



The Springfield Teacher

February 2018



On February 26th, the Supreme Court will be hearing the Janus vs. AFSCME case. The outcome of this case will likely have a huge impact on the way we organize our union. It will affect all public sector unions. We are part of a coalition of other public sector unions across

western Mass that have been meeting to begin to mobilize around this issue. On the 26th we will be joining those unions in an action at 95 Liberty Street at 4:30PM to let the public know that unions don't just fight for themselves but for the good of all of our communities. For instance, as teachers we have fought along side other unions to save our public schools from privatization (the NO on #2 campaign.) We have collected signatures for the Raise Up Massachusetts ballot initiative that will bring millions of dollars to roads, bridges and education every year. We will be working hard to see that that "millionaires tax" as it is sometimes called will pass in November. Unions play a key role in our society and we need to keep them strong and healthy.

The MTA's All In campaign is about making sure that we are all part of the union. Our strength comes from standing together and standing with others. We will have plenty of opportunities in the coming months to make sure that we all commit to being "all in" with the union. Be ready to join union members across the state and country by showing your union commitment through stickers, signs, walk-ins and solidarity rallies. More information to come.

Electronic Voting

The Executive Board decided that we will be holding electronic voting for our MTA/NEA delegates. The voting will take place February 26-March 2. This is an important year as we will be electing a new MTA President and Vice President. Your elected representatives to the MTA annual meeting are the only people who can vote. We will also be conducting business that will undoubtedly address the Janus case, the Raise Up Massachusetts campaign, school funding and other important educational issues we are facing! Please watch your personal email for your voting credentials. If we do not have your personal email, please contact the office so we can update our records. If you do not have internet or a personal email account you can vote here at the office. We will help you set up an email account so that you can receive the electronic ballot and vote. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at 782-8300.

GIC

Your outrage and activism are paying off! The Group Insurance Commission announced today that it will vote on Feb. 1 to reconsider its decision to limit the number of health insurance carriers for GIC participants. Take a moment to stand up and cheer for union power, but don't sit down yet. Contact the GIC at (617) 727-2310 to express your concerns.

Visit us on the web at www.seateachers.com and on Twitter at @SEASpringfield

Professional Development Committee

Defining quality professional development!

This past month (January Professional Development) educators from the Empowerment Zone Schools experienced a full day of teacher organized and teacher led professional development. With the assistance of the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), educators went to EdCamp.

What is EdCamp?

EdCamp is an opportunity for educators to design, develop, and share knowledge on topics most pertinent to their area of instruction and personal development. Teachers created learning communities around topics such as technology in the class, classroom management, parent engagement, self-care and yoga for the classroom. Teachers teaching teachers! The respect teachers have for their colleagues and the opportunity to share led to a full day of amazing growth. In addition, paraprofessionals contribute their knowledge to topics on ELL and SPED. The synergy created by having workshops that were relevant to the needs of the participants left many attendees asking, "Can we do this again?" Through collaborative practices with the SPS, the SEA intends to plan future EdCamps throughout the year.

The MTA will be offering **free PDP** workshops over Winter Break. Visit the MTA/ Professional Catalog for additional information pertaining to the variety of relevant workshops and conferences available for educators in and outside of the classroom. <https://massteacher.org/events-and-conferences/professional-development-catalog>

The Professional Development Committee has funds that can be used to attend conferences, workshops and classes. Each SEA member (in good standing) is entitled to \$300.00 every other year. If you are interested in using the funds you must complete and submit the "Application for Professional Development Funds" form. Once you have been approved for funds and have attended the event, you need to submit the "Request for Payment" form. Both forms can be found on the SEA website, www.seateachers.com. You can either mail the forms to the SEA office or email them to me at amurph-brown@seateachers.com.

SEA/MTA/NEA - Dues paid for 2017

January-June

13 Pay Periods @ \$40.87=\$531.31

August-December

9 Pay Periods @ \$40.95=\$368.55

**PAID
DUES**



February 14th is Wear Red for Ed day. Show your support for public education by wearing Red for Ed. Be sure to snap pictures and post them to Facebook, Twitter or Instagram (before or after school of course!)

New Educator Organizing:

SUPPORTING THE NEWBIES WITH INFORMATION

The Springfield Education Association is one of the first local chapters of the MTA to organize a successful workshop for new educators! Chestnut Academy and Impact Prep were two of the first schools that led an informational session on Professional Teacher Status -- what it is, how you get it, and what limited rights you have in the first three years of teaching. Out of twenty confirmed participants, 18 showed up! Because of this success, our hope is that other schools, not only in Springfield, but across the state of Massachusetts, will join us in supporting new educators.

If you're looking to support new educators in your school, here are some steps to help you get started:

1. Pick a date for the info session a month in advance at your school
2. Talk to your principal and the SEA to gain administration support
3. Inform building rep(s) of the date and encourage them to talk it up to the new educators
4. Determine the place for the workshop and reserve it
5. Informally ask teachers in person and one-on-one if they would be interested in attending an info session about Professional Teacher Status (do not mention date... yet).

The following week go back, in person and one-on-one, talk to the teachers who expressed interest and inform them of the date.

A week or two before the event, go back to teachers again and have them commit to a session. Record a personal email or cell number to send out a reminder.

The week of the event, send out reminder emails/texts!

Send reminder emails out two days before and one day before the event. An announcement on the day of the meeting helps too.

One of the organizers, Erin Burns, even ran the info session at EdCamp. Spreading information to those who need it is key here, but if we all do it together in small steps, ripples of change will start to emanate across the state. If you'd like to do this at your school, contact [**dolinskipaige@gmail.com**](mailto:dolinskipaige@gmail.com) or [**burnsy.erin@gmail.com**](mailto:burnsy.erin@gmail.com)

*Happy Valentine's
Day*

**SEA- African | Latino | Asian | Native | American- Educators
(ALANA)**

Did you know?

- * The issues and concerns expressed by the SEA- ALANA members are the same for all members employed by the Springfield Public Schools.
- * ALANA members and Allies are committed to addressing social justice issues that impact the lives of our students.

You are invited to add your voice to our conversations to share your joys, challenges, and ideas to help create cultural competent learning communities that embrace the strength of our diversity.

The SEA/ALANA is committed to creating the schools our students deserve.

VISION

ALANA-Educators creating opportunities for change.

MISSION

To create a supportive, dynamic, and collective Union focused on building a diverse and culturally proficient environment for African, Latino, Asian, Native, American Educators in the Springfield Public Schools while empowering ALANA- Educators.

Why the Union?

Why do I need to belong to the union? There are many reasons, but one of the most important benefits is clearly the legal protection and help we get because we belong. We have already, just this year, submitted almost 45 “green sheets.” A “green sheet” is a request for legal help for a member. We have made innumerable calls to the MTA attorney of the day to get legal advice and information. We have cases where arbitration goes on for days and days at a cost of about \$1500 dollars a day. That doesn’t even cover attorneys’ fees. Those costs are not borne by the defendant. We have filed Freedom of Information Requests regarding Springfield Public Schools hiring practices. We have filed an Unfair Labor Practice complaint because of the district’s attempt to limit our ability to talk to our members and investigate grievances. We have filed a suit in federal court because the district has not made reasonable accommodations for our members who are returning to work after an injury or illness. This is not a part of union protection we like to think or talk about but it is a reality we all face.

TOOLS 4 TEACHING

A Free Recycling Store for Teachers

When: The 2nd and 3rd THURSDAY of each month (except July) 3:00-5:30 . We follow the SPS schedule for school closings (snow days and/or emergencies). An SPS ID is required for shopping.

Where: 70 Tapley St. in the Congressman Richard E. Neal Municipal Operations Center across the street from Oak Grove Cemetery at the traffic light.

Who: The SEA Committee of Retirees— we also welcome volunteers from the community. For more information email Chris Williams at chrisew76@gmail.com.

Springfield Education Association @ 1000 Wilbraham Rd, Springfield, MA 01109

TEL: 782-8300 | FAX: 783-8812 | E-MAIL: contact@seateachers.com | WEB: www.seateachers.com