

End of the School Year - Info and Thoughts from Local 1642 President, Duane Peiffer

Helping Our Community: The Local 1642 donated \$1000 to the victims of the Willow Brooke apartment building fire this past spring.

Growing Our Union: District 214, last large independent teachers association has voted to affiliate with the IFT and join Local 1211.

Statewide Politics: The gubernatorial race (voting in 2018) is heating up. Bruce Rauner has already raised 70 million dollars. 5 Democratic candidates have declared (more can up until Dec. 3, 2017). Four of those candidates have met with our state IFT board, a board I sit on. All of those candidates would like our IFT endorsement, several trade unions have already endorsed J.B. Pritzker. There has been some pressure on the IFT to join in. It is very clear that many of our members across the state were upset with the AFT for their early endorsement of Hillary Clinton in the last presidential race. So let me assure you that the IFT will be seeking your input. I hope to have information and opportunities for input to present to you in fall of 2017.

Legislation: Pension Reform, Mandates, formula

There are a number of bills working their way through the state legislature. These things often move quickly, so the best way to stay informed is to regularly visit the IFT website www.ift-aft.org

Some of particular note:

- SB16 – pension reform, would require those part of TRS to choose between two pension reducing options.
- HB 440, HB 2569, SB756 – various bills that would allow schools to drop physical education requirements.
- HB 663, HB793, HB788, SB1712 – various bills that would allow schools to drop a variety of mandates. Some of the press on these make them sound reasonable. However the ramifications could lead to the elimination of a wide variety of programs ranging from busing to special education depending on the bill and the interpretation.
- HB 379 – A Steve Reick bill that would require colleges to submit to the Board of Higher Education a study of the cost of making its four most popular degree programs available online. (IFT opposes)
- HB 3447 , SB 1897 – Half of any new education funding over FY15 levels would be redirected to student scholarships and grant awards.
- SB 440 – Expand the Illinois Board of Higher Education from 16 to 18 members and require that 2 full-time faculty members selected by a faculty advisory committee (not the governor) be included.
- HB 3393 – would eliminate the carried interest loophole in Illinois.

There are a great many other initiative covering a wide swath of educational issues. Again the best way to stay on top of all this and find out which bills seem to be gaining momentum is to check out www.ift-aft.org

Summer Reading: If you are a reader and want to learn some more about unions, government, finance and other topics that we as teachers and unionists are affected by, I offer the following list.

Chicago is Not Broke edited by Tom Tresser – Short, concise text on various aspects of finances in the City of Chicago. Several chapters offer insight into our state and potential issues locally, including a chapter on TIF districts written by IFT vice president and recent Local 1642 guest speaker, Jackson Potter.

Flash Boys by Michael Lewis. By the author of *The Blind Side* and *Moneyball*, an enjoyable and illuminating story about high frequency trading (HFT). HFT has greatly impacted how stock markets work, which impacts the billions of dollars invested on behalf of our retirement programs, communities and personal investments.

A Fight for the Soul of Public Education by Steven K. Ashby and Robert Bruno. The story of the 2012 Chicago Teachers strike, the political forces that lead to the strike and how the CTU transformed itself into a member driven, activist organization.

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson. First published in 1962, this national best seller is often credited with jump starting the environmental movement. Author Rachel Carson was a pioneering writer, and was recently the subject of *The American Experience* series on PBS.

The Man Who Sold the World by William Kleinknecht. An examination of the negative impact of the Reagan presidency on policy and the American mindset. Seems to provide context for the policies being promoted today.

Social Insecurity: 401(k)s and the retirement crisis by James W. Russell. Provides good explanation of how various retirement plans work. Great resource for understanding the difference between defined benefit and 401(k) type retirement plans, how 401(k)'s have fallen short of their promise and how defined benefit programs really do work.

There is Power in a Union by Philip Dray. Good general history of unions in the U.S.A.

From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America by Elizabeth Hinton. Traces the history of how the 1960's "War on Poverty" transformed over 2 decades to become the "War on Crime".

THE IFT VISION

***Members fighting powerfully for a strong union
and the future we all deserve.***

The future we all deserve is an Illinois where we win:

Full and equitable funding for all levels of education and public services
Economic and social justice in communities anchored by strong public schools
Respect and voice for all workers