

SEA-IEA

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From the President: **"Your Union"**

Welcome back, to school (and happy sixth week [Graham](#) and [Southern View](#)). It was great to see everybody on opening day. I want to acknowledge your active presence at the the annual district event, August 16. Getting everyone together at once is inspiring and makes it so very evident the strength and potential political action power we have on collective educational agendas.

It was certainly noticed that the messages coming from the union, the board and the district had overlapping buzzwords, ideas and themes... and by no coincidence. A union is a device to empower workers toward collective change and many individuals have been exercising those rights for the past many years. The Memorial Health System roll out is in part a bi-product of that work. The SEL positions, intended to assist in our ever-more-difficult population were created out of that union push. And, the superintendent's very message itself, also a reflection of what has been an echoed by SEA over the last year from engaged members... "Take care of your people."

I am optimistic about our year ahead. However, the proof will be in the pudding. Without the action, without positive movement on concerns that we have as a district; the engaging rhetoric becomes a boomerang on which we find our "awfulizing" returning to us many fold.

Will the Memorial Health Systems program save us money? Will our journey inward as a district help our neighbors, our staffs and our organization? Will violence lessen and safety and security return to our schools. I think it will. In the meantime, I make the commitment to you once again of unwavering support from your union. I pledge to help carry your SEA and district banner proudly. And I firmly expect that you will hold me and the union accountable in these endeavors. This is your union; a strong union. SEA.

-Aaron



Illinois Policy Institute - Modern Day Trojan Horse

Within the last few days, many of the district's union members received a piece of mail or robocall from the Illinois Policy Institute. This organization, established right here in our backyard, claims to be a "government watchdog". It's very name makes it seem democratic or pro-citizen. However, it is actually a union-busting think tank, strongly biased against union and middle-class values that uses alluring pitches through purposeful story selection and/or political slants. The IPI utilizes loaded articles and media pushes, rife with words that attempt to influence an audience through emotion or stereotypes. They publish misleading reports and omit any information that may damage their cause. They are inextricably tied to the likes of the Koch Brothers, ALEC, Project Six and helped bankroll the JANUS vs AFSCME case.

The IPI wants your union and public education dismantled so that they can move their own (less democratic) political and educational agenda. They, and the like, helped to emaciate the unions of Wisconsin and other states, leaving them almost powerless to fight against crooked politicians and corporate greed. There is only one reason that they want you to stop contributing your union dues dollars toward collective political action, and that is to control you and undermine the very fabric on which we set our public education table each and every day. Republican, Democratic, Independent. It doesn't matter. Stand fast in collective retort. Union Strong!

One Voice, One Future, One Percent!

The school board and the district have slowly recovered from previous financial woes, putting SPS186 approximately roughly \$4 million dollars in the black. SEA members have helped to carry their share of this financial burden for the last 10 years, accepting less than we deserve and having to bite our cheek when we hear the word raise and health insurance increase.

SPS186, has roughly 35 different schools at varying degrees of disrepair. Some built as far back as 1930. And we have not passed a referendum to fund those school in more than 30 years.

The current combined sales tax rate for Springfield, IL is 8.75%. This is the total of state, county and city sales tax rates. The Illinois state sales tax rate is currently 6.25%. The Sangamon County sales tax rate is 0%. Springfield sales tax rate

is 2.5%. This proposed referendum would earmark an additional 1% specifically for district hardened structures for all county schools. As President of the School Board, Mike Zimmers said, "It is our last best chance at this."



The district needs SEA member's support on this. Please reach out and volunteer at SEApresident186@gmail.com

Sick Bank: Another Benefit Bargained By Your Union

Sick Leave Bank is to benefit those teachers who have, for one reason or another, been forced to be absent from the classroom due to illness, beyond the coverage of their accumulated sick days. Teachers donate one sick day to the sick bank each year (SEA Contract Article 12.1-12.2) The sick bank committee meets monthly to determine eligibility. There is a form and doctor's notes that need to be filled out when applying for bank. If you are interested in learning more about sick bank or wish to be a part of sick bank committee, please contact Dixie at dmcquali@yahoo.com.

Uniserve Director's Report: Statehouse Slight-of-Hand

A new state law raising the pension contributions school districts must pay for granting pay raises for soon-to-rotate teachers (licensed educators) passed the General Assembly and was signed by the Governor in June as part of the budget implementation bill. The law requires school district's to make additional contributions to Teachers Retirement Systems (TRS) for any increase above 3% in the years that will be used to calculate a retiree's annuity. (Tier 1 members of TRS it would be the 4 highest consecutive years of the last 10 years of service. Tier 2 members would be the 8 highest of the last 10 years.) For those of you that recall, this is a similar law to the 6% additional contribution law passed in 2005-06.

According to the Illinois Education Association (IEA) Government Relations department this bill was inserted into the budget by leadership in both parties. Rank and file legislators were unaware of the bill's insertion into the 700 page budget. IEA believes that it was done deliberately to place some of the costs of pension contributions back onto Districts without IEA members being able to lobby against the bill. While some District's will be able

to afford to make additional contributions, many others will want to cap any end of career or retirement incentives to 3%. Other Districts are already trying to limit annual raises of all employees to 3%! IEA is encouraging members to contact their local leadership and organize conversations with legislators to revisit this law and to add exceptions for education lane movement or step increases.

Currently, the only exemption to the 3% law is when a member changes employers. TRS has ruled that the new 3% rule will not apply until a current collective bargaining agreement ends. For SEA, our contract is in effect until August of 2019. While SEA bargainers will do everything possible to maintain or improve salary and benefits, the cost to the District in additional compensation to TRS for raises in excess of 3% will make it nearly impossible to leave the retirement incentive untouched. If you are eligible to retire within the next four years it would be prudent to declare your intentions this year to get the full benefit of the current contractual retirement incentive. If you have any questions about retirement please don't hesitate to contact me at sean.burns@ieanea.org, in addition to contacting TRS.

Committee Work: [SEA's Sue Handy Scholarship](#)

The Sue Handy Scholarship awards college tuition money to district employee's children who commit to entering the field of education. It is named after a past member, Sue Handy, who taught many years at Butler Elementary School. She was my first grade teacher, and set the bar for what a teacher should be. Sue was always willing to help anyone needing assistance. She was a great friend and mentor. Those who knew her remembered her amazing talent for teaching, her great one-liners, the way she always took the time to say something kind to those in need, and her hearty laugh that echoed the halls.

This scholarship is sustained by voluntary contributions from SEA members and it needs your support to survive. If you are interested, contact Pam Yaeger at pam.yaeger@ieanea.org. This is a donation that you know is worth the investment.

SEA Perspective: [Social Emotional Learning](#)

Social and emotional learning, or SEL, is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set and achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions. ([CASEL, 2017](#))

As we all know, the degree of trauma and psychological stressors our students are experiencing each year continues to rise, as have the chaos in many of our buildings. As educational professionals, we have expressed our concerns to those who would listen.

Many of our members have been working for years outside the classroom in professional roles, supporting the social and emotional health of children in the past in roles such as School Social Worker, Student Support Leader, School Psychologist and Certified Nurse. This year, the

district is adding another layer of support. Seven BBSS Strategist were created to directly support the social emotional needs of our students, staff, schools and district. Each of these veteran educators and SEA members have worked for years in the classroom and other district roles and are well-prepared to do this work. Additionally, the contract language for posting and filling these positions was followed and were all filled internally from our own union ranks.

Your open push for this assistance through the union has helped this additional layer of support to come to fruition. The union understands that although we recommended implementation of this program as was suggested by members, its roll out may have some bumps and is not a stand alone solution for student discipline issues. Do not hesitate to address these concerns with your BBSS Strategist, your AR, or directly to the SEA president at SEAPresident186@gmail.com. Together, we can do this!

[Grievance](#): "Let's Do Things Right."



Through the years, somehow the word grievance has come to be viewed by some in a negative light; frowned upon by those who think it an antiquated or unnecessary practice. It is however a very important part of union action and helps to make our district better.

According to Article 3.1 of the 2017-2019 SEA Contract, "A "grievance" shall mean a complaint by an employee or the Association that there has been an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of any provision of this agreement". When implemented properly, through the steps spelled out in our contract, the grievance process is a transparent form of accountability and healthy way for employees to stand up for themselves without fear of be(ing) subjected to discipline or reprisal from any source because of such participation". It is SEA's intent this year to utilize this process as necessary to spark strength and leadership within every corner of the district. Dawn Swagerty and Tim Ruyle, both veteran 186 and SEA members, will be co-chairing the Grievance Committee this year. Please reach out to them if you should have any questions or may be interested in serving on this committee at truyle2305@hotmail.com or dswags5@gmail.com.

S-PACE: IPACE Recommendation: Your Political Action \$ At Work.

On August 8, there was an IPACE recommendation meeting held Taylorville regarding endorsement of candidates from Senate District 48 and Representative District 95 and 96. Through an IPACE recommendation hearing process, the IEA affiliated unions within each legislative district are able to place, stay, or withdraw the local's political support behind pro-education candidates. The candidates up for endorsement were Senator Andy Manar (HD 96), Representative Sue Sherrer (SD 48), Representative Avery Bourne (HD 95) and Candidate Dillon Clark (HD 95). Each candidate was examined as far as their position on educational issues, relationships, and electability. Mannar, Sherrer and Clark all attended in person. Bourne called in by phone.

At the meetings conclusion, the group's unanimous decision was to continue recommendation for both

Sherrer and Manar because they have been continuous educational advocates with excellent voting records on the floor. In addition, Representative District 95 (not Springfield) placed support behind Candidate Dillon Clark over Avery Bourne, because his wife is a public school kindergarten teacher, he is pro union, and his opponent (Rep Avery Bourne) had not been seemingly supportive of public education over her last term.

There will be another recommendation meeting regarding US Congressman Rodney Davis and Candidate Betsy Dirksen Londrigan coming up very soon. Please contact your your president at SEApresident186@gmail.com or your Region 11 Chair, Meri Havenar if you have any input, questions, or might like to attend.

Calendar of Events

September



- 4 BOE, 1900, 6:00 p.m.
- 6 Sick Bank, 1900, 4:00 p.m.
- 11 ARs/Exec, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 18 Grievance, PDC, 4:00 p.m.
- 17 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.

October

- 1 BOE, 1900, 6:00 p.m.
- 4 Sick Bank, 1900, 4:00 p.m.
- 9 ARs/Exec, PDC, 4:20 p.m.
- 15 BOE, 1900, 6:00 p.m.
- 16 Grievance, PDC, 4:00 p.m.
- 23 Exec, PDC, 4:20 p.m.

* Elementary/Middle/High School/Minority/Sp Ed Concerns, S-PACE, Public Relations, Scholarship, and Prof Development meetings are all soon to be announced. Stay tuned for emails from their leaders!

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

Memorial Choice provides benefits above and beyond your current insurance plan. These benefits are only available to employees and dependents who are enrolled in the insurance plan provided by District 186.

Service	Your current insurance	Your insurance + Memorial Choice
Physician office visits <small>(primary care, internal medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, mental health)</small>	\$25 copay for primary care	\$0 copay plus free select primary care, pediatric and preventive services with Memorial Physician Services (MPS) providers at Koke Mill, North Dirksen, South Sixth, Chatham, MacArthur Walk-In Clinic, Jacksonville, Lincoln and Petersburg.
Urgent care	\$25 copay	\$0 copay plus free select urgent care services at Memorial ExpressCare clinics.
Virtual care	Not available	\$0 copay for online care for virtual access to Memorial providers from your smartphone, tablet or computer. Available 24/7 with one-hour provider responses 7 a.m.–7 p.m., seven days a week, including holidays. <small>Providers are part of the Memorial Physician Services network and are able to access your medical history and share information about your visit with your primary care physician.</small>
Nurse concierge	Not available	One-stop phone call for appointment scheduling, select prescription refills, referrals and more, available 7 a.m.–7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday.
Care Coordination	Not available	Available free of charge to employees with more complex medical needs. Care Coordination helps you keep track of appointments, understand your insurance and access care. Care coordinators are on call 24/7 and can also act as personal "health coaches," to help you manage your conditions and meet your goals.

More about your new health benefits at <http://www.sps186.org/business/payroll/?p=125378>

