

# BELLEVILLE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

AFT/IFT LOCAL 434



## YOUR UNION

Elected by you every year, the Executive Board of Local 434 conducts the business of the union every month by meeting and voting on every action and every dollar spent.

## WORKING FOR YOU

- Contract bargaining and negotiating
- Grievance processing
- Dues management
- Rights protections
- Workplace protections

YOUR RIGHTS  
YOUR PROTECTIONS  
YOUR PEACE OF MIND  
YOUR UNION

**#UNIONSTRONG**

# A LEGACY OF SOLIDARITY

## TEACHERS AT HIGH SCHOOL ORGANIZING

## OTHER DRI IN LIEBIG ORDERED

Local Chapter of American Federation of Teachers is Formed Here.  
The local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, the largest teachers' union in the nation, was organized in the city of Belleville...

Established in 1935, our union of professionals includes classroom teachers, heads of departments, librarians, school nurses holding Public Health Certification, counselors, and full-time and part-time certified personnel.

We represent the best interests of almost four-hundred members in District #201.

# A HISTORY OF SUCCESS

Our union formed in 1935 after six beloved teachers were fired without cause in order to "save a little money." Ever since, several generations of teachers have been fighting to ensure that can't happen again. Meanwhile, we've fought for so much more. For a list of some of those hard-fought benefits, read on. You can also read more about our history on our website!

### HIGHEST PAY

We earn the highest average pay of any Illinois school outside the Chicago suburbs. (48.6% higher than the average of all Illinois high schools within 50 miles of Belleville [\$80,331 vs. \$54,041].)

### DISTRICT-PAID TRS

District 201 pays the full teacher contribution (over 9%) while many other districts pay half or none of the mandatory pension contributions.

### BETTER HEALTH INSURANCE

District 201 provides one of the best (believe it or not . . .) school-based health insurance plans, and pays more of our premiums than most.



## SIX HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS FIRED

### Conference to Settle Power Strike Is Started

<b>THREE PARTIES IN DISPUTE ARE REPRESENTED AT SESSIONS</b> Negotiations Being Carried on in Secrecy; Trouble May Be Referred to...	<b>Roses, No Wedding</b> 	<b>East St. Louis Votes to Sell \$4,000,000 in Bonds for Bridge</b> Council Awards Contract to New York Concern; McGlynn Hired as Special Attorney; Evanston Engineer to Supervise Work.	<b>Another Big Dionne Family</b> 	<b>WALKER GUILTY OF ASSAULTING U. S. OFFICERS. GETS 4 YEARS</b> Motion for New Trial of Shelton Gansinger Is Denied; No Evidence for...	<b>FOR GOOD OF SCHOOL, SAYS DR. M'KELVEY</b> Misses Kindred, Dill, Alexander, Harrison and Tawinkle and Kenneth Pyatt Fail to Be Reappointed.
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## SICK DAY BUMPS

We receive a free year of sick day bonuses to our accumulated total. This enables us to retire earlier and saves the district money by retiring the highest paid teachers sooner.

## PENSION PROTECTIONS

Our dues fight for our pensions in the courts. For instance, when Illinois passed the unconstitutional pension theft legislation, our parent union, the IFT, led the successful lawsuit that restored our pensions.

## SHORTENED DAYS AND LIMITED MEETINGS

Faculty meeting days are shortened to get us home 30 minutes earlier and class time is reduced by one hour for late start meetings, saving 13.5 hours of free time annually. We also can't be required to attend more than two monthly meetings outside of the school day.

## NO LESSON PLAN REQUIREMENT

Some schools require daily written lesson plans. Local 434 successfully fought such efforts from being implemented at Belleville East not too long ago.

## NO REQUIREMENT TO ARRIVE EARLY OR STAY LATE

Many schools in our area require teachers to arrive 30 minutes early or stay 30 minutes late, or both! Our school day is the same as the students: 8:25–3:25!

## A LARGE RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For every dollar paid in dues and fees, an estimated \$6.12 (512%) is returned to union members in after-tax income.

## UNION PROTECTION AND REPRESENTATION

When accusations are made against teachers by students, parents, or administrators, teachers receive union representation through every step of the process.

## TUITION REIMBURSEMENT


The District reimburses \$75 per credit hour of tuition paid, up to \$675 in a fiscal year.

## MENTORING PROGRAM

A mentoring program providing guidance and assistance is available for new teachers.

## LIMITED EXTRA DUTY ASSIGNMENTS

While some districts require teachers to attend a minimum number of activities or take on unpaid extracurricular assignments, our mandatory unpaid extra duty assignments are limited to 25 minutes of hall duty per day during the school day and on alternate quarters.



THE ROLE OF A LABOR UNION IS TO ENSURE THAT THE BALANCE IS NOT  
TIPPED IN FAVOR OF THE EMPLOYER WHEN EMPLOYEES DO NOT RECEIVE  
WAGES AND BENEFITS COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR CONTRIBUTION.

—WILLIAM BURRUS

# YOUR UNION PROVIDES

*Since 1935, our collective action has had a substantial impact on our wages, benefits, equality, and workplace protections.*

## CONTRACT BARGAINING

Our members democratically elect their bargaining team, which then negotiates terms with the District, agrees to a final contract with the District, and then the whole membership votes to approve that contract, which helps to provide fair wages, benefits, work rules, and job security.



## RIGHTS PROTECTIONS

We provide our members with support when their rights on the job are being violated. Every member has equal access to union representation when they believe their contract rights are being violated or that they're being unfairly targeted for discipline without due process.

## WORKPLACE PROTECTIONS

When we combine forces we have a more powerful voice, and our union members use their powerful voice to advocate for important issues like smaller class sizes, academic freedom, safe schools and workplaces, and other matters that have a positive impact on education, public services, and our communities.



THE ONLY EFFECTIVE ANSWER TO ORGANIZED  
GREED IS ORGANIZED LABOR.

—THOMAS DONAHUE



# YOUR UNION. YOUR VOICE.

*All local unions are required by law to hold elections at least every three years. Here's how it works:*



## YOU CHOOSE

Any member in good standing may run for a position on the board. You may either run yourself or nominate another member. No member in good standing can be prevented from adding their name to the ballot.



## YOU VOTE

Elections are held regularly, and your vote decides which members will represent you on the Executive Board, as well as on the committee that negotiates our contracts with the district.



## YOU BENEFIT

The member-elected board manages the Union's affairs on behalf of the membership, **so you can focus on other priorities knowing that those making decisions FOR you were elected BY you.**

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## HOW YOUR REPS WORK FOR YOU

*In order to ensure members are represented fairly, union business may not be conducted without a vote of a majority of the Board's elected members.*

- Your elected board, often referred to as the Executive Council, meets monthly throughout the school year to conduct business for the membership.
- The Board **must** conduct business by following very specific procedures that ensure members are represented fairly and equally. No elected member of the board has more power than another.
- Each meeting follows an order of business, or agenda. Officers and committee chairs call or email the President in advance to add to the agenda. New business is introduced at the end of the meeting.
- All business is discussed and voted on one item at a time. All board members have an **equal voice** in discussion and debate, and all get an **equal vote**.

# WHEN YOU NEED YOUR UNION

*Union members have rights that other employees don't have. It's important to know what your union can do for you, and when it's time to seek help.*



## YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

Weingarten rights guarantee an employee the right to Union representation during an **investigatory interview**. These rights must be claimed by the employee. The supervisor has no obligation to inform an employee that s/he is entitled to representation.

### WHAT IS AN INVESTIGATORY INTERVIEW?



An investigatory interview is one in which a Supervisor questions an employee to **obtain information which could be used as a basis for discipline, or asks an employee to defend his/her conduct**. If an employee has a reasonable belief that discipline or discharge may result from what s/he says, the employee has the right to request union representation.

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**RULE 1:** **The employee must make a clear request for union representation** before or during the interview. The employee can't be punished for making this request.

**RULE 2:** After the employee makes the request, **the supervisor has 3 options:**

**Grant the request and delay the interview** until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee;

**Deny the request** and end the interview immediately;

**Give the employee a choice** of 1) having the interview without representation or 2) ending the interview.

**RULE 3:** **If the supervisor denies the request** and continues to ask questions, **this is an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer**. The employee cannot be disciplined for such refusal but is required to remain until the supervisor terminates the interview.

# A CONTRACT IS A COMMITMENT

*The contract that the Union negotiates on behalf of its members is legally binding. If you feel that the administration is in violation of your contract, your union can help.*

## MAKING A FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you feel like the administration is violating the contract, you have the right to file a complaint through your union. This process is called **filing a grievance**, which is basically a formal complaint concerning a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any of the provisions of your contract.

## FILING A GRIEVANCE STARTS WITH AN INFORMAL CONFERENCE



Before any formal grievance can continue, you must attempt to resolve the issue by meeting with a principal or a department chairperson first. It's your right to have union representation during this initial conference.

If an informal conference fails to resolve the issue, then the process may continue with a formal written statement.

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- STEP 1:** If an informal conference fails to resolve the issue, the grievant or the Union must present a written statement on an official grievance form within 40 days of the date of the occurrence.
  - STEP 2:** In the event that the grievance is still not resolved after step 1, the grievant or the Union may file an appeal with the superintendent within 10 days.
  - STEP 3:** Finally, if the appeal is denied, the grievance moves to binding arbitration under the Voluntary Labor Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association, where an arbitrator will make a final decision.



## YOU SHOULD KNOW:

All of this information and more is available in your contract. It's important to read through your contract in order to familiarize yourself with your rights, duties, and obligations related to your position.



# STAY INFORMED. STAY INVOLVED

A union is only as strong as its membership. Our strength comes from our numbers and from our active, knowledgeable membership working together in solidarity.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

### STAY UP-TO-DATE

We occasionally update the membership through work email, personal email, and campus mail. Be sure to read through these communications because they often have important information related to collective action, union business, or meeting times and election information. Also, visit our website at [bellevillefederationofteachers.org](http://bellevillefederationofteachers.org).

### ASK QUESTIONS

Understanding the contract, your rights, or even how a union works can get confusing and complicated, so don't hesitate to ask your campus representative, another member of the Executive Board, or just another informed member if you have any questions.

Furthermore, a lot of gossip and misinformation tends to float around the workplace. If something you hear concerns you, contact the President. He or she will be able to paint a fuller picture and verify or deny any rumors. Remember, they're elected by you to work for you.

### ATTEND A MEETING

At least twice a year we hold general membership meetings that last about an hour, once near the beginning of the year and once near the end. It's not mandatory by any means, but it's a good opportunity to see your union in action and to gain an understanding of how business is conducted democratically. You can just sit and watch, or if you feel comfortable, get involved! Participation is encouraged as long as members follow proper meeting procedures and etiquette.

### JOIN A COMMITTEE

Many committee chairs could use help and assistance with their responsibilities. If you're interested in helping but can't make monthly meetings, or if you just want to make a limited commitment, this might be just what you're looking for. Contact the President to see if you can fill a need.

### RUN FOR OFFICE

We hold elections yearly and any dues-paying member in good standing may run for election. It doesn't have to be the same people every year. We just need a few committed members to take the reins. Are you up to the task?

# WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

# GOOD TO KNOW

Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions, among other important items of information. Visit our website for a more detailed list of frequently asked questions.

## WHEN AM I TENURED?

As long as you've been employed full time in the district for four consecutive years, you're considered tenured your fifth year and your full union protections kick in. The School Board is legally required to notify you in the spring if you're being rehired the next year, so once you've received a letter from the Board informing you that you've been hired for your fifth year then you can consider yourself tenured.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF WE STRIKE?

We suggest you cross the picket line and continue fulfilling your duties if you're non-tenured, since non-tenured teachers can be let go without cause. We don't want you losing your job, so leave the striking to the tenured teachers.

## DO I HAVE TO SPONSOR OR COACH AN EXTRACURRICULAR?

Not unless that assignment was part of your hiring agreement with the District. However, you're welcome to if you want. Students love seeing their teachers outside of class; just remember that the first few years of teaching are the most stressful, so you should try not to take on too much too soon if you're worried about burnout.

## HOW LONG DO I HAVE FOR LUNCH?

We're technically limited to a half hour for duty-free lunch according to the contract. You're welcome to leave campus during your lunch period.

## WHAT TIME DO I HAVE TO BE ON CAMPUS?

Teachers are expected to be on campus from 8:25 to 3:25, or seven periods, on regular school days. Counselors and librarians work a seven and one-half hour day, either from 8:00 to 3:30 or 8:30 to 4:00. Be sure to plan ahead for traffic, which gets more congested the closer it gets to the bell.

## WHAT IF I'M UNEXPECTEDLY SICK?

Both campuses have specific guidelines for reporting absences. Go to [bths201.org](http://bths201.org), click on "Staff Resources" at the top of the page, sign in using your school email and password, click on the tab for your respective campus, then scroll down to "Teacher/Teacher Assistant Absences" and familiarize yourself with the process.

## AVOID THESE COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID LEGAL TROUBLE

- Do not force students to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Do not assign homework as punishment.
- Do not use corporal punishment. This includes anything physical, like push-ups.
- Do not share a student's personal information, including grades, with anyone except need-to-know staff members and legal guardians.
- Do not personally endorse, sponsor, or display religious messages or iconography on campus.

# NOTES

# STAY UNION STRONG!



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## TEACHERS AT HIGH SCHOOL ORGANIZING

**Local Chapter of American Federation of Teachers Is Formed Here.**

The News-Democrat today learned that teachers in the Belleville Township High School have practically completed organization of a Belleville chapter of the American Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor.

A series of meetings has been held within the last month, at which time plans for the organization of the teachers were discussed. All but a few details remain to be ironed out, it was learned.

Harold Glover, a biology teacher, has been elected president and Miss Ruth Miller has been chosen secretary.

**Dues Depends On Salary**

## OTHER DRI IN LIEBIG ORDERED

**Verdict of Criminalness; Funeral Sunday After**

A verdict of criminalness was returned today by a Coroner's jury into the death of William J. Liebig, 32, of 4929 Permod Street, St. Louis, a former Belleville resident.

The jury recommended that the driver of the truck which crashed into Liebig's car, be held for the Grand Jury action. The Grand Jury is expected to take up the case in January.

Liebig, winner of the Chamber of Commerce award for civic service awarded last year, died in Jewish Hospital.

## THE UNION DIFFERENCE

Union members who bargain collectively earn significantly higher average salaries and improved benefits across all occupations.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[BELLEVILLEFEDERATIONOFTEACHERS.ORG](http://BELLEVILLEFEDERATIONOFTEACHERS.ORG)

Email: [bftlocal434@gmail.com](mailto:bftlocal434@gmail.com)

