Grayslake Teachers and Grayslake PSRP Engage in 1-Day Strike for Higher Wages

by Matt LaPierre, LCFT Business Agent

After ten months and a one-day strike of shock and awe, the Grayslake Federation of Teachers and the Grayslake PSRP Council reached an agreement with District #46 that provided for salary and wage increases along with increases in a host of supplemental financial concerns.

The two Councils were bargaining together for the last 2 years of a four-year agreement. The parties had agreed in earlier negotiations to hold bargaining in abeyance for financial items due to the uncertain future of the district’s financial picture.

In addition to salaries the parties were bargaining over supplemental duty pay, internal substitute pay, tuition reimbursement and summer school pay. All of which increased by 3% for the remaining two years of the contract.

Salaries and wages were increased by 4% retroactively for 2019-2020 and 3.6% for 2020-2021. These increases were only gained after a massive show of solidarity by members from both groups engaging in a work stoppage that ended in success after a single day.

Grayslake Federation of Teachers President Michele Beye led the charge for the teachers along with her bargaining team of Coye Flores, Lynn Misulonas, Jenn Miller, Jim Fry, Dan Frey, Julie Ways, Kim Kraus.

“I am proud of the GFT and its ability to organize and unify so quickly. I am also proud of our community and other Union brothers and sisters who supported us before and during the strike” added President Beye.

PSRP Council President Leah Brown stated: “I would like to thank everyone that was involved in the Negotiations for the D46 PSRP Contract. This included so many individuals, including Local 504 Business Agent Jim Pergander who started the process with us back in February, 2019, and current Local 504 Representative Matt LaPierre who jumped in like he had been with us all along. Their knowledge of the process was so beneficial!”. President Brown was assisted by her bargaining team of, Leslie McLeod, Cecelia Secor, Linda Griffin, Lori Isaacs, John Canniff, Bob Garcia, Cheryl Tednes.

President Brown also added: “We are also so very appreciative of the support we received from the Local 504 staff and the surrounding school districts including financial support, walking the picket line or helping make strike signs. We could not have done this without you!”
From the Desk of
Michael T. McGue

Once again I am humbled by our strength and solidarity. Our Local has a uniquely proud history of standing united. Our original founding document, signed in 1937 by Teachers in Waukegan, states: “We will go to any limit that the majority opinion of the group may call for.” Last month our colleagues at Grayslake District 46 demonstrated their unity once again. Both the Grayslake Federation of Teachers and the Grayslake PSRP Unions voted to authorize a joint strike. After trying to reach resolution to a “salary only” contract dispute, both groups went on strike Thursday November 7th. The strike lasted one day and that night the parties were back at the table ultimately reaching resolution at 3:00 am and returning to work that morning.

Certainly strikes are a last resort position in bargaining, one that not all of us have been asked to authorize, let alone participate in. Yet the lasting effect of such an action has a profound impact on each and everyone of us who work in public education. We not only understand and appreciate our renewed strength through Grayslake’s unity but we all reap the rewards of a secondary benefit. Our shared willingness to sacrifice for the mutual gains of our colleagues has impacted and continues to profoundly influence the decisions of Boards of Education throughout Lake County during contract bargaining affecting the rest of our Councils.

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--LCFT President Mike McGue

I am often amazed, yet sometimes frustrated by the misunderstanding of the democracy within our Union by non-Union folks. Certainly we don’t and won’t all agree on acceptable employment conditions, yet we do agree that a strong majority of opinion should be the reasonable basis for us to unite. Our shared oneness in this vision allows us self determination in the workplace that can only be found through this solidarity.

Since I first became Local 504 President in 1995, our Local has elected to strike at Woodland, Zion-Benton, Waukegan, and now on two occasions, Grayslake. Previously, our members led numerous strikes in Waukegan, Gurnee, Woodland and North Chicago, some occurring even before striking was a legal activity! The common thread in what appears on face-value to be militancy, is a desire to earn respect from our employer. We mutually resolve to seek the self-determination in our professional lives that is a powerful American virtue. We value our ability to exercise and, equally important, demonstrate our rights to a say in our employment. Our combined fortitude has demonstrated democracy-in-action not just to the unsympathetic employer but also to our students and the public at large.

Again, we’ve become a stronger Union as a direct result of sacrifices made by others in our Local. I want to congratulate and thank our brothers and sisters at Grayslake for showing their dedication to a shared cause and taking a stand for all of us!

In Unity,

Michael T. McGue, President,
Lake County Federation of Teachers

December 2019
REGISTRATION FORM
LCFT LOCAL 504 – 2020 WINTER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

(Please Print Clearly)
Name: ___________________________ Home Phone: ___________________________

Home Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _____ Zip: _________________________

Personal E-mail: ___________________________ (School District): _______________________
(NOT DISTRICT EMAIL)

IEIN Number: ___________________________

Select courses you will attend: WINTER DAILY ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED

☐ STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: PART 1
Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 30 PDU’s 2 hours
January 14 through February 13, 2020

☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 15 PDU’s 1 hours
February 18 through March 3, 2020

☐ ELA WITH COMMON CORE
Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 15 PDU’s 1 hours
March 5 through March 19, 2020

☐ MANAGING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR:
Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 30 PDU’s 30 hours
March 31 through April 30, 2020

☐ FOUNDATIONS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING:
Tuesdays and Thursdays (4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) 30 PDU’s 30 hours
May 5 through June 4, 2020

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

December 2019
IFT Holds Tri-ennial Convention; LCFT Elects Three Vice-Presidents

by Kelly Regnier, 504 WORD Editor

On October 19 and 20, the delegates from LCFT met with other delegates from around Illinois to do the important business of the organization, as is our custom.

The convention was held in Rosemont, and is required by IFT by-laws, included amendments to the constitution, resolutions for future action, and elections of the new IFT officers and executive board.

Constitutional amendments included a nominal dues increase for all members. There were many resolutions debated by the body, including a resolution honoring former IFT Executive Vice-President Karen GJ Lewis, who appeared briefly.

While IFT President Dan Montgomery and Secretary-Treasurer Jane Russell were re-elected, Stacy Davis-Gates of the Chicago Teachers Union was elected as the new IFT Executive Vice President. Forty Vice-Presidents from around the state were elected to serve as the IFT’s Executive Board, including three from LCFT; president Andrew Freidlieb of Waukegan, LCFT PAC chair and Retiree Corinne McGue, and LCFT Director of Communications and ZBFT president Kelly Regnier. All officers will serve until the next convention in 2022.

In addition to their voting duties, the delegates were able to attend workshops on various Union related subjects, as well as hear from speakers including US Senator Dick Durbin, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, and LCFT’s own Mary Edy-Allen.