



UPDATE

American Federation of Teachers Local 604, AFL-CIO

www.aftlocal604.org

April/May 2019

E-learning option now open for all

At this moment, most are counting down the days until the end of the 2018-19 school year. For some, the count is higher than others. The main reason: E-learning days.

When Illinois was suffering through its coldest winter in recent memory and most schools were closed and adding days to the end of the school years, others had planned for E-learning and will be out at their regularly-scheduled date.

E-learning allows students to learn electronically while they are not physically in the building. There are limits, though. These research-based programs may not exceed the minimum number of emergency days in the school calendar.

Originally, only three districts in the state were part of the pilot program. Now, SB 28, introduced by Sen. Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant, opens the option for all districts that meet the state requirements.

Because of a change in 2018 where the state redefined instructional days, Kankakee took advantage of a waiver and had students in grades 7-12 complete assignments on the district-issued Chromebooks. The students were also required to communicate with their teachers through email or Google Classroom.

For K-6, the teachers had prepared a take-home packet of assignments to be completed and handed in when they returned.

Dr. Geneva Walters, superintendent, had met with all unions in the district to make sure they were on board. In her presentations, she told them that no one would suffer. Hourly employees were given options outside their normal day.

Beth Anderson, council president, said, "One of the concerns is pay for hourly workers. In Kankakee County, three superintendents have stated they have no intentions paying hourly staff on e-learning days or when staff is sent home for bad weather conditions."

Over-all, Beth said the reaction from teachers and students, alike, was very positive. However, there are some concerns. Dr. Walters said, "My major concern with e-learning anywhere, anytime, is the idea that students can't come to see their teachers face-to-face if teachers are in the building. I don't want anyone starting the practice of using it as an opportunity not to provide face-to-face support if the building is open and adults are in the building."

The option is now available for any district that follows the state guidelines. First, the BOE must adopt a research-based program(s) for e-learning days district-wide. This program must then be approved by the ROE to make sure that specific needs of all students are met, including special education students and English learners.

In addition, the proposal must be posted in a newspaper in the district, reach the parents or guardians of all students in the district, and shared with the collective bargaining representatives and those not a part of the union.



The document must be designed to accomplish 10 areas including:

- ⇒ ensure and verify at least 5 clock hours of instruction or school work
- ⇒ access from home or other appropriate remote facilities for all students
- ⇒ ensure non-electronic materials are made available to those who do not have access to required technology
- ⇒ address appropriate learning opportunities for students with special needs
- ⇒ provide effective notice to students, their parents or guardians of the use of days for e-learning
- ⇒ provide staff and students with adequate training for e-days
- ⇒ review and revise the program as implemented to address difficulties.

Parents have long issued concerns with late starts or early dismissals when they are working or have their routine disrupted. E-learning helps to calm those issues. Dr. Walters admitted that some options don't always work for Kankakee.

She said, "You have parents that won't send their kids to school because they feel the weather is too bad regardless of the time we start. And you have parents that have to get their students to a sitter because of their work schedule so they just won't attend school that day."

For them, e-learning is a win-win situation.

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For Illinois to move forward

Fair Tax Must Pass



Bill Briggs

With yard signs cleared and elections for school board and local offices settled, politics should be out of our lives for a while. However, we have already been witnessing TV advertisements touting the importance of Illinois moving from a Flat Tax to a Fair Tax.

Let me be clear up front, as educators, we need to be informed and support this major change on how Illinois raises revenues. The message is clear: the \$3.2 billion deficit from the previous administration is real, and Governor JB Pritzker's plan will help put Illinois back on track, **period**. The idea is not new; his campaign for governor centered on this idea.

Right now, 33 states and the District of Columbia already have a form of what some call a Progressive Tax. Currently in Illinois, our flat tax at 4.95% for everyone, obviously, favors the wealthy, while the middle class and poor don't do as well.

The TV ad states, "97% of Illinoisans WILL NOT see an income tax increase; only those making above \$250,000 pay more."

To me, it's a no brainer. After Trump and the GOP's new tax laws shocked millions when they realized their return was not as large as expected or in some cases people who were used to a refund had to pay, any mention of changing tax laws puts up a red flag. As we spread our support for this change, we need to be aware that those opposed to it will offer their view on why it's bad.

Case in point, recently, educators from Republican Lindsay Parkhurst's 79th District met with the representative to discuss issues important to our members. When I asked her view on the Fair Tax, she was quick to state why she was against the proposal and said both "Iowa and Kentucky reverted back to a flat tax."

Taken by surprise, I asked the IFT research department for the facts on her statement, which, I am sure, will be spread by most from the GOP. Here are the facts:

- ⇒ Iowa is **not** going back to a flat tax but is reducing the number of brackets from nine to four by 2023. Not a surprise, the change benefits mostly the wealthy. According to the *Des Moines Register*, 2/3 of Iowans earn \$60,000 or less and will save about \$58 million collectively, or 13% of the total tax savings. Those earning \$250,000 or more, but only 2.5% of all taxpayers, will see a savings of \$206 million, or 46% of the total \$443 million projected to be saved.
- ⇒ In Kentucky, by moving to a flat tax, 95% of Kentuckians saw their taxes increased, while giving the wealthiest a 5% tax cut (Kentucky Center for Economic Policy). The flat tax rate is now 5%, but before the range was 2 to 6%.
- ⇒ Kansas, however, is like a tennis match. It went from a fair tax to a flat tax, and now is going back to the fair tax.

I realize that both sides will try to influence all on why we should keep the flat tax or vote to give authority to the legislature to pass a graduated structure. Multiple members have already asked me if passing the Fair Tax would mean opening the State Constitution for review, which could put our pensions in jeopardy. The answer is clear: **NO** the constitution would just be amended. But one thing is clear, when you ask Republicans what their plan is to solve our financial woes in Illinois, the response is usually a blank stare or the words we all hate to hear, CUT.

If we want to see change in the issues dear to us—education, social services, and capital improvements, we must support this plan for a Fair Tax; we must ...

THINK BIG, ILLINOIS!

97% of Illinois Taxpayers Pay the Same or Less Under Governor Pritzker's Fair Tax

How will the Fair Tax affect the counties of AFT Local 604?

See for yourself how the Fair Tax will affect your family: Illinois.gov/FairTax Calculator.

BUREAU COUNTY 15,620 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 99.12%/ 15,483	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.07%/ 11
COOK COUNTY 2,318,073 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 96.78%/ 2,243,421	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.40%/ 9,295
DUPAGE COUNTY 448,643 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 94.77%/ 425,200	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.55%/ 2,460
GRUNDY COUNTY 23,703 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 98.77%/ 23,411	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.09%/ 21
HENRY COUNTY 22,472 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 99.00%/ 22,248	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.08%/ 19
IROQUOIS COUNTY 15,620 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 99.19%/ 12,782	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.04%/ *
KANE COUNTY 228,423 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 97.13%/ 221,865	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.23%/ 530
KANKAKEE COUNTY 46,617 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 99.09%/ 46,192	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.07%/ 32
KENDALL COUNTY 55,211 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 98.26%/ 54,251	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.09%/ 48
LASALLE COUNTY 51,229 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 99.06%/ 50,747	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.08%/ 43
LIVINGSTON COUNTY 16,044 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 98.39%/ 15,869	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.07%/ 12
WILL COUNTY 308,496 TOTAL FILERS	TAXPAYERS PAYING THE SAME OR LESS (<\$250K INCOME) 97.52%/ 300,838	MILLIONAIRES PAYING TOP RATE (>\$1M INCOME) 0.16%/ 484

COUNTY-LEVEL TAXPAYER INFORMATION IS BASED ON ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE DATA FROM THE 2016 TAX YEAR, THE MOST RECENT YEAR FOR WHICH COMPREHENSIVE FINAL DATA IS AVAILABLE. *INSTANCES INVOLVING FEWER THAN 6 TAX FILERS HAVE BEEN REDACTED TO PROTECT FILERS' PRIVACY.

Your rights under the workers' compensation act

by James M. Ridge, attorney at law

Identifying Discrimination in the Workplace

Employment discrimination is a situation in which employees are treated unfairly because of who they are. However, not all forms of discrimination are protected under the law. Generally speaking, employment discrimination laws (both federal and state) seek to prevent unfair or disparate treatment in the workplace because the employee falls within a protected class, characteristic or activity, such as age (over 40), physical or mental disability, gender identity, genetic information, race/color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, or pregnancy/maternity.

While employment discrimination can occur in any number of workplace situations, it often occurs when an employer discriminates against an employee with respect to work-related decisions such as hiring, firing, promotions, job assignments, compensation, the availability of benefits, retaliation, and various types of harassment.

Discrimination occurs when an employee receives subpar treatment or when an employer takes an adverse action against an employee (i.e., termination or demotion) because of his/her protected characteristic or activity.

Harassment is a form of discrimination and there are different types. Harassment occurs when an employee endures offensive, threatening, intimidating or humiliating comments or actions, including unwelcome behavior from a co-worker, manager or anyone in the workplace because of one of his/her protected characteristics or activities. Sexual harassment is a behavior which includes unwelcome advances or attention of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct which unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating or hostile work environment. Prohibited conduct can also occur through writing and other forms of communication such as email, texting and social media.



While not all unfavorable treatment in the workplace constitutes unlawful discrimination, any employee who believes that he/she has experienced workplace discrimination can file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) at (312) 353-2713 or the Illinois Human Rights Commission at (312) 814-6200.



For more information on your rights contact:

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What Our Councils do for their Students/Community



Julie Harris, Tinley Park District 146 Council President, says, “Union and ESP Union members “fund raise” all year in their buildings to raise money for scholarships. At the Union sponsored “end of year celebration,” we award up to \$4,500 in scholarships for college - bound children of our union members. Each building fund raises by having themed luncheons, jean days, and other creative fund raising ideas to support our scholarship fund.”

Michelle Nevin, Lemont 113a Council President, says, “We partner with a local community organization called Hope & Friendship. We host three events each year that benefits hundreds of people. One is a winter clothing drive plus giveaway, the second is collecting and delivering Christmas dinners on Christmas day, and the third is, “Warm a Heart” lunch making where we also make note creations.”

Dan Nyalka, Channahon School District 17 Council Co-President, says, “We offer a scholarship at the high school level to any students interested in pursuing teaching as a career. The only criterion they have to meet is that they were a student in our school district.”

Nina Mitchell, Waltham Elementary School Council Co-President, says, “ We donate a monetary gift to a former student or family every year at Christmas time. This past year it was to a former student who has a rare form of cancer.”

Nancy Christensen, Waubensee Community College Council President, says, “ In the Fall, there is a school-supply drive and in the Spring there is a food-bank drive. They have payroll deductions for WCC Foundation Scholarships. We collect and sell textbooks and supplies to provide funds for scholarships. The “Faculty Council” is one of the largest private donors to the Waubensee Foundation. These awards are for Waubensee students and are applied towards their books, tuition and fees.”

Renee Calabrese, Valley View Council President, says, “Our council provides six scholarships to six seniors at both of the high schools. This money can be used towards the expense of college. We use the money collected from our soda machines in the lounges of all 21 of our buildings to do this. Students submit an essay and the reps from each of those high schools review them and pick eligible candidates. Our Council also walks in the Founder’s Day parades in both of our communities, Romeoville and Bolingbrook every year. We pass out candy, pencils and certificates to the children along the parade route as well.”

Cara Anderson, Herscher Council President, says, “There is a cooking competition that we host between all four of our buildings. The competition includes an appetizer, side dish, entrée and dessert. The event is open to the community. People purchase tickets to attend the event, sample the different food and vote for their favorite in each category. All of the different departments and many of the student organizations donate baskets that the individuals attending the event buy tickets for as a raffle. We then use the money that is raised to give out scholarships to the graduating seniors. We give out a scholarship to a student who is pursuing a career in education. We give out scholarships to students who show strong community involvement. A scholarship is given each year to a student who is about to start their student teaching. We have a straight A’s banquet where dinner is provided for the student(s) by the members of the U2CT which also includes a speaker. They must obtain straight A’s for two consecutive semesters. A/B students are also recognized with a post card and gift card mailed to their home if they have A’s and B’s for two consecutive semesters. We also have a retiree breakfast. On the last institute of the year, the U2CT puts on a breakfast for all of the district staff to recognize those both in the union and out of the union who are retiring.”

Go to our web page at www.aftlocal604.org to view photos

Digital Learning to Enhance your teaching Workshops

Looking for some free professional development over the summer while earning PD hours? AFT Local 604 has some options for you! You can sign up for one or more of the courses depending on your needs or availability. There will be a cap of 15 participants per course but depending on interest, we will look at opening up more dates. Please bring your own device to the sessions that you sign up for.

These classes are free for our members.

Course Name	Intended Audience	What is needed for this course?	Session Date & Time
Digital Learning to Enhance your Teaching Workshop 1- Assessments	These sessions are for anyone looking to increase their formative assessment tool belt. Topics that will be explored include but are not limited to the following: Flippity, Gimkit, Socrative, Nearpod, Google Forms, EdPuzzle, Quizizz, Kahoot, Quizlet Live, Flipgrid	⇒ A device ⇒ Google Account (not necessary but helpful)	June 10th 8:30-11:30 OR June 11th 8:30-11:30
Digital Learning to Enhance your Teaching Workshop 2- Google Tools	These sessions are for anyone looking to increase their knowledge about Google Tools. Topics that will be explored include but are not limited to the following: Sheets, Drawings, My Maps, Sites, Keep, Translate, Earth, Hangouts, add-ons.	⇒ A device ⇒ Google Account (not necessary but helpful)	June 10th 12:30-3:30 OR June 11th 12:30-3:30

Instructor: Michelle Nevin

You may register by calling 815-725-0402

Please indicate the course you'd like to take (time & date), name; address; cell #; & home email.

Each session is limited to 15 participants.

You will earn 3 CPDUs for each session you complete.

Please make sure your device is fully charged!



Arlie Fender, 85, passes

Arlie Emmet Fender, 85, retired AFT Local 604 treasurer, passed away at 10:15 am, April 8 in Heartland Christian Village, Neoga, IL.

Arlie and Dick Manley were instrumental in the growth of AFT Local 604 to what has become the 10th largest local in the AFT and the second largest in Illinois. A graduate of North Clay High School and the University of Illinois, his 40-year teaching career included time at his former high school and Lockport Central, where he served as secretary, grievance chair, and president of the Lockport Council.

A life-long member of the AFT and IFT, after retirement from Lockport in 1990, he extended his union career as negotiator and treasurer of AFT Local 604 for two decades.

He is survived by his wife, Dr. Victoria Davis of Shelbyville; son James (Janet) of Lockport; daughter Diane Payton (Rob) of Knoxville, TN; step-daughter Dr. Rachel Davis (Clark Pope) of Cary, NC; brother Danny Fender (Jean) of Louisville, IL; and granddaughters Kristen Cole Sample (Colton) and Allison Rose Pope.

He was preceded in death by his son Drew and granddaughter Laurie Cole.

Courses offered for professional development

Go to www.aftlocal604.org to find registration form for classes listed here

AFT Local 604 is offering summer classes at the Local 604 office to help teachers and paraprofessionals in the classroom. You also have the opportunity to earn 30 CPDUs or two graduate credits. The AFT TEACH program is based on proven practice, is created and delivered by classroom teachers and meets the NCLB criteria for high-quality professional development. These courses offer professional development opportunities and learning experiences that are very different from traditional in-service training programs. **Reading and Mathematics courses were redesigned to help teachers understand the content and practice standards of the Common Core Standards.**

Reading Comprehension Instruction Reading Comprehension Instruction focuses on the research and exemplary practices that help students acquire strong reading comprehension skills.

RCI is appropriate for all K-12 teachers and support staff who need to help increase their students' comprehension of text—whether that text is a literature selection or informational text. The course provides participants with a synthesis of the research base on reading comprehension instruction and vocabulary development. Participants examine, discuss and evaluate the appropriate application of a range of instructional strategies from explicit to implicit teaching of comprehension skills. Strategies are presented for increasing student comprehension of both narrative and expository texts. In addition, participants learn how to help students self-monitor comprehension and apply appropriate “fix-up” strategies when comprehension is not achieved.

Practice in using instructional strategies and examples of student work are embedded in the course.

Dates: June 24-28, 2019 (registration due by June 10th)
Time: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Place: Local 604 office
1520 N. Rock Run Drive, #1, Crest Hill
Fee: \$40 for the manual *Additional \$100 fee for non Members.
Instructor: Christina Grigsby

Managing Behavior in School Communities—The anti-social actions of a small, but powerful percentage of students in school not only put their own academic success at risk, but also threaten the learning environment for everyone. This course presents research on students who have emotional and behavioral problems and who consistently act out. Participants will learn strategies to reduce and/or prevent the occurrence of disruptive behaviors.

Dates: June 3,4,6,7, 2019 (registration due by May 13th)
Time: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
Location: Local 604 office
1520 N. Rock Run Drive, #1, Crest Hill
Fee: \$40 for the manual *Additional \$100 fee for non members.
Instructor: Marjorie Kubacki

***You can earn 30 CPDUs for these classes.**

***Additional fee for 2 credit hours from Governor State or Prairie State.**

***Participants must:**

Attend ALL classes & read & participate in class discussions/activities

Lunch will be provided for all classes

Registration forms can be found at www.aftlocal604.org.

AFT Local 604 would like to introduce our new part-time IFT Secretary,

Angela Rallis!

I would like to tell you a little about myself. I am married to Jim Rallis and between us we have three children, Michael and his wife Jess, Tony and Paige. We also have a beautiful almost two-year-old granddaughter Aria Brielle. I worked for Joliet Township High School for 21 years and recently retired from there. I was the President of the Joliet Township High School Office Staff union for 11 years and took part in the negotiations of many contracts. I also perform with my husband's band "Sundance". I love hanging out at the beach in Michigan and love spending time with my family.

When I was the union president, I was in contact with the AFT Local 604 office on many occasions and was able to work closely with them. I am excited to join the IFT-AFT Local 604 office and now becoming part of the team.



Student Debt Clinic

IFT's **Union Leadership Institute (ULI)** program was designed to meet the needs of both new and experienced local leaders.

This past February the ULI had a two-day workshop, **Student Debt Clinic: Train the Trainer** course.

On **June 5th and 19th** we will have workshops at the AFT Local 604 office on **Student Debt Forgiveness/Repayment**. **8:30-10:00** is for **Leadership & Administrators**. **10:30-12:00 & 1:30-3:00** are for our **Members**. Teaching the classes will be Katie Kollross and Beth Anderson.

To sign up for a class, please call our office at 815-725-0402.

These classes are free to our Members.



Attending the ULI two day workshop classes were:

Back row left to right...

Lindsey McGee, Regina Alexander, Susan Heerd, Tara Heatherly, Tamara Dillard, Katie Kollross, Beth Anderson, Nancye Wertz & sitting is Ashley McDaniel-Johnson

Next Senate Meeting

Wednesday, August 14, 2019 @ 6:00 p.m.

AFT Local 604 office in Joliet



IFT/AFT, AFL-CIO

American Federation of Teachers Local 604
www.aftlocal604.org

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