



A Union of Professionals

1274 Newsline



North Suburban Teachers Union – Local 1274, CFL, IFT/AFT, AFL-CIO

November 2011

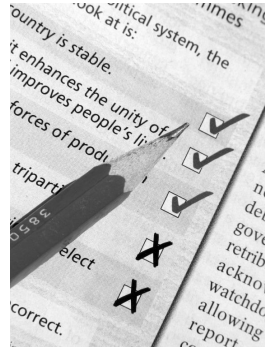
PERA and SB7: What will change?

Two recent changes in Illinois law will have a significant impact upon teachers, especially in terms of evaluations and layoffs.

PERA, or the Performance Evaluation Reform Act, was signed into law in January 2010. It requires that teachers and principals be evaluated based on **both** a teacher's professional performance **and** measures of student growth. Since the part of the evaluation based on student growth will not go into effect until 2016 for most districts, the immediate concern for teachers will be changes in how teacher performance is evaluated.

Senate Bill 7 was signed into law on June 13, 2011 and is closely tied to PERA. The biggest change under this law relates to how layoffs or "honorable dismissals" are to be determined. Under the terms of this law, seniority will have much **less** weight in decisions about who will be laid off while teacher evaluations, as determined by PERA, will have much **more**.

Local 1274, assisted by the IFT Field Service staff, has begun training local union leaders on the implications of these laws. For an outline of the main features of PERA and SB7, please go to page 2.



Durbin gets an education

On September 27, Senator Dick Durbin visited Golf Middle School as part of a tour promoting the American Jobs Act proposed by President Obama. He may have learned more than he expected.

Durbin was informed by teachers and administrators of the many problems facing the school, including classrooms in need of urgent repair as well as the effects of a poor economy on students.

According to Peggy Steadman, a language arts teacher and president of the Golf Middle School council of Local 1274, "we teach in spite of extremely hot or cold classrooms, falling ceiling tiles, steady drips during heavy rains, and rusty drinking water. Students come to class sometimes hungry and distracted from their family's financial hardships."

The teachers at Golf Middle School have taken contract concessions two years in a row and have managed to maintain a positive learning environment.

"I asked Senator Durbin to please go to bat for us in Washington," said Steadman. "In my opinion, we are the glue that hold things together in difficult times."

Below, Golf Middle School Teachers with Senator Durbin

Inside This Issue	
Details on PERA and SB7	2
From the President	3
New Offices for Local 1274	4
Council Corner	4



PERA: The Basics

- By September 1, 2011, all districts must evaluate teachers using four rating categories:
 - excellent
 - proficient
 - needs improvement
 - unsatisfactory
- Non-tenured teachers will be evaluated every year. Tenured teachers will be evaluated at least every two years.
- Tenured teachers receiving either "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" rating any part of the evaluation must be evaluated at least once in the following year.
- For tenured teachers receiving a "needs improvement" rating, the evaluator, in consultation with the teacher, must develop a professional development plan within 30 school days after the teacher received the rating. Tenured teachers receiving an "unsatisfactory" rating must complete remediation. There will be a mid-point and final evaluation during remediation.
- Districts may dismiss a tenured teacher who receives two "unsatisfactory" ratings within a 36-month period. If a teacher receives an "unsatisfactory" rating, completes remediation, and then receives a second "unsatisfactory" rating in the next 36 months, the district may also seek dismissal.
- By September 1, 2011, all evaluators will have to be trained in a program being developed by ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education). Evaluators in most cases will include administrators, but peers may also be evaluators, subject to union agreement.
- By 2016 in most schools outside Chicago, districts must also incorporate measures of student growth in teacher evaluations. The law provides for a joint labor-management committee in each district to negotiate what data will be used to determine a teacher's contribution to student growth. A state advisory committee, PEAC (Performance Evaluation Advisory Council), has also been formed to create a model. If a district does not arrive at its own agreed-upon method for measuring student growth, the PEAC model will be used as a default.



SB 7 and Layoffs

- Under the old law, when a reduction in force went into effect, non-tenured teachers were laid off first and tenured teachers were laid off according to seniority. Non-tenured teachers had no recall rights and tenured teachers were recalled according to seniority.
- Under the new law, layoffs will be based primarily on performance evaluation ratings, with seniority as a secondary consideration.
- Each school district must create "position lists" including the names of teachers legally qualified for each position. To be put on a position list, teachers must qualify no later than May 10th of the school year prior to the layoffs.
- Each "position list" will further categorize teachers according to their ratings on the four-part evaluation system set up under PERA, so that there will be four groupings of teachers for each position.
- The sequence of layoffs (or "honorable dismissals") will be as follows:



Group 1	Non-tenured, not-evaluated teachers. These will mostly be first year teachers.
Group 2	Teachers with a "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" rating on either of the teacher's last two evaluations.
Group 3	Teachers with at least a "satisfactory" or "proficient" on both of the last two evaluations, or on the last evaluation if only one is available.
Group 4	Teachers whose last two evaluations were "excellent" or had "excellent" on 2 of the last three evaluations, providing that there were no "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" ratings in the last two evaluations.

- Within each group, the order of dismissal will be determined by seniority.
- The order of recall will be the reverse of the dismissals, but Groups 1 and 2 will not have recall rights.

What doesn't change?

- Seniority and tenure still exist, but evaluations will play a bigger role.
- Privacy of evaluations is still protected.
- Longstanding bargaining rights remain intact; local unions may bargain the evaluation process and develop evaluation plans in cooperation with the district.

Why know the law?

At a time when the conditions of teacher employment are changing rapidly, it is important that we all understand our rights and take an active role in defending them. The union, which retains its right to bargain the terms and conditions of employment, depends upon an informed and involved membership.

For more information on how the law applies in your district, please talk with your council president.

- Position lists must be created in consultation with the union. A joint committee will be created in each district consisting of equal numbers selected by the school board and the union to address questions related to lists and layoffs. These committees must be established and meet before December 1, 2011.

From the President: Civic Committee Strikes Again

Many of you have seen the advertisements by a group referring to itself as "Illinois is Broke." The billboards and full-page newspaper ads feature a picture of Abe Lincoln with his pockets turned inside out. The television commercial has an ominous, faceless bureaucrat informing a woman about the huge bill coming to pay for the states' debts, and when she says she cannot possibly afford to make that payment, the ominous voice points to the child in her arms and says "I'm talking to her."



Who is behind this organization? Of course, it is our good old frenemies from the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago, a group of the city's most well heeled, politically connected corporate bosses. Let's take a look at some of the faceless leaders behind this movement to attack public pensions. Doing so will give us a clue to their motives:

W. James Farrell is the Chairman of the Civic Committee and the retired chairman of the board of Illinois Tool Works. Before he left ITW he was 36th on Forbes' list of top paid CEOs with a total compensation package of \$32.6 million and in retirement he brings home an annual pension of \$1.4 million.

R. Eden Martin, immediate past president of the Civic Committee, earns over \$330,000 per year in compensation for sitting on the board of directors at Nicor and Aon, and that is on top of the pension that he earns from his former law firm, Sidley Austin, who will not disclose the amount of Mr. Martins retirement package.

But the fattest cat is the Vice-Chairman of the Civic Committee and CEO of Abbott Labs, Miles D. White, whose total compensation package from 2010 (according to Forbes) was a whopping \$25,564,283. And what if Mr. White spends lavishly and goes through that 25 million? Don't worry; he has waiting for him in retirement a defined benefit pension (the type he rails against for others) of over \$20 million per year.

These are the men behind the attack on public pensions. What chutzpah. So what is their motive?

On the Civic Committee website, they claim purely altruistic motives of "a common concern for the future of Illinois." Not true. They have a common concern for

protecting a political and business climate that allowed their own kind to reap obscene levels of compensation. These are the same captains of industry that destroyed their own unions and gutted their employee pension systems. And now they turn their attention to public workers who represent the biggest group of union members who still have a defined benefit pension.

"Last week the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Committee released a report showing that the top 1% of income earners in the U.S. saw a 275% increase in their income from 1979 to 2007. Clearly the members of the Civic Committee are in that 1%."

The truth is that Illinois, like many states, is in terrible financial shape. The reason, however, is not bloated pensions as the Civic Committee would have it.

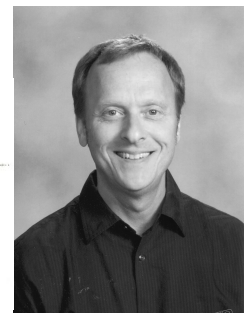
So what is the real reason for Illinois being broke? The state legislature has spent the last 30 years failing to make its payments to the pension system, a failure that has now been exacerbated by a terrible recession that devastated revenues. In a real sense the state has stolen from our pension funds to pay its bills and now that we are broke they want to solve the problem by destroying our pensions while casting us as the villains.



In the meantime, we continue with a regressive flat income tax that protects our wealthiest citizens from paying their fair share to the state. And of course, who has lobbied for, and benefited from, this tax structure? Those well heeled members of the Civic Committee.

Wealthy members of the Civic Committee like R. Eden Martin, shown above, wield undue influence in Springfield.

In Solidarity,



Local moves to new office

In October, after a long period of office-hunting and negotiations, Local 1274 and the IFT Field Service staff moved into a new suite of offices just down the hall in the same building as the old office. The new office features a larger reception area, more spacious offices and a much larger conference room, but still offers the benefits of easy access by car from the Edens and reasonable rents.



At left, the new reception area.

Below, Field Service Director Kathy Shaevel briefs union leaders on SB7 in the new conference area.

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Four Points Group
Group 1 (10/1/07)
Group 2 (10/1/07)
Group 3 (10/1/07)
Group 4 (10/1/07)
Group 5 (10/1/07)
Group 6 (10/1/07)
Group 7 (10/1/07)
Group 8 (10/1/07)
Group 9 (10/1/07)
Group 10 (10/1/07)

Four Points Group
Group 1 (10/1/07)
Group 2 (10/1/07)
Group 3 (10/1/07)
Group 4 (10/1/07)
Group 5 (10/1/07)
Group 6 (10/1/07)
Group 7 (10/1/07)
Group 8 (10/1/07)
Group 9 (10/1/07)
Group 10 (10/1/07)



Council Corner

District 31: We have reached a one year agreement with the Board of Education. Facing a \$1.8 million deficit and a tax rebate challenge from Allstate that could be as much as \$3.3 million, the WNTA accepted a salary freeze along with a small increase for people using our PPO medical option. Each teacher will receive a stipend of \$990.

District 39SS: The first general membership meeting was held on September 26th. Plans will be moving forward for contract negotiations.

District 74SS: District 74 and the Lincolnwood Support Staff Union reached a tentative agreement on their first collective bargaining agreement. The agreement will be presented to the union and board in the coming weeks. Once it is ratified, more details will be released, so stay tuned!

NTFSET 807: We signed a one year contract extension in the spring. We will negotiate a new contract this year. The union also filed a Step 2 grievance regarding pay for an extended school year.

Note: A new law to be implemented next year will no longer allow a 1/2 day of school to be counted as a school day when it is scheduled on the first and last day of the school year.

1274 Newsline

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