-reaching ways. Due to restrictive housing patterns, black Chicagoans were forced into a segregated community. From this black city-within-a-city arose successful businesses and entrepreneurship; rich and far-reaching cultural creativity in music, visual arts, and literature; a focused political purpose; and bold self-determination that continues to resonate throughout

<https://interactive.wttw.com/dusable-to-obama/the-great-migration>

### Alison Saar's Monument to the Great Northern Migration

Alison Saar's bronze figure is a testament to the thousands of African Americans who migrated to Chicago in the early 20th century in search of greater freedom and opportunity. The traveler's hand is raised in salutation to his new home. In his other hand he carries a worn suitcase symbolic of his journey, dreams and talents. The bollards surrounding the monument are also suitcases that are textured with a pattern derived from the tin ceilings of the era. The figure is oriented to the north, symbolizing the traveler's destination. The figure is located at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. and 26th Place in Chicago.



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Ever.

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Starting 2022 with solidarity and  
savings!

<https://unionplus.org>

### 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](mailto:571editor@gmail.com)



We're on the Web!!!  
[www.wstu571.org](http://www.wstu571.org)

West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571  
500 Oakmont Lane  
P.O. Box 390  
Westmont, IL 60559-0390  
Phone: 630-468-4098 Fax: 630-468-4088  
E-mail: [resposito571@ift-aft.org](mailto:resposito571@ift-aft.org)