

SPRINGFIELD EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

SEAF ACTION LINE

SEA-IEA
3440 Liberty Drive
Springfield, IL 62704
<https://springfieldeducation.org>

Aaron Graves: SEAPresident186@gmail.com
Pam Yeager: pam.yeager@ieanea.org
Sean Burns: sean.burns@ieanea.org

Vol X, Issue 2
Phone: 217.787.7060
Fax: 217.787.7080
October 8, 2018



Education First

As educators and educational support professionals, we have built our lives around public education. Whether we wear it on our sleeve or carry our banner deep within the recesses of our day-to-day actions, we all believe in the power it wields to engage society in positively changing the world we live in. Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mine worker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another." As public educators, the prospect of

something better for our students is at the core of our belief system. And every day, you great educators and educational professionals increase the probability of that prospect.

Throughout the first quarter, while you have been doing the real work of educating today's youth, SEA has been attending to individual's concerns, ensuring that the contract is followed and that there is a continual and collaborative district push toward equity, violence prevention and cultural and emotional competency. We must hold our school district and our schools accountable in these realms to make the true development of public education realized. Please do not accept less than what is best for your entire class and school. You are the educational professionals and you know what is best for students. The task before us; making a better future for our students, our community and our world is a mighty one and SEA is here with you every step of the way.

-Aaron Graves



[Better School Facilities in Just 4 Hours!!!](#)

The County School 1% Facilities Tax represents a shift away from relying so heavily on property taxes for SPS186 and surrounding school districts and is a question on the November 6 ballot. If this passes we can make long overdue and necessary improvements in our districts. One cent of every one dollar will be equally distributed to all county schools and District 186 estimates receiving upwards of \$10 million dollars a year for more equitable facilities, upgrades in safety and security, 21st Century learning spaces and infrastructure, and more welcoming learning environments (Chatham gets over \$3 million and Williamsville and Rochester both receive over a \$1 million a year).

This tax will not affect anything not currently taxed now. Additionally, it does not tax unprepared food (groceries), cars/trucks/atvs/boats/mobile homes, farm equipment, parts or services. And, it is a great way to capture tourism revenue from those passing through Springfield each and every day. Every surrounding county has passed this tax and are revolutionizing their schools. You only need travel to Jacksonville or Decatur and see their marvelous middle and high schools to appreciate the benefits of this type of referendum.

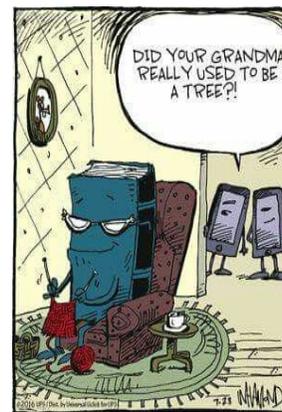
We need your yes vote and we need you to help get the word out. October 13, 17, 20 and November 3 we will be canvassing neighborhoods with information about the referendum. We only need 4 hours of one Saturday morning from you. PLEASE, sign up to be a volunteer by contacting your building AR, Aaron Graves at SEAPresident186@gmail.com, or Mike Zimmers at mikezimmers@comcast.net. And then, make sure you are registered and vote "yes" on November 6.

Grades - Assessment, Communication and Academic Integrity

With the end of Graham and Southern view's first quarter behind them and the end of the traditional calendar school's quarter coming to a close, now seems an appropriate time to review contract language around grading.

Section 11.6 - of your contract (grades), states, *"Teachers shall administer the approved marking system or other approved means of evaluating pupil progress. Middle and high school teachers will update the online grade book at least once every two weeks to help with communication to students and families. Extenuating circumstances can be discussed between teacher and administrator. The teacher shall maintain the responsibility and right to determine grades and other evaluations of students within the grading policies of the District based upon his/her professional judgment of available criteria pertinent to any given subject area or activity to which he/she is responsible. Mid-point of each grading term, teachers shall notify each parent whose child is in danger of failing. The forms provided for notification will be submitted to the counselors in middle/high school and to the principals in the elementary schools."*

It is SEA's stance that you are the educational professional, and your professional judgement is, and has always been, the classic basis on which student's progress is gauged and what should best be done to assist students in their educational endeavors. You know your students and you know and do what is best for them and your classes. Stand by that and SEA will stand by you!



3, 2, 1, Contract...

At this point, it is our hope that all SEA members have a hard copy of the contract. Article 2.5 of the contract states, *"Copies of this Agreement shall be printed and presented to all employees now employed or hereafter employed by the Board as long as this Agreement remains in effect. The cost of such printing and distribution shall be borne equally by the Board and the Association."*

The SEA contract and the rights and benefits that it affords you as a member have been fought for by educators and educational professionals here in Springfield since 1960. It is an extensive contract, negotiated and re-negotiated dozens of times, fine tuning it to fit our ever changing public school system. As you reference the paper copy of the contract or online version, remember that it is your union, your contract and your rights. SEA encourages every member to utilize those rights to help make their classroom, school and district as professional as possible.

NEA Member Benefits



Being a union member has many advantages. NEA Member Benefits is another. Check out these amazing "member only" discounts at <https://www.neamb.com/> to help recoup some union dues \$.

Veterinary Bills - Pets are part of the family too, which is why NEA Member Benefits partnered with Pets Best, a leading U.S. provider, to offer pet health insurance. Pets Best was founded by a veterinarian in 2005 and has paid over \$175 million in pet insurance claims to pet parents just like you. Love your pet while you love your wallet.

Automobiles - NEA® Auto Buying Program Members save an average of \$3,383 off MSRP.

Phone - Save 15% on AT&T cell phone service for you and your family. Savings sounds good!

Travel - With Red Roof Inn, as an NEA member, you and your family can enjoy a 20% discount at any of Red Roof's 520 plus locations nationwide. Red Roof, red school house, big savings...

Flowers - NEA Members now receive 20% off all the 1800FLOWERS.com® family of brands.

Evaluations - "The Old Informal"

The age-old "informal" has been done for years by exceptional administrators. Any principal who has earned their stripes in the classroom understands that quality time shared with their teachers in educational settings is a critical piece of a positive school-wide discipline process, is key to guidance and development of newer employees, and is essential in gauging the climate and progress of their school's classrooms. It should be an honest, trustworthy and transparent process by which feedback is collected and given. They need not all be evaluative in nature, however might be. Article 14.7 of your SEA contract states that, *"Any informal observations which are evaluative in nature must be reduced to writing, discussed with the evaluated teacher, and submitted to the teacher for signature prior to placement in the teacher's personnel file. Such signature does not indicate agreement to the contents of this evaluation, but acknowledgment that the teacher is cognizant of the contents."*

What informal observations are not to be used for are "gotchas", creations of negative paper trails, or retribution for past perceived transgressions. SEA stands behind our members in attaining the highest levels of professionalism possible and we will not waiver on assuring that your evaluation is just as professional. Please refer to your contract (Article 14) for all other evaluation information or reach out to your building AR for additional questions.



Strength in Numbers

The Illinois Policy Institute (the IPI) is a group of self-proclaimed Libertarian watch dogs led by CEO John Tillman and financially backed by uber rich such as the Koch brothers and wealthy think tanks like ALEC and the Franklin Center for Government and Public Integrity. Recently, they reached out to SPS186 union members encouraging people to drop their union membership by preying on people's frustration, current political polarization, and financial vulnerability; claiming that there are no cons to dropping one's membership.

While true that at this point anyone who drops their membership will receive the current gains that the union has fought tenaciously for, this "watch dog" organization fails to leave out some key points. First, people who drop their membership do not get ALL of the benefits. Members who elect to drop are not entitled to assistance on any dispute matter with administration (or others) that falls outside of the contract. And we all know that many building issues fall in this gray realm. Secondly, non-union members are not afforded IEA legal or Uniserve assistance in any legal or DCFS allegation issues. In these times, we all know that this is an unfortunate possibility in this profession. The third and strongest argument is, if thousands of teachers, nurses, security guards, speech therapists, social workers, braillists, psychologists and other public school employees drop their union membership, then unions will have less resources and will have a more difficult time making future gains for you and your profession, thus benefiting private acquisition of schools and education.

We want every member in the union, but as a matter of principal, SEA asks that you please honor the choices of any member who may elect to drop. They are still our colleagues and they deserve our respect. We hope that they will again decide to join us in the very near future and we welcome them back when they do.



S-PACE - "Lucky 13" - Springfield's Congressional District

Saturday, September 22 at the IEA Headquarters, the Illinois Political Action Committee for Education (IPACE) had a recommendation meeting regarding US Congressman Rodney Davis and Candidate Betsy Dirksen Londrigan for the 13th Congressional District. SEA was included in this process with many other union locals west to White Hall, south past Edwardsville, north to Normal and east past Champaign. That morning, both candidates presented well and gave strong arguments why they were the better candidate and the debate over which would better represent educators lasted hours. However, at the end of the process and with input at various levels of the union, a neutral stance on this particular race was selected. SEA welcomes your input or questions on this and any other political matter for the future.

The Best Bobcat - [The Sue Handy Scholarship](#)



Sue Handy was my first grade teacher. She welcomed me to first grade at Butler Elementary in 1980 with a warm and confident manner. She helped to ensure that every student in that room had the best possible start in life and she was one of my very favorite teachers. Her dedication to education and kids typified the magic that has made Springfield 186 a remarkable place to work and to learn. In honor of that dedication, SEA dedicated a scholarship to her in 1992. This fund awards scholarship money to college students who plan to enter the teaching field, in the hopes that they will someday become a "Mrs. Handy" too. Outside of rare personal donations from family and friends, this fund is supported entirely by our members. Unfortunately, we currently have only 7 district 186 employees currently donating. We need your donations, SEA! Any potential donor need only donate \$1 per paycheck, but are free to donate more if they prefer. The fund needs monthly donations from you if it is to survive. Please contact Pam Yeager at 217-787-7060 or pam.yeager@ieanea.org to sign up to donate.

NABTU Apprenticeship Readiness - Another Pathway to Success

At the most recent District 186 Curriculum Council, representatives from the North American Building and Trades Union (NABTU) were welcomed with open arms as they presented a proposal for a collaborative apprenticeship readiness program. This developing program would give our students an alternative pathway to the traditional 4 years Bachelor's Degree, hands-on experience in union careers prior to graduation, and could be a game-changer for many of our non-traditional students. SEA will continue to be involved with long-requested and important program as it is developed for the upcoming 2019-2020 academic year and after.

If you know of any students or teachers that would be a good fit for this program, please refer them to Cheree Morrison at chereemo@sps186.org or Aaron Graves at SEApresident186@gmail.com. Union strong!

Calendar of Events

October

- 9 AR/Exec Meeting, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 9 Elem Solutions, PDC, 5:30 p.m.
- 15 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.
- 12 Bomke Pumpkin Patch, 5:00 p.m.
- 16 Mid. Sch. Solutions, GMS Library, 3:30 p.m.
- 16 Grievance, PDC, 4:00 p.m.
- 17 ESP Solutions, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 20 Danenberger Winery, 4:00 p.m.
- 23 Exec. Meeting, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 29 S-PACE, PDC, 4:20 p.m.

November

- 1 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.
- 4 Sick Bank, 1900, 4:00 p.m.
- 13 AR/Exec Meeting, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 13 High School Solutions, 5:30 p.m.
- 14 Sp. Ed, Solutions, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 15 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.
- 16 Grievance, PDC, 4:00 p.m.
- 23 Exec Meeting, PDC, 4:20 p.m.

* All meetings at IEA PDC (3440 Liberty Drive) unless otherwise noted.



