

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

Union Messenger

“A Union of Professionals”

March Calendar

3/11—ExBd Mtg. (5:30 p.m.—Westmont)
 3/11—571 proposed 2024-25 budget presented to ExBd
 3/11—Deadline for 571 Area Trustee Nomination

Union Messenger

Kyle Stern, President
 April Giannosa, Vice-President
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary
 Eugene Poull, Financial Secretary
 Brett Blair, Legal Defense Secretary
 Emily Moore, Cope Chair
 John Wardisiani, Cope Treasurer
 Rachel Esposito, IFT Field Service Director
 Max Schoenberg, IFT Field Service Director
 Renee Wagner, IFT Field Service Director
 Carolyn Wilson, Membership Support Staff
 Patty Clancy, Office Support Staff
 Andrew Bendelow, 571 Web Administrator
 Robin Hancock, 571 *Union Messenger* Editor



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Effective Communication

Dear Union Siblings,

In the previous Union Messenger, we explored the art of active listening. This month, let's delve into the invaluable insights shared by Dr. David Posen, M.D., and Dr. Henry Cloud on the paramount importance of establishing workplace boundaries. As the Union President of West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571, I have the privilege of representing a dedicated group of educators and support



staff committed to empowering the next generation. Many of us in the education field face the common challenge of maintaining a healthy work-life balance, a struggle witnessed among too many of our members and can lead to burnout.

Dr. Posen emphasizes the critical need to clearly define boundaries regarding availability, workload, and responsibilities. To put this into practice, consider disconnecting your work email from your phone. This small but impactful step can create a clear separation between work and personal time, safeguarding your

well-being and enhancing professional efficacy. Assertive communication of these boundaries is key to fostering a workplace culture that respects individual needs.

During disagreements, standing firm on established boundaries is imperative. Imagine a scenario where a colleague requests additional work outside your agreed-upon responsibilities. It's essential to assertively communicate that while you appreciate their request, your current workload and personal commitments prevent you from taking on additional tasks. By doing so, you not only maintain your boundaries but also contribute to a healthier work-life dynamic.

Dr. Cloud provides a structured approach to setting and maintaining boundaries, starting with identifying specific unacceptable behaviors. Let's consider an example where a colleague consistently interrupts your work. By identifying this disruptive behavior, you can address it effectively, expressing your concerns to the colleague without blame or judgment. This approach fosters a constructive dialogue, contributing to a healthier work environment.

Central to Dr. Cloud's approach is effective communication. Once boundaries are defined, imagine communicating them to colleagues with a specific example. For instance, you might express that during specific hours, you are focused on grading assignments and request that colleagues minimize interruptions during that time. This clarity in communication encourages a respectful and understanding workplace culture.

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Effective Communication

Dr. Cloud also advocates seeking support and guidance from trusted colleagues, mentors, or union advisors. Consider reaching out to a mentor within the union when faced with complex boundary issues. Their insights and experiences can prove invaluable in navigating these challenges, fostering a sense of community within the workplace.

Integral to upholding healthy boundaries is maintaining personal well-being. Imagine clearly defining your availability and scheduling, ensuring colleagues are aware of designated office hours. Picture consistent communication of these boundaries, preventing confusion or mixed messages. Periodic reflection allows for adjustments based on changing circumstances or feedback, contributing to a more effective and balanced work-life dynamic.

Incorporating Dr. Cloud's insights into our approach to disagreements at work can effectively navigate challenges. As we embark on the journey of 2024 and beyond, remember that healthy boundaries and effective communication are essential tools for building strong and productive workplace relationships.

Wishing you a harmonious and boundary-conscious journey in the years ahead!

In Unity,

Kyle Stern

Local 571 Executive Board Area Trustees Call for 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, 2024, 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 11, 2024 by end of the business day. Nominations can be emailed to Patty Clancy @ pclancy@ift-aft.org. Nominees will receive a written or electronic acknowledgement of receipt. Voting will take place in May 2024 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. Members' ballots without emails on file will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service to their homes.



West Suburban Teachers Union Local 571 Scholarship Opportunities



- ◇ **Mary Wheeler Scholarship**—Six \$3,300 one-time awards will be given to high school seniors graduating in 2024 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 2024. 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, 2024.***
- ◇ **Jo Ann Horowitz Scholarship**—Two \$1,650 one-time awards will be given in 2024 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, 2024.***
- ◇ **Julienne Phillips Scholarship**—Two \$1,650 one-time awards will be given in 2024 to current licensed, practicing educators (ex. 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, 2024.***
- ◇ **Maryann Karlovsky Scholarship**—Two \$1,650 one-time awards will be given in 2024 to current licensed, practicing educators (ex. 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, 2024.***

793,000 Borrowers Get Student Loan Forgiveness Based On Their Jobs

The Biden administration announced a [new wave of student loan forgiveness](#) approvals last week, adding to a growing sum of borrowers who have received debt relief based on their public service employment.

Hundreds of thousands of borrowers working in nonprofit and government jobs have benefited from new reforms that the Education Department has been implementing since 2021. And more relief is coming.

“The Biden-Harris Administration just approved another nearly \$5 billion in student loan debt cancellation for 74,000 Americans — the majority of whom are teachers, nurses, firefighters, and other public servants,” said Vice President Kamala Harris in a [message on X](#) last Friday. “This is historic progress, but @POTUS and I won’t stop here.”

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/adamminsky/>



Illinois Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

CONTACT

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IFT Announces Endorsements in the March Primary

ILLINOIS – Today, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) announced their endorsements in the March 2024 Primary Election.

The endorsements are the result of the IFT's rigorous candidate evaluation process, encompassing candidate surveys, regional deliberations, and thorough evaluation by the 47 elected members of the union's Executive Board, representing a diverse array of local unions statewide.

"It is critical that we endorse candidates who actively support collective bargaining, champion public education and services, and advocate for the rights of our members. These individuals play a crucial role in

shaping policies that directly impact our freedoms and the well-being of educators, students, and the communities we serve. By aligning with candidates who prioritize our values, we contribute to a stronger and more resilient Illinois," said **IFT President Dan Montgomery**.

IFT members statewide mobilize to support the union's endorsed candidates. These efforts may include canvassing, phone-banking, and text-banking. IFT volunteers engage directly with fellow members and other voters to discuss candidates and issues impacting our workplaces and communities. This approach mobilizes our members statewide through personalized communication from trusted messengers.

"Endorsing these candidates is an investment in the future of education and critical state services. It's a powerful affirmation of our collective dedication to building supportive, equitable, and empowering workplaces for students and educators," **added Montgomery**.

A complete list of endorsements:

<https://www.ift-aft.org/candidates>

IFT Endorsements

The Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) is delighted to unveil its endorsements for the March 2019 primaries. In a collaborative effort, IFT members actively participated in their respective Regional Political Action Committee (PAC) meetings, a crucial step in the endorsement process.

During these Regional PAC meetings, candidates, both incumbents and newcomers, underwent comprehensive interviews, and incumbents had their voting records on education issues meticulously scrutinized. This thorough evaluation ensured that the endorsements were based on a keen understanding of each candidate's stance on critical educational matters.

Following the Regional PAC meetings, the endorsed candidates' recommendations progressed to the IFT State PAC, comprised of dedicated Regional PAC Chairs. Representing the West Suburban Teachers Union (WSTU) on the State PAC were Monique Manuel and Grace Drobny, both distinguished legislative directors. Their active participation ensured that the interests of WSTU members were well represented in the endorsement process.

Upon the State PAC's consolidation of recommendations, the endorsed candidates' profiles were presented to the IFT Executive Board. Notably, the West Suburban Teachers Union had a strong presence on the Executive Board, with

April Giannosa, Monique Manuel, and Kyle Stern serving as members. Their valuable insights and commitment played a pivotal role in the finalization of the endorsements.

The IFT Executive Board, with the collective input of representatives from various regions, diligently voted on the recommendations, culminating in the official endorsement of candidates for the March 2019 primaries. These endorsements signify the union's support for candidates who align with the IFT's mission and vision for education.

We encourage all members to consider voting for our endorsed candidates, as their dedication to education and commitment to the well-being of educators closely align with the values upheld by the IFT. Your vote can make a significant impact in supporting candidates who prioritize the advancement of education and the interests of teachers across Illinois.

Kyle Stern

IFT 2024 Primary Election Endorsements



Bold- incumbent

*- union member

U.S. House 1st –

Jonathan Jackson (D)
 2nd – Robin Kelly (D)
 3rd – Delia Ramirez (D)
 4th – Jesus “Chuy” Garcia (D)
 5th – Mike Quigley (D)
 6th – Sean Casten (D)
 8th – Raja Krishnamoorthi (D)
 9th – Jan Schakowsky (D)*
 10th – Brad Schneider (D) 11th
 – Bill Foster (D)
 13th – Nikki Budzinski (D)
 14th – Lauren Underwood (D)
 17th – Eric Sorensen (D)

State Senate 4th –

Kimberly Lightford (D)
 5th – Lakesia Collins (D)
 7th – Mike Simmons (D)
 10th – Robert Martwick (D)
 13th – Robert Peters (D)
 16th – Willie Preston (D)
 19th – Michael Hastings (D)
 20th – Graciela Guzman (D)
 22nd – Cristina Castro (D)
 25th – Karina Villa (D)
 28th – Laura Murphy (D)
 31st – Mary Edly-Allen (D)* 34th
 – Steve Stadelman (D)
 40th – Patrick Joyce (D)
 43rd – Rachel Ventura (D)
 46th – Dave Koehler (D)
 49th – Meg Loughran Cappel (D)*
 52nd – Paul Faraci (D)
 58th – Terri Bryant (R)

State House

1st – Aaron Ortiz (D)*
 3rd – Eva-Dina Delgado (D)
 4th – Lilian Jimenez (D)
 5th – Kimberly Neely du Buclet (D)
 6th – Sonya Harper (D)
 7th – Chris Welch (D)
 8th – La Shawn Ford (D)
 9th – Yolanda Morris (D)

10th – Jawaharial Omar Williams (D)*
 11th – Ann Williams (D)
 13th – Hoan Huynh (D)
 14th – Kelly Cassidy (D)
 15th – Michael Kelly (D)
 17th – Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (D)
 18th – Robyn Gabel (D)
 19th – Lindsey LaPointe (D)
 21st – Abdelnasser Rashid (D)
 23rd – Edgar Gonzalez, Jr. (D)
 24th – Theresa Mah (D) 26th
 – Kam Buckner (D)
 27th – Justin Slaughter (D)
 28th – Bob Rita (D)
 30th – Will Davis (D)
 32nd – Lisa Davis (D)
 33rd – Marcus Evans, Jr. (D)
 34th – Nick Smith (D)
 35th – Mary Gill (D)
 38th – Debbie Meyers-Martin (D)
 39th – Will Guzzardi (D)
 40th – Jaime Andrade, Jr. (D)
 41st – Janet Yang Rohr (D)
 42nd – Terra Costa Howard (D)
 43rd – Anna Moeller (D)
 44th – Fred Crespo (D)
 45th – Dennis Reboletti (R)
 46th – Diane Blair-Sherlock (D)
 47th – Jackie Williamson (D)
 48th – Maria Vessey (D)
 49th – Maura Hirschauer (D)
 50th – Barbara Hernandez (D)
 51st – Nabeela Syed (D)
 52nd – Maria Peterson (D)
 53rd – Mark Walker (D)
 54th – Mary Beth Canty (D)
 56th – Michelle Mussman (D)
 57th – Tracy Katz Muhl (D)
 58th – Bob Morgan (D)
 59th – Daniel Didech (D)
 60th – Rita Mayfield (D)
 61st – Joyce Mason (D)
 62nd – Laura Faver Dias (D)
 63rd – Mary Mahady (D)
 65th – Linda Robertson (D) 66th
 – Suzanne Ness (D)
 67th – Maurice West II (D)
 68th – Dave Vella (D)
 69th – Peter Janko (D)
 70th – Randi Olson (D)
 72nd – Gregg Johnson (D)
 75th – Heidi Henry (D)
 77th – Norma Hernandez (D)

78th – Camille Lilly (D)
 79th – William “Billy” Morgan (D)
 80th – Anthony DeLuca (D)
 81st – Anne Stava-Murray (D)
 82nd – Suzanne Akhras (D)
 83rd – Matt Hanson (D)
 84th – Stephanie Kifowit (D)
 85th – Dagmara “Dee” Avelar (D)*
 86th – Larry Walsh, Jr. (D)*
 91st – Sharon Chung (D)
 92nd – Jehan Gordon-Booth (D)
 94th – Norine Hammond (R)
 95th – Kristen Chiaro (D)
 96th – Sue Scherer (D)
 97th – Harry Benton (D)
 98th – Natalie Manley (D)
 102nd – Jim Acklin (R)
 103rd – Carol Ammons (D)
 105th – Morgan Phillips (D)
 110th – Matthew T. Hall (R)
 111th – Nick Raftopoulos (D)
 112th – Katie Stuart (D)
 113th – Jay Hoffman (D)*
 114th – LaToya Greenwood (D)
 116th – Dave Severin (R)

Judicial

1st Supreme– Joy Virginia Cunningham (D)
 1st Appellate – Mary Lane Mikva (D)
 1st Appellate – Cynthia Cobbs (D)
 1st Appellate – Celia Louise Gamrath (D)
 1st Appellate – Carl Anthony Walker (D)
 3rd Appellate – John Anderson (D)
 3rd Appellate – Linda Davenport (D)
 3rd Appellate – Lance Peterson (D)

(As of January 27th, 2024)

Members Engaged



Reverend Jesse Jackson and Kyle Stern



Kyle Stern with State's Attorney Kim Foxx and Judge Greg Mathis



TV Anchor Val Warner and Kyle Stern



Kyle Stern with State Representative Mary Gill and State Representative Joyce Mason



Santa, Kyle Stern and Speaker Chris Welch



Mayor Brandon Johnson and Kyle Stern



Senator Don Harmon, Kyle Stern and Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias



Kyle Stern with State Representative Mary Gill and State Representative Jenn Ladisch



Kyle Stern with Congressman Bill Foster



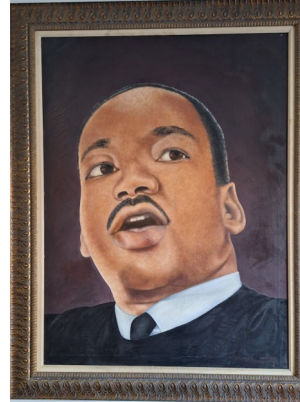
Leap Year 2024

What is a leap year?

A leap year is a year that is one day longer than a regular calendar year. This happens almost every four years to ensure the calendar is aligned with Earth's solar rotation. In 2024, February will have 29 days, rather than 28.

Members Engaged

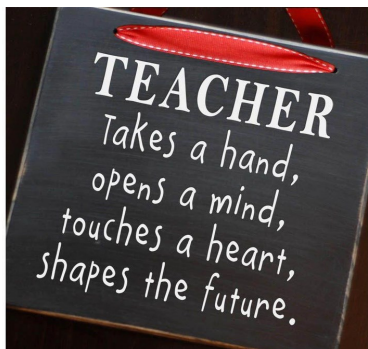
Local 571 President Kyle Stern recently visited Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. It is the church where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was co-pastor from 1960 until his assassination in 1968, and the location of the funerals of both Dr. King and Congressman John Lewis. United States Senator Raphael Warnock has been pastor since 2005. Its historic church building and expanded sanctuary building are located in the historic area now designated as the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historical Park.



Local 571 members and other labor leaders supporting LGBTQIA+ Students in District 230.



Argo High School Union members supported students in graphic arts classes by purchasing student designed winter holiday sweaters to close out 2023 and ring in 2024.



Welcome Union members. Limited time offer!
SAVE 30% on all bouquets!



<https://unionplus.org/benefits/shopping-discounts>

Meet-a-Member

Local 571 is a 5900+ member union of teachers, paraprofessionals, school-related personnel (PSRPs) and retirees, employed (currently or formerly) in school districts in western Cook and DuPage Counties. We have many interesting and talented members among us! This column spotlights our members and gives a glimpse into what makes us exceptional. This month, I'd like you to meet... **Edgar Camacho, Building Maintenance at North Elementary in Franklin Park!**

Q: What is your favorite part about your current position?

A: I like being on days. Starting early and getting out early gives me time to spend with my own kids and family. I'm involved with their sports, so evenings are busy for us.

Q: What's a happy memory you have from when you were in school?

A: My happy memories at school were seeing friends that we don't see on a daily basis and spending time with the teachers.

Q: What was your favorite subject?

A: My favorite subjects were P.E. and history.

Q: If you could change one thing about your job, what would it be?

A: I would get better machinery. It would help to get the right equipment for the job. It would save a lot of time too. If I had to pick a piece of equipment to get, I would say new drills.

Q: What is the greatest strength that you think you bring to this role?

A: My greatest strength in this role would be my flexibility, knowledge, and the eagerness of doing stuff and getting it done in a timely manner.

Q: What kind of background do you have that helps you with this job?

A: I have a mechanical background. I love taking things apart and putting them back together.

Q: What's your favorite part about working in a school?

A: My favorite part of working in a school is the kids. I love the kids. I like that every day is a different day where I can just do something different. You never know what each day brings. it's not the same routine every single day.



If you would like to nominate yourself, or another member you know, to be interviewed for the Meet-a-Member column, reach out to April at agiannosa@wstu571.org

<p>WSTU, Local 571: Who We Are</p> <p>Organized in 1938, Local 571 currently is a 5900+ member union of teachers and paraprofessional and school-related personnel (PSRPs) employed in school districts in western Cook and DuPage Counties and retirees.</p> <p>Local 571 exists to serve the interests of its members as determined by democratic processes at the council, local, state, and national levels. For the most part, those interests have to do with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Establishing job security and fairness, usually through collective bargaining and legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Empowering members to act to uphold high standards for their professions and their schools ◆ Disseminating information on professional issues and providing programs of leadership training and professional development ◆ Acting in coalition with other organizations to address issues affecting all working Americans ◆ Issues of social and racial justice and equality for all working Americans. <p>Local 571 is affiliated with the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the AFL-CIO. It also participates in the North Central Illinois Labor Council and Chicago Federation of Labor.</p>
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KNOW YOUR WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

by

Rachel Esposito, Max Schoenberg and Renee Wagner

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.

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.

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 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.

Legislative Director Report

By: Grace Drobny



Happy New Year! As we embark upon a new epoch, the political landscape of our great state unfolds, resonating across the tiers of all constituents. The forthcoming Illinois primary, scheduled for **March 19th, 2024**, marks a pivotal juncture in our democratic tapestry. Notably, the Illinois State Senate will see 23 out of 59 seats poised for the *general election on November 5th, 2024*.

Reflecting upon the 2022 Illinois primaries, where voter turnout ranked fourth lowest across the nation, there arises a poignant realization that a mere fraction of the populace determined the fate of our public officials. This prompts a staunch call to broaden our constituent outreach on a grand scale.

Voting is not merely a right; it is a privileged expression of our citizenship, a means by which our voices resound in the corridors of governance. We must ensure to aspire substantive change in our educational institutions; conductive meticulous assessment analyses; and safeguarding the honorable pensions of our educators, it exacerbates the importance to exercise our right to vote and extend advocacy to all our diverse communities.

Presented is a link list of all candidates: [https://ballotpedia.org/Illinois State Senate elections,2024](https://ballotpedia.org/Illinois_State_Senate_elections,2024)

In the words of esteemed *Dr. Martin Luther King*, “*voting is the foundation soul for political actions.*” Let us heed this call, recognizing the profound importance to engage.

In the *Year of the Dragon*, symbolizing power, strength, and good fortune, let us unite in our civic duty, fostering a resolute commitment to elevate the democratic spirit within Illinois and beyond.



Monday-February 12
Lincoln’s Birthday

Tuesday-February 13
Mardi Gras

Monday-February 19
Presidents’ Day



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: rhancock@wstu571.org

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