Welcome Millburn PSRP to Local 504!!!

by Michelle Standridge,
IFT Field Service Director

It is my privilege to introduce our newest Council to Local 504. The Millburn PSRP participated in card-check in January and filed for official certification from the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board in early February. The Council includes fifty-two Paraprofessionals and Maintenance/Custodial workers split between two buildings.

Card-check is the confidential process by which employees can petition the Labor Board to certify a union as their exclusive bargaining representative if a majority of employees sign cards. Employees sign a card, indicating their desire to form a union and be represented by the Local, and those cards are forwarded to the Labor Board. This allows employees to document their desire to be a part of the union without having to disclose that information to their employer. They are also safe-guarded from any retaliation by the employer.

The Millburn Federation of Teachers organized back in 2012, and now the PSRP in this District are excited to bargain their first contract for their unit and are ready to be active participants in shaping their futures: collectively!

To date, the Millburn PSRP have elected their first Council officers: President, Alma Maynez; Vice President, Cindy Sodt; Secretary, Jacqueline Gross; and Treasurer, Steve Novak and will soon draft their by-laws. They began negotiations with the district in June and are working toward establishing their first contract.

Public educational employees are facing many obstacles, and now, more than ever, Union representation is so very important to secure your financial health and to protect your benefits. If you know of any workers desiring to organize, please don’t hesitate to contact LCFT. We are here to serve you!
As I write this, the recent events in Charlottesville continue to unfold as a stunned nation watches on with shock and horror. Looking to our President for some words of reassurance and condemnation of events unprecedented in my lifetime, instead, President Trump claimed some kind of erroneous equivalence between the Nazi’s and White Supremacist groups and the groups that oppose them.

The no longer hidden intolerance of the President was out on full display over the last several days. We continue to reel from Trump’s lack of understanding of our country’s history with the insupportable views of the KKK and other hate groups. On our horizon, however, there is a another insidious, yet less-transparent, harm to our country being perpetrated by one member of the Trump Cabinet. Of the array of unfortunate, and even ironic Administrative picks by Trump, one choice looms particularly foreboding. The Secretary of Education is poised to inflict both immediate and long-lasting damage to our democracy. “After 6 months on the job, (Betsy) Devos still highly divisive,” led the headline in my local newspaper.

The article from the Associated Press, written by Maria Danilova, basically summarized DeVos’ tenure beginning with Vice-president Pence’s necessity to break a senate tie for her confirmation, to her nearly “rabid” support for “School Choice” in combination with an advocacy for “for-profit” vocational schools.

One might suspect that a wealthy businesswoman like DeVos might find motivation for “turning a profit” by shifting priorities from public to private schools and you’d be correct: DeVos worked fervently in Michigan to promote the use of tax dollars to fund private, for-profit schools, including several which were run and owned by her family. Of the 17 schools she has visited since her confirmation only seven were public. Even some of her own party leaders have suggested that rather than focusing on this singular issue, she should concentrate her efforts into making public education better for all.

On school choice, DeVos makes the “cart-before-the-horse” argument: ‘I think the first line of accountability is frankly with the parents.” It appears that she believes that by the shear act of having to choose which school to attend, parents become more engaged. The reason that she has it backwards is that only parents who are involved in their children’s education will make the choice of which school to attend: the others will be left behind with inadequately funded schools.

The premise of desegregation was to homogenize
Council News
August 2017

by Kelly Regnier, 504 Word Editor

LCFT would like to congratulate Zion-Benton Federation of Teachers member Genevieve Sherman who has been named one of 2017’s National Council of Teachers of English’s (NCTE) teachers of the year.

Ms. Sherman has been an English teacher at Zion-Benton for twenty years. Over the years she has taught a multitude of courses, and currently focuses primarily on Contemporary and African Literature. She is also very involved in the school community, planning Homecoming events each year, leading the SWARM student group, and co-coordinating an annual BEE PINK event that raises thousands of dollars for cancer research each year.

Ms. Sherman was nominated for this honor by the Illinois affiliate of NCTE. Ms. Sherman is a longtime member of the Illinois Association of Teachers of English (IATE) and currently serves as the Committee Chair for Honorary Awards for IATE.

Ms. Sherman’s colleagues are not surprised by this recognition. Michael Blades, Division Chair for English, ELL and VPA, said this about her, “She leads students not only in the classroom, but outside of it, providing students with a model for excellence by holding herself and her students to the highest standards. Students aren’t just receiving knowledge from Ms. Sherman, they are actively engaged in constructing their learning.”

Great job Genevieve! LCFT is very proud to call you our member and our friend!

PRESIDENT, continued from page 2

In past articles I’ve labeled school choice as “de facto segregation.” When parents make the choice where to send their children do we really think that all of them will do so based solely on their child’s educational opportunities? By nature, school choice segregates children by those whose parents care to choose and those that do not, for whatever reasons. As we all know, engaging parents to actively participate in all levels of their child’s education is one of the most significant challenges we face. Simply applying “school choice” to this problem does little, if anything, to create equal opportunity for all.

After listening to Trump’s rhetoric regarding the “fine people” marching with Nazi’s I must ask: “Is bigotry the underlying motivator behind “school choice?” If there was ever a time when keeping privatization, and all of the associated injustices, at bay was of utmost urgency, we are living it right now.

Of course, DeVos and Trump will likely never articulate segregation as a rationale for this school choice agenda but are these the folks that we are going to trust to overhaul public education? We remain a bulwark to these existential threats toward equal opportunity for all through our commitment to public education. We must continue to fight these treacherous, self-serving forces on behalf of each and every student and for the future of our democracy.

In Unity,

Michael T. McGue, President, Lake County Federation of Teachers
State Budget and District Personnel Changes Impact Beach Park Contract Negotiations

by Matthew LaPierre, LCFT Business Agent

The lack of a state budget and the impact on school funding were present throughout the negotiations for new contracts at Beach Park School District.

The Classified Staff contract and the Social Worker/Psychologist contracts were both up for re-negotiation at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. Furthermore, both the District Superintendent and Business Manager had announced they were leaving the District effective July 1. These issues lent an air of immediacy to the talks in an attempt to finalize new agreements before these veteran players left their positions.

The State Budget and possible property tax freeze in fact impacted the final compensation settlement. But both bargaining units and the District agreed upon new contracts that will provide stronger job security for our members, increased seniority rights and a wage increase that should keep pace with inflation and is fair to district residents.

Both Agreements are 4 years in duration through 2021. The Classified Agreement calls for a 4% wage increase in the first year and the Social Worker/Psychologist Agreement calls for a 3.75% wage increase the first year.

Thereafter in both contracts wage increases will be contingent on the Consumer Price Index or a property tax freeze with a floor of 1.5% increase and a ceiling of 4%.

“With the hard work of our committee we reached agreement in late June,” said Classified Staff Co-President Debi Johnson, “This has truly been a learning experience for me and I take great pride in our accomplishments.”

In addition to the wages the Bargaining Team, consisting of Debi Johnson, Co-President Sharon Hamilton and Vice-President Janet Fleischauer also secured a small employer contribution to employee dependent health insurance of $300 annually. Till now the District did not contribute to dependent coverage. Additionally, the contract now contains a “just cause” standard for disciplinary action, increase seniority rights for promotions and transfers as well as increase protections against involuntary transfers.

Co-President Hamilton states, “We had both our Superintendent and Business Manager leaving, but everyone involved was invested in getting it done. I am very pleased and relieved we finished. We had a great negotiation team that gave up countless hours of their free time to help us win a very strong contract.”
The 3-person bargaining team at the negotiations table was assisted by a larger negotiation team of the following Union members: Stacy Thomas, Linda Moore, Gail Tate, Andra Norton, Darlynn Douglas, Elise Drinkwine and Bernice Olvera.

The new contract for the Social Worker/Psychologist bargaining unit also contains the “just cause” standard for discipline and the District dependent premium contribution, as well as health and safety protections and stronger language against principals harassing our members. This bargaining unit also includes, Speech Language Pathologists, OTs, PTs, Nurses and Hearing Itinerant.

The bargaining team consisted of Janet Powell, Jennifer Kozol and Erin Cramner.

Prairie Crossing Council Ratifies Salary Reopener for 2017-18

by Michelle Standridge, IFT Field Service Director

At the close of last school year, Prairie Crossing Council ratified provisions for a salary reopener, securing increases and other benefits for the third year in their four-year contract. Members will receive a BRI (Base Rate Increase) of 5.67%, but there will be no minimum merit allotment amount for the 17-18 school year.

Members will maintain their monthly health insurance stipend as well as a longevity bonus program, and they will see an increase in their monthly dental insurance stipend.

On the Union’s bargaining team were Council President, Chris Hershiser, Vice President, Cynthia McGovern, Kim Boneczkowski, Josh Flood, Robert Freeman, Christine Jeffery, Roxanne Turner, and IFT Field Service Director, Michelle Standridge.

Do You Have Questions About Negotiations for Your Council?

If you have questions about when your contract will be up for negotiations, there are a couple of ways you can check. You can visit www.lcft.org and log in as a member. When you are there, you will have access to your contract and any extensions that your council has negotiated. The expiration date of your contract will be present on the cover.

You can also ask your council leaders for negotiation updates. They will likely know the timetable for any upcoming negotiations.

As always, if you want to get involved, see your council leaders for information about upcoming Union Leadership Institutes!
REGISTRATION FORM
LCFT LOCAL 504 – 2017 FALL
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

(Please Print Clearly)
Name: ____________________________________  Home Phone: _____________________

Home Address: ________________________________

City: _________________________________________  State: _____  Zip: ______________

Personal E-mail: ______________________________ (School District): ________________

IEIN Number: ________________________________

Select courses you will attend:

FALL  DAILY ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED

☐ FOUNDATIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING:
  Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m.– 7:00 p.m.) 30 PDUs 30 hours
  August 29 through September 28

☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS 101
  Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 15 PDUs 15 hours
  October 3 through October 17

☐ STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (PART I)
  Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 30 PDUs 30 hours
  October 19 – November 21

Number of courses selected: x Cost per course: $50 = $ __________

CHECKS AND REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE IN THE UNION HALL TWO WEEKS PRIOR
TO THE START OF THE CLASS. PLEASE DON’T JEOPARDIZE THE CLASS BY
REGISTERING LATE. ALL CLASSES ARE HELD IN THE UNION HALL.

Enclose check or money order (no cash) made payable to:  AFT Local 504

Return form with non-refundable payment to:  Lake County Federation of Teachers, Local 504
  248 Ambrogio Drive
  Gurnee, IL  60031
ER&D Report

by Andrea Herbster,

ER&D Coordinator for LCFT

This summer has been another very successful one. We offered seven classes, once again, which was what was offered last summer and all but one have been conducted. To say this is quite an accomplishment is about all that can be said. Our local does quite a job helping our teachers get graduate credits and credits for recertification. I am very proud of us!

This fall and early winter, we will be offering some of our more popular classes. The first class for the fall is one that is highly recommended for new teachers as well as for those that can use a brushing up on some ideas for starting the school year.

Remember for those who have never taken a class, the cost is only $50 per class which reward two hours of graduate credit for those councils that award those credits as well as 30 credits for recertification. We do have shorter classes that reward half the amount of hours and credits. If your council does not reward credits, talk to me about it and perhaps we can get it included in your next contract. Otherwise you can get graduate credits from Governor’s State University for a substantial cost.

Have you Moved?
Changed your Name?
Changed your Email?

If so, please contact the LCFT Office so we can keep you up to date!

phone: 847-623-7725
email: bmccann@ift-aft.org

Are you following LCFT?

on the web: www.lcft.org

on Facebook: Lake County Federation of Teachers

on Twitter: @LCFT504

Correction:
The article about SEDOL in the May 504 Word was listed as written by Matthew LaPierre. It was actually written by STU president Rebecca Slye.
AFT Responds to White Supremacist Terrorism in Charlottesville

AFT press release

What happened in Charlottesville exposed a dark turning point in America, AFT’s top elected officials say in a joint statement. “It is not just a sobering reminder of the very real racism and anti-Semitism running through the veins of Americans, but a call to stand up to the forces of hate and division in this country that feel emboldened today,” President Randi Weingarten, Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson and Executive Vice President Mary Cathryn Ricker say.

“White supremacists and Nazis now feel empowered to come out of the shadows and inflict terror on American communities. We stand with those who stood up to this racism and anti-Semitism yesterday. We grieve the murder of Heather Heyer and the injury of other peaceful protestors. And we continue to denounce the hate and bigotry that was on display in Charlottesville and is being unmasked in communities across the country. But this moment requires more than simply denouncing hatred; it requires action to protect the basic rights and safety of American families from those who peddle terror and hate.

“We call on the president, the Justice Department and the FBI to conduct real, transparent investigations into terrorism from white supremacists. We call on elected officials and law enforcement from all 50 states to use all of the resources at their disposal to keep our communities safe. People in America need to know that laws will be enforced to protect them. White Americans get to presume the laws will protect them, and African-American, Jewish, queer and other marginalized Americans deserve that peace of mind as well.

The AFT has co-sponsored vigils around the country with Indivisible and other organizations committed to safety, tolerance and justice for all Americans. And as educators, we will continue to fulfill our responsibility to make sure our students feel safe and protected and valued for who they are. We have free lessons on civil rights, bullying and helping students cope with traumatic events on Share My Lesson, to help families and educators talk to children about the terror we are witnessing.

“We must stand for what is right, and African-Americans, Jews, LGBTQ people and other marginalized people deserve justice,” the statement says. “America is stronger when we embrace our diversity and work to ensure opportunity for everyone, and that is what we will continue to fight for.”
Keeping Sight of the True Meaning of Labor Day

By Kelly Regnier, 504 Word Editor

As the end of August nears, most LCFT members are back to school and back “in the swing of things.” And while those outside of education probably won’t understand this, education professionals know that there is no tired like beginning-of-the-year-tired (except maybe end-of-the-year-tired). And just when it seems that exhaustion may be here to stay, there is that glorious first three-day weekend of the year, Labor Day.

And while we are grateful for this early break, as Union members, we should be sure to remember Labor Day for its true purpose: honoring the labor movement in America, and the contributions that American workers have made to our society.

The origins of Labor Day date as far back as the late 19th century. The notion of an official “Labor Day” was first proposed in America in the 1880s, and secretary of the Central Labor Union (CLU) Matthew Maguire is given credit for proposing that Labor Day be annually celebrated on the first Monday of September.

Oregon was the first state to make Labor Day an official holiday, and thirty more states would do the same before the federal government officially recognized Labor Day in 1894.

When Pullman Strike of 1894 resulted in the deaths of several workers, the United States Congress voted unanimously to make Labor Day a national holiday. Six days after the end of the Pullman Strike, then President Grover Cleveland signed it into law. In 1909, the American Federation of Labor would include the Sunday prior to Labor Day as a day dedicated to the spiritual and educational aspects of the Labor Movement.

The first proposal for the celebration included a street parade to celebrate the strength of labor unions and trade organizations, and a festival for workers and their families and friends; which is a tradition that survives to this day in many communities.

As members of LCFT, we are part of this proud heritage. No matter how you celebrate, don’t forget our shared history, and remember to support our brothers and sisters throughout the Union Movement by planning to buy Union for your Labor Day celebration.
Officer Elections

Election of officers for the Lake County Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 504, will be held in November 2017. Nominees for president, vice-president, treasurer, or secretary should send a letter indicating the nominee’s name, address, telephone number, and council of membership to the Lake County Federation of Teachers Union Hall no later than 12:00 pm on October 9, 2017 in order to be considered for slating.

Election Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 25, 2017</td>
<td>Nominations open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9, 2017</td>
<td>Nominations due in the Union Hall by 12:00 noon to be considered for slating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10, 2017</td>
<td>Additional nominations from the floor of the LCFT Executive Board Meeting. The nominee must present a petition with at least fifteen (15) signatures of members in good standing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10, 2017</td>
<td>Nominations closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18, 2017</td>
<td>Ballots distributed to Council Presidents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 28, 2017</td>
<td>Council leaders must return ballots to the LCFT Union Hall no later than 4:00 pm. The counting of the ballots will begin at 4:00 pm. Results of the election will be posted at the Union Hall and on <a href="http://www.lcft.org">www.lcft.org</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5, 2017</td>
<td>Results will be distributed to delegates at the LCFT Executive Board Meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1, 2018</td>
<td>New officers begin their terms of office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Officer Job Descriptions

The President shall:
* Attend Local meetings and workshops
* Keep abreast of material and news relating to Union activities
* Serve as a spokesperson for the Local with the media
* Preside over all meetings of the LCFT Executive Board and the General Membership
* Contribute to Local publications
* Assist in legislative activities
* Promote membership services both within and outside the Local
* Report to the LCFT Executive Board of activities within the Local
* Carry out assignments made by the LCFT Executive Board

The Vice-President shall:
* Attend Local meetings and workshops
* Keep abreast of material and news relating to Union activities
* Perform the duties of the President when the President is absent
* Chair the LCFT Defense Committee
* Carry out assignments made by the LCFT Executive Board and LCFT President

The Secretary shall:
* Attend Local meetings and workshops
* Keep abreast of material and news relating to Union activities
* Attend to the correspondence of the Union
* Record and publish minutes of all meetings of the LCFT Executive Board and other official meetings of the Union as designated by the President
* Carry out assignments made by the LCFT Executive Board and LCFT President

The Treasurer shall:
* Attend Local meetings and workshops
* Keep abreast of material and news relating to Union activities
* Receive all money, receipts for same, and deposit and pay such financial obligations of the Union as directed by the LCFT Executive Board
* Prepare a budget and an annual report to be distributed at a time and place set by the LCFT Executive Board
* Keep records on Local and Council finances
* Issue monthly reports to Councils on the financial status of their accounts
* Issue quarterly reports on the financial status of the Local
* Be available to answer questions of the membership and officers
* Assist in the calculations, procedures, and implementation of Fair Share Provisions
* Carry out assignments made by the LCFT Executive Board and LCFT President

The 504 Word is devoted to the interests of the Education Workers' Union movement and is published five times each year by the Lake County Federation of Teachers.
Election Information