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Chicago Union Teacher

APRIL-MAY 2015 / VOL. 78 / NUMBER 7



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TESTING RESISTANCE AND REFORM



STOP THE RAHM- RAUNER ATTACKS



DESTROYING OUR SCHOOLS

■ Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner has been a top advisor to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel on **school closings** and other **harmful education policies**. Juan Rangel, the disgraced former CEO of charter-school giant UNO, has also been a close advisor to Rahm. Rangel stepped down as UNO's CEO after a series of **corporate scandals** and federal investigations into UNO's misuse of public funds.

■ Both Rahm and Rauner back **budget cuts** for public schools and **sending school money to private organizations** beyond the democratic control of our communities.

HARMING OUR COMMUNITIES

■ As Mayor, Rahm has **laid off 7,000 teachers** and severely cut retirement income for thousands of seniors who live and spend money in our communities. His friend Rauner wants to **cut even more** from the limited income of the elderly.

■ Both Rahm and Rauner **oppose a minimum wage hike** of \$15 an hour for working families in Chicago despite the need in our communities. An early 2014 poll found that nearly two-thirds of Illinois voters support a minimum wage of \$10 an hour.

SERVING THE RICH AND POWERFUL

■ Bruce Rauner owns **nine homes** worth a combined tens of millions of dollars. Rauner spent more than \$100,000 to join an exclusive wine club. Asked whether he's a member of the 1 percent, he responded, "Oh, I'm **probably .01 percent.**"

■ After leaving his White House job, Rahm made \$18 million working for two years in private equity—essential to his success was Rauner's support. How did he make so much so quickly? According to Ron Suskind, a Pulitzer Prize-winning former reporter for the Wall Street Journal: "Paying someone who will be a future government official a lot of money for doing very little? On Wall Street, **we call that an investment.**"

A RAHM-RAUNER AGENDA THREATENS ALL OF US.

We must build our capacity to fight misguided politicians, well-financed corporate school reformers, and people who want to turn back the clock on workers' rights. Visit CTU.net/PAC, and make a monthly donation of \$5, \$10, or \$20.

Contribute to the CTU PAC.



ChicagoUnionTeacher

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Opt out!

Photo credit: Eric Ruder

ChicagoUnionTeacher

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Sisters and Brothers,

As I write this letter, Chicago Public Schools is mired in scandal and the governor of Illinois—a blind bull in a china shop—has suggested bankruptcy as a solution to the financial problems that plague our district. It is a trying time for public education in our city, but it is also extremely important that we understand how these events are connected.

The governor, who helped finance the Chicago Public Education Fund, the private education group behind CPS's current woes, will inevitably twist the turmoil at the top level of CPS into an indictment of a "broken" system that needs to be torn down and rebuilt from the ground up. This gives weight to his extremist rhetoric. It also gives weight to increased calls from his administration and the Chicago Board of Education for cuts to our schools and pensions. Sadly, this is the modus operandi of many wealthy individuals who become politicians and handpicked decision makers, and remain disconnected from the reality of hardworking, every day people. They attempt to manage human lives like they manage their hedge funds. Take control then strip to the bone.

Our union, however, is a political and organizational force, evident in our work surrounding this year's municipal election. Nearly two years ago, and exactly one day after the mayor closed 50 of our neighborhood schools, I said the Chicago Teachers Union had three political objectives—to register 100,000 new voters, to

run our own candidates for political office and to change the political landscape in the city. I am proud to say today that we have accomplished them all, and have placed one of our members, Susan Sadowski Garza, in a seat on the Chicago City Council as alderman-elect of the 10th Ward. We protected the Progressive Caucus, endorsed a number of new aldermen and gave the mayor a race he never expected to run.

What transpired in Chicago for the past six months was not just about an election, but a movement, and throughout this issue of *Chicago Union Teacher* you will find evidence of your role—from PARCC opt-outs and delegate/school leader training, to new National Board Certified Teachers and the public introduction of our contract proposals at a March rally for education justice. It was at this rally where Morrill Elementary School teacher and Big Bargaining Team member Monique Redeaux-Smith told a crowd of hundreds, "You don't build strong communities and strong families by continually disinvesting and taking away resources and social services." Yet this is how our governor has chosen to begin his term, by divesting in a number of essential state programs, including those providing services for HIV-prevention and a pre-school for impoverished AIDS-affected children. Prior to taking office, he clouted his daughter into Payton Prep before making a \$250,000 donation to the school. So when



we as a union talk about those who balance budgets on the backs of regular people, and also a culture of conflict of interest, the governor is exhibit A, B and C.

In addition to our contract campaign for the city and the schools that our students deserve, we must continue to hold politicians accountable for their attacks on our union and its members, and for what they do—and don't do—for our families and communities. We will defend your rights and the rights of working class people against any threat to labor and the programs which help the most vulnerable people in our state. We will not apologize for standing up for what is right for our children, and we will never remain silent in the face of austerity.

In solidarity,

Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT

Your Pension Matters: CTPF Ambassadors Share the Message

BY JACKIE UMBLES

A Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund (CTPF) pension provides former teachers financial stability in retirement and helps drive the economy in Chicago and Illinois. Do your elected representatives understand how much your pension matters to you, your family, and our city and state?

It's time to share the message.

A lack of state and employer funding has drained resources from our pension fund, and it's time to take action to protect your pension. We're asking our members to speak up and reach out to help Illinois legislators understand that pension funding is vital—not optional.

CTPF Pension Fund Ambassadors

In 2013, the CTPF Board of Trustees developed the CTPF Pension Fund Ambassador program to encourage our members to educate lawmakers and decision makers about the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund, its legislative priorities and our members. The program launched in October of 2013, and today, includes more than 3,000 members who identify themselves as Ambassadors for the CTPF.

"Our members are teachers as well as concerned constituents who want to be a resource for their legislators. They are educators who have devoted their lives in the classroom, and are depending on their pensions for financial security," said Lois W. Ashford, CTPF Vice President and chair of the CTPF Pension Law and Rules Committee. "Ambassadors aren't expected to solve the pension 'crisis,' but they are connecting legislators to the faces behind the pensions. The Ambassadors share information about the important economic impact that pensions have on our communities."

Program Overview

The Ambassador program provides training opportunities designed to educate our members. Educational training sessions are offered year-round and range from

hands-on seminars designed to help members learn how to write a letter to an editor, to webinars, lectures and educational outreach events. The program's goal is to offer members the tools they need to meet successfully with their local lawmakers.

This spring, the CTPF hosted seven different Ambassador Seminars for Chicago Public Schools teachers and retirees. These events provided an overview of The Buck Stays Here, the 2015 Economic Impact Statement and offered a look at CTPF pensioners' direct economic impact on neighborhoods and communities throughout Illinois. Other highlights of the program included summer visits with Illinois Senate President John Cullerton in his Chicago office and State Representative Barbra Flynn Currie in their Chicago offices, as well as winter and fall webinars.

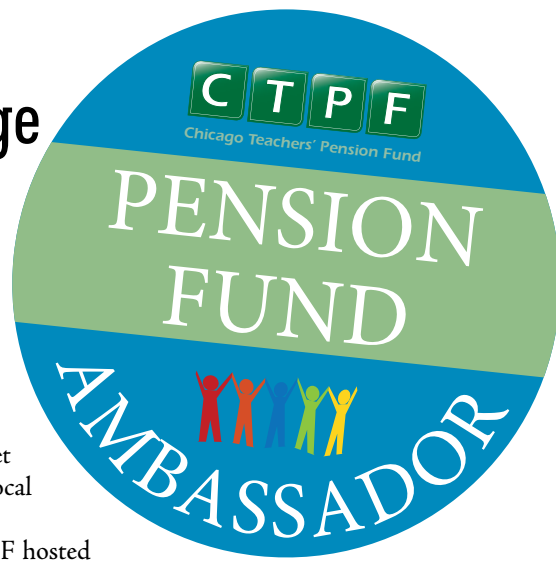
The Ambassador program also helps to support members' efforts to reach out to lawmakers. "I led a group that met with Illinois State Senator Bill Cunningham," said Judy Benson. "The CTPF helped me connect with other Ambassadors in the neighborhood who wanted to attend."

How to Get Involved

Getting involved can be as simple as writing a letter or calling a legislator, or as involved as organizing your own event. Register as an Ambassador at <http://goo.gl/TMn8SO> (case sensitive). Once you register, you'll be included on e-mail alerts with upcoming training and event information.

Find more information at www.ctpf.org on the Education and Advocacy tab. If you have questions, please e-mail ambassadors@ctpf.org. **CTU**

Jackie Umbles is the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund Communications Specialist.



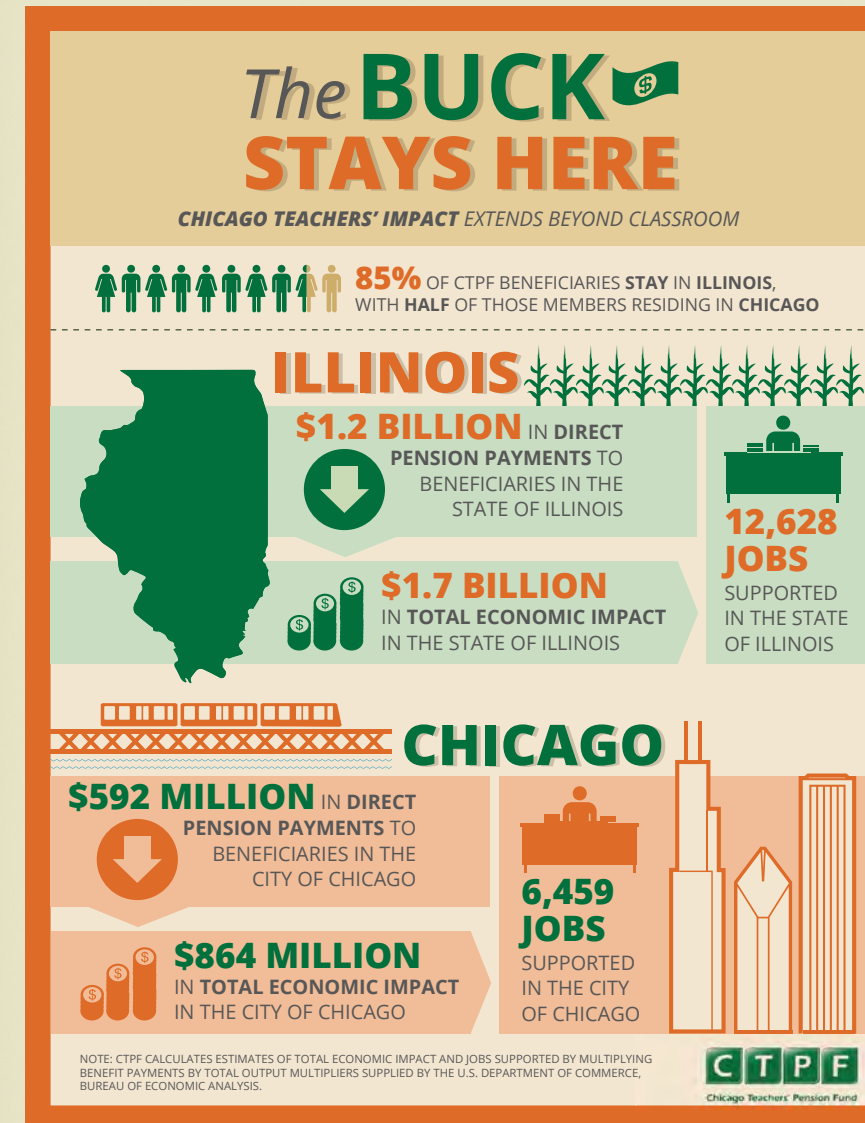
Ambassadors attending a training session in the CTPF's Chicago office.

Photo: Jackie Umbles



One City, One Pension!

BY RAYMOND WOHL



A pension is a promise. Chicago public school teachers, counselors, nurses, social workers, office clerks, school engineers, teaching assistants, administrators and principals make contributions from every paycheck to their retirement benefit fund. The contributions are deferred wages invested over time and producing more than 9 percent interest. These pensions are protected by a contract and the State of Illinois Constitution.

Any employer, legislator or court that tries to take that benefit away is reaching into retirees' pockets for the purpose of wage theft. All active and retired union teachers and staff must be educated about the facts of pension funds. Nearly \$2 billion dollars every year is put back into the local economy by the two pension funds paid into by Chicago Teachers Union members. The facts show that this positive economic impact creates nearly 20,000 jobs in Illinois. Pensions do matter and they work for everyone!

You are invited to become a Pension Ambassador and get the facts on your pension! Please visit www.ctpf.org or "like" us on Facebook. **CTU**

Raymond Wohl is the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund Recording Secretary. This column and opinions are those of Mr. Wohl and do not reflect the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund.



WRITE TO US



Agree? Disagree? Send *Chicago Union Teacher* your feedback, your compliments and your criticisms. Send letters to the editor to leadership@ctulocal1.com or *Chicago Union Teacher*, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60654. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

WRITE FOR US

The *Chicago Union Teacher* is published for the members of the Chicago Teachers Union. It is your magazine. Members can—and should!—submit articles about whatever topics they consider relevant to our overall project of fighting for quality public education and justice for all. Email submissions for consideration to leadership@ctulocal.com.

ADVERTISE IN THE CUT

The *Chicago Union Teacher* accepts classified advertisements from CTU members at a substantial discount. For more information, contact April Stigger, advertising manager, at aprilstigger@ctulocal1.com and 312-329-6225.



Sue Garza and Karen Lewis, champions for schools, communities and social justice.

Photo: Antonio Dickey

City's first run-off election a landmark moment for a new progressive and democratic movement

Election 2015: The movement that changed Chicago's political landscape

BY CTU COMMUNICATIONS

For the first time in 20 years, Chicagoans had the opportunity to engage in an extended political debate regarding the city's future, which created a massive coalition of labor, community organizations, social justice activists, clergy and people of all ethnic backgrounds and from all of Chicago's neighborhoods. The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) is both proud and honored to be one of the organizations contributing to what was not only a mayoral campaign for Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, but a landmark moment for a progressive, democratic movement that is only going to grow larger and more powerful in Chicago politics. We are even more proud of the newest member of the Chicago City Council, our own Susan Sadlowski Garza, alderman-elect of the 10th Ward.

Although Mayor Rahm Emanuel won a hard-fought re-election campaign, it came only after surviving the first

run-off in Chicago's history. The fact that a number of incumbent aldermen lost Tuesday night and all Progressive Caucus candidates won re-election despite the mayor's efforts to discharge them demonstrates the dissatisfaction and anger felt by countless Chicagoans. Emanuel was able to win re-election by promising to change his approach and be more responsive to the needs of every day residents of our city. If the mayor is truly repentant for his past policy transgressions, this will allow for more substantive contract negotiations between the CTU and the Chicago Board of Education, and transparent discussions about the type of neighborhoods, schools and public services that Chicago's students and their families deserve.

"This was not just about one election—it was about a movement created by people who have felt relegated to the sidelines for far too long," said CTU President Karen Lewis. "This coalition of individuals and

their values and ideas that united around Chuy and our candidates for alderman is going to be a force in Chicago politics for generations to come."

The day after the mayor closed a record 50 neighborhood schools in 2013, President Lewis said the CTU had three objectives: register 100,000 new voters, run CTU candidates for political office and change the political landscape of the city. The Union has accomplished each of these goals, but still has much work to do for the 20,000 homeless students in our district, a growing epidemic of overcrowded classrooms, and 200 schools without libraries. Our ongoing contract negotiations will bring these and many other issues to the fore, and we hope that the mayor and his administration will respect the work of Chicago public school educators and education support staff, who desire only the best for Chicago's students and their families.

We congratulate Chuy Garcia for carrying the torch and

This was not just about one election—it was about a movement created by people who have felt relegated to the sidelines for far too long.

providing a voice for the thousands of Chicagoans who have been marginalized by failed policies of both current and past mayoral administrations. Through Chuy's campaign, Chicagoans have seen what is possible if we challenge the status quo. We have debated a number of issues in all parts of the city; a number of first-time aldermen will be sworn in as new members of the Chicago City Council and many of them have committed to joining the Progressive Caucus; and the people of Chicago have gained the positioning and the right to protest and have a greater understanding of the power of their collective voice.

"The mayor didn't win the run-off election in as much as he survived it," said CTU Vice President Jesse Sharkey. "But we believe that if he is sincere about owning his faults, and listening to the voices of average, working Chicagoans, those sentiments expressed in his television ads won't just be conciliatory, they will be needed to move this city forward." **CTU**

Notice: Due to a recording error, the Delegates Not Present lists for March and April were not available at press time. Chicago Union Teacher will run these lists in our June issue.

Responding to Bruce

BY **STEPHANIE GADLIN**
AND **KURT HILGENDORF**

Governor Bruce Rauner famously said that he's "been successful at everything [he's] ever done." His budget address in February was no different. Gov. Rauner wants to be successful in destroying vitally necessary public services, including the state's university system, drug treatment and breast cancer services, public transit and the Department of Children and Family Services. Evidently, Gov. Rauner wants to be successful at destroying Illinois' economy, too. The lessons from Greece, Ireland, Italy and Kansas all show that public government austerity budgets don't work to fix the economy, and unnecessarily and dramatically exacerbate human suffering. The experiences in California and Minnesota show the clearest alternative forward: Raise revenue from those most able to pay and the state's economy can grow and prosper. This contrast points to the real issue: Gov. Rauner most wants to be successful at shoveling money to himself and his wealthy supporters. The tax cuts Rauner wholeheartedly supports overwhelmingly benefit the privileged few at the top of Illinois' economy; the vast majority gains practically nothing and loses dramatically. Rauner's thoroughly disproven voodoo economics is an unacceptable attack on the

There is only one equitable solution to Illinois' budget: Generate revenue from those most able to pay.

working families of Illinois, and in his zero-sum world, "success" means failure for everyone else.

Budgets are statements of priorities and morals, and it is clear where the governor fails on both.

The Republican lawmaker claimed that this is an honest budget and that it's make or break time. But that's a deeply dishonest statement and his solution is evidently to break the state. He was crystal clear: Any consideration of revenue will only be tied to draconian reforms that harm working people. Like his good friend Rahm Emanuel, the governor is attempting to capitalize on a manufactured crisis rooted in his unwillingness to raise revenue from those who are most able to pay.

There are two clear realities of this budget proposal. The first is that budget cuts will hit every segment of government operations, even those that get an "increase" in funding. The education funding "hike"

Rauner's Budget Address

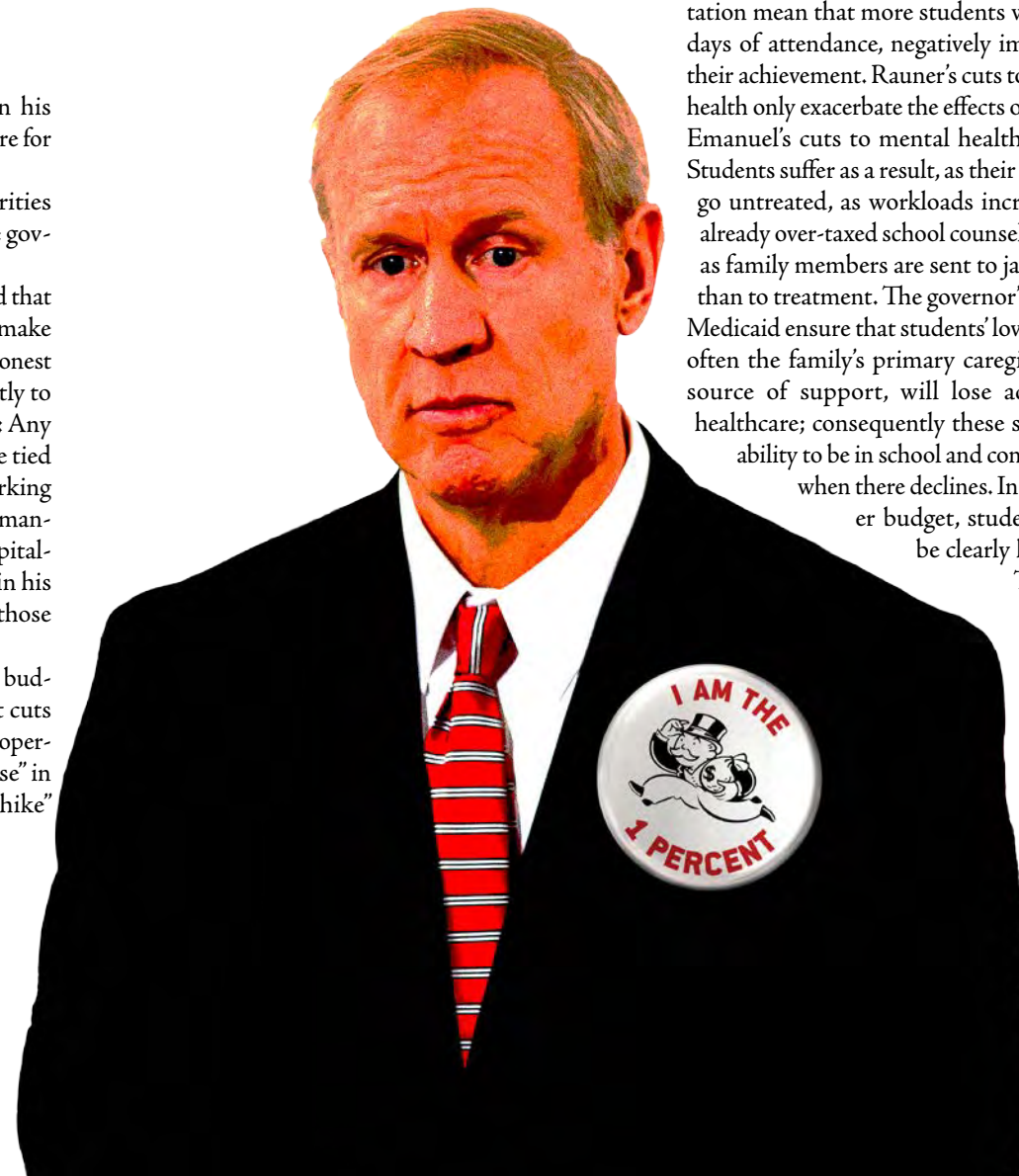
comes at the expense of other public services on which students depend. Research is clear that out-of-school factors have huge impacts on students' ability to learn and grow during school. Thousands of students across the city have transportation challenges, so cuts to public transportation mean that more students will miss days of attendance, negatively impacting their achievement. Rauner's cuts to mental health only exacerbate the effects of Mayor Emanuel's cuts to mental health clinics. Students suffer as a result, as their traumas go untreated, as workloads increase for already over-taxed school counselors, and as family members are sent to jail rather than to treatment. The governor's cuts to Medicaid ensure that students' loved ones, often the family's primary caregiver and source of support, will lose access to healthcare; consequently these students'

ability to be in school and concentrate when there declines. In a Rauner budget, students will be clearly harmed.

The second reality is that

this budget proposal is primarily an attack on women and people of color. In Chicago, where 85 percent of public school students are low-income and 90 percent of those learners are students of color, Rauner's budget is a clear attack on already-decimated communities on the South and West sides of the city. In what can only be deemed a "surprise," the governor did the same thing to women that he blamed Pat Quinn for: slashing public services and decimating good jobs. Mr. Rauner's proposal to slash the retirement security of active teachers is a direct attack on women and people of color. Women make up 75 percent of Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund members and 60 percent of Chicago Municipal Fund members. Furthermore, the proposed pension cuts come on top of school budget and job cuts that have decimated the percentage of Black teachers in the Chicago Public Schools. These combined measures most directly impact neighborhoods like Roseland, Mt. Greenwood, Morgan Park, Chatham, South Shore, Auburn-Gresham and South Chicago. Public sector jobs undergird the economies in these neighborhoods, and as a result of his budget, these neighborhoods, already devastated by unemployment, foreclosures and the associated dramatic loss of wealth, are further sacrificed to ideology.

There is only one equitable solution to



Illinois' budget problems: Generate revenue from those most able to pay. A report issued in February 2015 from the Center for Budget and Tax Accountability pointed to the real impact of the reduction of the state's income tax level—a massive transfer of wealth to the richest Illinoisans. Illinois is “broke” because the governor and his biggest supporters do not pay their fair share. The solutions continue to be clear. Rauner should advocate for a surcharge on millionaires. He should support a graduated income tax. He should propose eliminating tax loopholes that allow corporations to avoid hundreds of millions in Illinois taxes. He should assist municipalities' finances by pledging to withhold state business from any bank that refuses to renegotiate toxic interest swaps. The governor provided practically no detail and proposed none of these revenue proposals.

Illinois' success depends on the collective support of public services to fuel the entire state economy.

Taken collectively, Gov. Rauner's proposal only worsens Illinois' economic challenges and unnecessarily harms working people across the state. Evidently, successfully shaking up Springfield means more of the same discredited 1980s economic theory to benefit the wealthy. Way to go, governor. **CTU**

Stephanie Gadlin is the Communications Director at the CTU, and Kurt Hilgendorf is the CTU policy researcher and lobbyist.

Our Transformational Contract Demands for City Chicago's Students Deserve

BY **CTU COMMUNICATIONS**

On March 26, Chicago Teachers Union President Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT, led 50 teachers and education support personnel into contract negotiations with the Chicago Board of Education, in which the Union presented its proposals for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract). Many of the proposals are designed to vastly improve the academic and social/emotional supports for Chicago's most underserved students, who rely on the city's public schools to improve their life opportunities. The current CTU/Chicago Board of Education contract expires June 30, 2015.

“Our new contract will reflect our values as educators, and the stake we have—and our city should have—in the education of the children we serve,” President Lewis said. “There is absolutely no greater interest for our members than the lives of their students, and we look forward to honest,

transparent conversations with the Board on how to strengthen the district and provide adequate resources for all of its students, their families and the city our students deserve.”

Throughout negotiations, the CTU will be strongly advocating for the services and supports needed by all CPS schools. Among the contract demands the CTU proposes are:

- » Establish lower and compulsory class size limits in all schools.
- » Ensure that every school has: the necessary clinicians and a school counselor and nurse; a truant officer, restorative justice coordinator, librarian and playground instructors; and art, music, physical education and other teachers to create robust and effective educational programs.
- » Restore adequate preparation time and enforce paper-work limits for teachers.
- » Dedicate resources previously committed to Teach



▲
Photo: ndceaser
from Flickr

for America to the Grow Your Own Program instead to develop a more diverse and local teaching force directly from CPS student graduates.

- » Engage in legal action against big banks to retrieve upwards of \$1 billion for our classrooms; end contracts with these same financial institutions that refuse to renegotiate excessive fees and penalties.
- » Return diverted revenues from the tax increment financing (TIF) program to the schools.
- » Place a freeze on charter school expansion, school closings and turnarounds; allow for union rights for teachers at charter schools and legislative advocacy for an elected school board.
- » Expanded pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) for parents at 300% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- » Reduce significantly the number and duration of standardized tests; prohibit tests entirely for students in Pre-K through 2nd grade.
- » Establish 50 sustainable community schools and strive for policies to achieve increasing integration of students and increased access to curriculum

which reflects the experiences and identities of our students.

In the CTU's recent research report, “A Just Chicago: Fighting for the City our Students Deserve,” the Union argued that the families of Chicago students deserve adequate pay and permanent jobs; freedom from judicial inequities; stable, affordable and appropriate housing; better access to whole health care; equitably-funded, high-quality education; and political action to equalize opportunity. To that end, the demands presented to the Board will reflect this vision.

“Teachers and PSRPs are demanding the schools our students deserve, a commitment to public education and real actions to address the social crisis so many of our students in their communities face, so we demand that Chicago's leaders treat our children as the priority—not the bankers and stock-traders who fund their campaigns,” said CTU Vice President Jesse Sharkey. “If we are to be accountable to the needs of our children, we will have to hold the wealthy accountable for the massive investments that our schools deserve.” **CTU**



◀ **Rahm Emanuel**

Photo:
Kevin Gebhardt
from Flickr

Uh Oh: How Rahm Won Re-Election

BY **STEPHANIE GADLIN**

Much of the post-election “analysis” seems to ignore a very simple fact: political propaganda (also known as political persuasion) works. While some folks were looking for people to blame in Jesus “Chuy” Garcia’s April 7 run-off loss, as well as people to salute in Rahm’s 11-point win, perhaps they might look little deeper into how campaigns actually work. We might want to consider how money, messaging and the campaign mechanics create the viability of political candidates.

First and foremost, you’d better have a candidate that is running to win and not just oppose. If a person is running to win their race, then there are some things a campaign must do and have in order to ensure that can happen. Yes, a candidate needs money; and obviously the inner workings of their campaign structure are equally important. However, without the ability to get out a clear, easy-to-understand message to the right audiences, using the right medium and being able to effectively provide a counter narrative to an opponent’s opposition messaging, your candidate’s electability will fade.

Mayor Emanuel spent nearly \$30 million over a six-week period with much of that going toward messaging/media: TV ads, cable ads, radio ads, print ads, digital, direct mail, social media, signage, polling, image

consultation and the successful use of well-placed surrogates. His goal was to convince the majority of voters to forget his four years of failed leadership and instead re-focus them on their own inner fears of what “might” happen if Chicagoans “elect a Mexican American,” or “career politician” who “can’t tell us who is on a commission” or “how he’ll solve the city’s budget crisis” in 45 seconds. This underlying message was reinforced by that “uh oh,” tag line in his repetitive negative TV ads, which highlighted this short utterance to convey feelings of dread, fear, confusion, untrustworthiness and uncertainty. Those were the exact emotions he needed undecided voters to conjure as they headed to the polls while he fought a well-liked, smart, refreshing, popular candidate like Garcia.

If you elect that guy—uh oh.

You know he’s Mexican—uh oh.

He doesn’t have a plan—uh oh.

He won’t show you the money—uh oh.

He can’t make up his mind—uh oh.

Do you want to take that chance—uh oh.

Save yourselves, before it’s too late—uh oh.

The mayor’s secondary persuasion goal was to re-brand himself as a “mayor for all” and not “Mayor 1%” by softening his image, making him appear to be from the neighborhoods by removing his suit and tie, having him smile more and ensuring that

Who needs safer
‘hoods, housing and
health care when we
can get a (mayoral)
hug, some hope
and some healing.

Uh oh.

whenever he was seen he had a “rainbow coalition” around him, smiling and nodding their heads. And not just any rainbow—the people needed to reflect the demographic of people he needed to convince most—and yes, that was Black women, older African-Americans and the dwindling middle class (across all racial demographics). He didn’t need all whites or all Latinos or all blacks—he needed the right mixture of Rahm voters, and he got it. And that right mix meant targeting the undecided African-American voters who were angry at him but still loved President Obama, were influenced by charismatic leadership and were more likely, because of their religious beliefs, to “forgive and forget,” because “everybody needs a second chance,” blah....blah. blah. And, period.

So Rahm Emanuel apologized—in a TV ad.

The mayor in a fuzzy sweater—wow he is one of us after all.

The mayor surrounded by Black women—wow, he doesn’t dislike people of color, after all.

The mayor smiling all the time—wow, maybe he’s isn’t so mean, and disconnected after all.

The mayor scribbling on a note pad—wow, maybe he knows how to balance a budget, after all.

The mayor knocking doors—wow, he might not be so bad, after all.

The mayor with Obama—wow, the PRESIDENT!!!! (You know...Michelle’s husband.)

Who needs safer ‘hoods, housing and health care when we can get a (mayoral) hug, some hope and some healing. *Uh oh.*

Rahm spent about \$5 million a week (that we know of) to convince Chicago voters that he is a changed man; that he is the most competent; and that we should focus on Chuy’s alleged shortcomings rather than on how Rahm exacerbated the city’s fiscal hemorrhaging and why so many people disliked him in the first place. Dropping five million dollars’ worth of coin every 168 hours buys a lot of love—I don’t care what you say. If you hated him, you were gonna love him when it was done. Some people even put on t-shirts and held up

signs expressing their newfound romantic affinity for Mr. 1%.

The mayor had a plan. And it worked. And, end of sentence, so stop kicking yourself if you were out in the field, like I was, working to convince Chicagoans to vote in their best self-interest. If you’re looking for fairy dust, or the secret sauce, he didn’t have it. No, this was not an act of God.

The formula is quite simple when you think about it and if you understand the science to it and how to apply it. Persuasion works. Polling works. Focus groups work. Image consulting works. Leaning not unto your own understanding works. Being a disciplined candidate works. Being able to consistently hammer away a thought, a message, an idea for or against something works. Having the resources to do all of this (*say it with me*)...works.

The Chicago Teachers Union is successful in this regard. The public loves and trusts teachers and the people who work in our school buildings, including principals. Teachers, like parents, are the first line of defense for our nation’s children. A teacher evokes a feeling of love, trust, knowledge, compassion, focus and authority. Because the CTU emphasizes *teachers* instead of the word *union* in our brand, we are strongly regarded locally and across the nation and globe as caring about our students, the conditions in our school buildings and the conditions in the communities where we serve.

Every teacher, paraprofessional and clinician is credited with “changing the conversation” about education public policy, so-called school reform, charter madness and austerity in Chicago. We showed the strength of organized labor through our solidarity, organizing and advocacy. For three years, the CTU worked strategically and consistently to lower the mayor’s approval ratings so he would be politically vulnerable and we could get some relief from his misguided and harmful fiscal policies. Because we were successful in dropping his poll numbers to a record low through coalition efforts, we were instrumental in creating the first run-off and real municipal election this city has had in decades.

Through it all, the CTU was strong enough to take the hits, criticisms and complaints from editorial boards and people on the well-funded right who

2015 Young Artist Contest for CPS Students

The annual CTU Young Artist Contest is open to all students in Chicago Public Schools from kindergarten through 12th grades. Its purpose is to showcase student talent, recognize students, parents, and teachers and to display prize winning creations by our students in the CTU Office.

All submissions must be received at the CTU Office. Send to Chicago Teachers Union, attn: April Stigger, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 400, Chicago, IL 60654. April can also be reached at 312.329.6225 and aprilstigger@ctulocal1.com.

Contest Rules

1. One entry per school.
2. Flat drawings, prints, paintings, or sculpture that reflect original ideas will be accepted.
3. All entries must be original student art. No copies accepted.
4. Artwork must be matted or mounted

and protected with cover flap, except sculpted pieces, and the maximum size (excluding mat) is 24"x30".

5. Any medium may be used, including original, computer-generated work.
6. Pieces may be in either black and white or color, but charcoal, pastels, chalk, or crayon works must be sprayed with fixative to prevent smearing. No framed work or canvas on stretchers allowed.
7. There is no theme; quality of the art is the only criterion for judging.
8. Any student attending a Chicago Public School is eligible to enter.
9. Winning artwork becomes the property of the CTU if not picked up 30 days after letter is sent out to the school for artwork to be picked up.

Prizes

Winners will receive:

1. A gift card.
2. A certificate from CTU.

3. Invitation with one guest to a reception at the CTU Office.
4. Invitation to teacher or art teacher to attend luncheon.
5. Art displayed in the CTU office for one year.
6. Winners artwork published on the CTU Website.
7. A winner will have artwork showcased on the cover of the June 2015 issue of CTU's CUT magazine.

How to enter

1. Each piece of art must have two entry forms.
2. Please print or type and affix to the back of artwork.
3. Please make a copy to submit in an envelope to accompany the artwork.
4. Entrant gives the CTU the right to reproduce winning artwork.

Thank you! [CTU](#)

Photo: Antonio Dickey



Teachers, like parents, are the first line of defense for our nation's children. A teacher evokes a feeling of love, trust, knowledge, compassion, focus and authority.

launched and funded their own campaign against us. CTU President Karen Lewis emerged from being dragged, ridiculed and mocked in the media to being a celebrated international labor icon who isn't afraid to take on one of the most powerful and skilled politicians of our time. In my focus group, people saw Karen as a "growling grizzly" to Rahm's "sneaky snake," and therefore, I was intent on ensuring that our "mother bear" would ever be seen as fighting for those she loved—and that is the people of this city and its most vulnerable, which include children and the poor. We prevailed because we knew justice and truth were on our side—and we have one of the best research teams in the country.

How did the CTU do this: We had the messaging, money and mechanics to successfully engage on our issues. We used *persuasion*. We had to convince people of our counter arguments. We were consistent in our message until, until.... until....the press and then the people began to examine the facts for themselves and understand that we were honestly speaking for the best interests of our educators, students and families we serve. Period. And then we organized. We all worked together, with the same message, for the same cause and we pulled in the same direction.

So in the final analysis of this election analysis, pundits would do a greater service to the community by correctly talking about the mechanics of political (and advocacy) campaigns. Perhaps we can help people understand the process so they can make informed decisions based on all of the information available.

If Garcia had \$30 million to spend in a sprint to the fifth floor, I'm sure his TV commercials would have been quite the sights to behold, too. He could have personally knocked on 100,000 doors and shook hands with another 100,000 people at EL stops and he would not have had the same reach or impact as a 45-second TV spot on ABC, NBC, CBS, WGN, FOX and all of the radio stations slamming him as an incompetent flip-flopper.

Let's keep it real: A 30-second earned media TV spot that you might catch if you watch or record your local newscast will never trump a 30-second negative political ad played over and over and over and over and over and over and over and over—did I say over—as you watch your favorite TV show or cable program. And even if you miss that, somebody in your household or on their block, or at your workplace didn't—and they will tell you about it. *Uh oh*. I saw my share. You saw yours. Then you got that stuff in your mailbox. Then you got it on your Internet. Then you got it on your cell phone. Then you heard about it on your radio. Then you read about it in your newspaper or social media site. Then you thought about it. Then you went to vote.

So let's keep it all in perspective: On April 7, Chicago voters across race and class lines were not convinced to elect Garcia as mayor not because Rahm was the better choice, but because they were persuaded not to through a carefully orchestrated, well-funded, effective messaging component. [CTU](#)

Stephanie Gadlin is the CTU Communications Director.

CTU Young Artist 2015 Entry Form

Student Name _____

Student Address _____

Student Phone Number _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Medium _____

School _____

School Address _____

Zip _____ School Telephone _____

Art or Classroom Teacher _____

Teacher Email Address _____ Contact Number for Teacher _____

CTU Delegate _____

Principal's Name _____

Please print legibly and complete entire entry form. Thank you in advance!



A Just Chicago: Rally for Education Justice in Chicago

The Chicago Teachers Union on March 26, 2015, released its proposals publicly with hundreds of educators, parents, students and community members from across the city and country during a rally at the James R. Thompson Center. The Grassroots Education Movement and Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, city-wide and national networks, joined the CTU in support of this visionary agenda. [CTU](#)



Photos: Nathan Goldbaum



BY JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Recently, a principal insisted upon being called the title of “Doctor.” He told me he “spent too much money” on his degree not to be called by that title. I thought about it for a minute. On the one hand, it is a sign of respect to honor an individual who has worked hard in their field to earn a particular degree. On the other hand, it can be used to elevate oneself to a position of supremacy over another person.

Then I thought about what my field rep Jerry Siegel told me when I was a new delegate. When I became delegate he said, “Remember, when it comes to union business, you have to put yourself on equal footing with a principal.” Indeed, our contract refers to our Professional Problems Committee as a “meeting of peers” between the delegate and the principal. We are peers.

This is the reason I don’t always call principals by “Ms.,” “Mr.” or “principal” when I address them. One principal is always called by her first name by other principals and central office staff. Once, that same principal insisted that I call her “Principal _____” or “Ms.” This was demeaning to me and to the Union, to insist on a title from me, but to

be called by her first name with her peers. This was an attempt to create a power structure in which I would be treated as a subordinate and defer to her title and position of authority. Jerry taught me this would not serve our members. He taught me that the principals must be on our same level and respect us as equals.

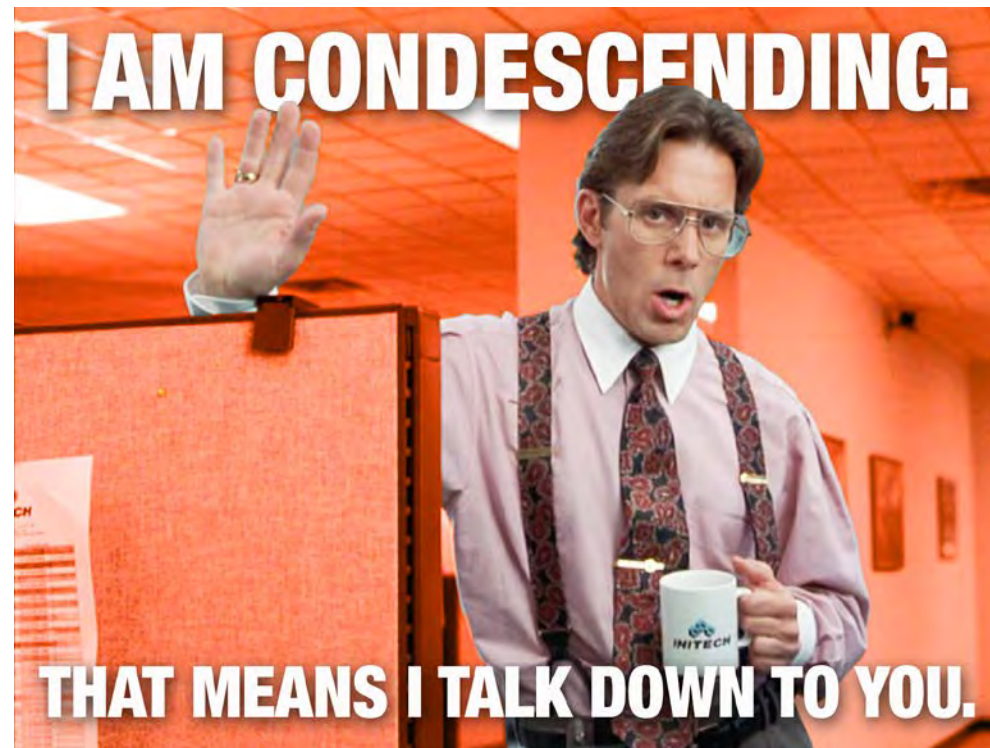
One principal told me it was unprofessional for me to call him by his first name. What they regard as social protocols and “professional dialogue” is really a guise to diminish our power. I responded that, “I address all my workplace peers by their first name, because there isn’t a person in my office that I address by ‘Mr.’ or ‘Ms.’” This is my experience with professionalism and professional dialogue.

What they regard as social protocols and “professional dialogue” is really a guise to diminish our power.

As delegates and PPC members, we must often partner and collaborate with the boss. Partnership cannot take place when we are treated as a subordinate, and not an equal. The insistence of a title is an effort to enforce a hierarchical power construct between management and labor.

The use of a title can often be an indication that one is an adversary or that we have a barrier between each other. The use of first names is a demonstration that we are equals and that we have a working relationship.

One principal indicated that he was raised to



Partnership cannot take place when we are treated as a subordinate, and not an equal.

respect people with power, and somehow I was not raised with the same level of respect. I was taught, however, to respect education in all forms. I was taught to respect the master mechanic that studied their craft just as I would respect the master physician or educator. Every trade has a means of furthering oneself through study.

I was taught by my parents to fight hierarchy, inequality and oligarchy. I told the principal, "I will treat the custodian, the teacher, the security guard and the boss all with the same level of respect and dignity." If I call each of the other trades by their first name, I will call the boss by their first name. The boss gets no special privileges for being the boss.

I was also raised as a person of God and faith. I was taught that we are all loved equally by our creator. I was taught that we didn't need a priest to make our water holy. I was taught that the minister was no more "reverent" than the congregants, just because they studied theology and had a position of authority in the church. I was taught that we were all equal in the eyes of the Lord. In some religious traditions, everyone is called "brother" or "sister," much as we do as fellow union members.

I share these thoughts hoping that principals and bosses everywhere can respect the work of delegates and the PPC. I hope that we all can honor our diverse backgrounds and life experiences. I seek to understand because I honor the years of good deeds and service by many principals.

I demonstrated great deference to my first principal at Crane High School, Merv Scott. He did so much to guide me and help me develop as an educator. I often think back to Mr. Scott for guidance when I experience a principal that is abusive or doesn't support a teacher. I ask, "What would Mr. Scott have done in this type of situation?" Mr. Scott had the unique skill in which he could convince me to be enthusiastic about the most ridiculous of Board of Education mandates, which was a truly miraculous skill.

I finally told the principal that between the two of us I would use a first name. I would concede to respect their request when we were in front of their staff. It might seem trivial, but everyone deserves the same respect and dignity regardless of their position in life. **CTU**

Joseph McDermott is a CTU teacher field representative.



2015 Delegates and Leadership Training

Nearly 200 CTU delegates, retirees and school activists came together for two days in March to build power in their schools and in the streets, and gain valuable skills, tips and solidarity. Members gathered to hear labor analyst Jane McAlevey, Bill Fletcher of the AFL-CIO and Bob Peterson of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association outline the steps to winning good working conditions. CTU members then broke out into planning sessions organized first by network and then by topic, with sessions on fighting paperwork overload; oversized classes; principal bullying; unsafe conditions; back-to-back with sessions on political organizing; PSRP pensions; and evaluations and more.

Photos: Nathan Goldbaum



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Testing Resistance and Reform Movement Growing Rapidly

OPT OUT!

BY **MONTY NEILL**

In early March, as the testing season is just beginning, the resistance and reform movement is expanding rapidly across the nation. Thousands of high-school students in half a dozen New Mexico communities walked out on their exams. The Nathan Hale School Senate in Seattle voted not to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Common Core exam. As New Jersey begins Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) testing, some communities report refusal rates of more than 40 percent. Since mid-February,



Photo:
Sarah
Jane
Rhee

newspapers in more than a dozen states have reported on boycotts, though the main testing has not yet started in most jurisdictions. Bills to explicitly authorize parents' right to opt their children out of standardized exams have been introduced in at least 11 states, including Illinois.

"Opting out" both reflects and shapes public opinion. Several national and state surveys recently reported that strong majorities believe there is too much testing, too much teaching to the test, and that these misuses harm learning.

Local school leaders have increasingly joined the resistance. The Lewiston, Maine, Board of Education sent notices to parents informing them of their right to refuse. From New Jersey to Oregon, many school boards have passed resolutions recognizing this right. In Florida, Lee County voted to end all its district-mandated tests (which add greatly to the burden), while other districts cut back some tests. The Florida boards also are a major source of pressure on the legislature to reduce the number of exams and the stakes to both students and teachers attached to them.

In response to the growing anti-testing movement, states and districts are changing laws and policies. In 2013 and 2014, four states repealed or delayed graduation exams. In 2015, Arizona has already halted its exit test, while Oklahoma, Utah, Pennsylvania and Texas are debating whether or not to do the same. Other states and districts ended or softened grade promotion testing or eliminated other

exams. More are certain to do so this year.

Quite a few states have established commissions to review the amount of public school testing. In surveys, teachers have reported that up to 30 percent of classroom time is spent on testing and test prep, while some districts administer more than 20 exams in a year in certain grades. The amount of testing is likely to dramatically expand if states do not kill policies to judge teachers based on student test scores, as required under U.S. Department of Education waivers from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) sanctions. For example, the superintendent in Miami-Dade, Florida said his district will have to create 1,500 new exams to comply.

Legislators also are increasingly rejecting the PARCC and Smarter Balanced exams, the two Common Core consortia. The number of states participating in PARCC dropped by half over the past year, while several states dropped Smarter Balanced. More are likely to join them in the coming year. Of

Several national and state surveys recently reported that strong majorities believe there is too much testing, too much teaching to the test, and that these misuses harm learning.

course, to meet federal testing requirements under No Child Left Behind, these states have had to adopt other standardized exams.

Another advance for the anti-testing movement is that, for the first time since the passage of NCLB, Congress is debating whether to reduce federally-mandated annual testing, from grades 3-8 to once each in 3-5 and 6-9, as well as once in high school, for reading, math and science. The U.S. House of Representatives refused to allow a vote on such an amendment to its rewrite of the law (perhaps because leaders feared it would pass). However, the Senate has not yet made such a decision. Lamar Alexander, the education committee chair, included the "grade span" option in his initial draft bill.

Unfortunately, most Democrats want to keep every-grade testing. This will be a live issue into April, so check <http://fairtest.org> for updates as well as links for sending emails to members of Congress.

What does seem certain is that any bill that advances through Congress will end NCLB's punitive sanctions—except perhaps for the lowest scoring districts, which are overwhelmingly comprised of students who are low-income, of color and/or are English language learners. As it stands now, neither the House nor Senate will require states to use student test scores to rank teachers, but if they use discretionary federal funds to evaluate teachers, they will have to include student "growth" scores.

An important development has been the rapid

BOOK REVIEW

The Test: Why Our Schools Are Obsessed With Standardized Testing—But You Don't Have To Be

BY ED DZIEDZIC

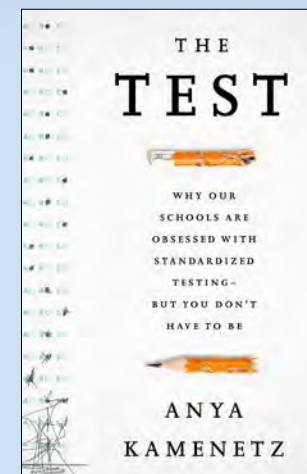
As CTU members, we understand the problems of excessive standardized testing. Many parents, however, are confused and misled by promoters of high stakes tests who insist the constant barrage of standardized tests are necessary and even good for students. Anya Kamenetz's very readable book, "The Test: Why Our Schools Are Obsessed With Standardized Testing—But You Don't Have To Be" (PublicAffairs, 2015) uncovers the history behind the current testing craze, addresses the problems with these tests, and

offers some unique suggestions for combatting the current over-testing craze. "The Test" helps parents understand the drawbacks to standardized over-testing, and offers a guide to opting-out, coping with and changing standardized assessments.

Kamenetz reviews the history of standardized testing—testing which reveals strong, often racist, bias against students of lower socio-economic status. She investigates the federal No Child Left Behind and Race to The Top acts, and discusses the Common Core heavily funded testing promoted by the

"Billionaire Boys' Club" of Bill Gates, Eli Broad and the Walton Family Foundation. Kamenetz reveals how the current testing mania has reaped exorbitant corporate profits for testing companies such as Pearson.

Kamenetz also explores designing better assessments, like portfolio assessment and a SimCity-type video game that could assess real-life, decision-making skills. Finally, she includes a chapter on "beating the test"—common sense suggestions for calming children down if they must take standardized tests. She recommends



helping them approach the test as a game, one that they can win.

"The Test" is a book that parents can use as a practical guide, teachers can use to counter the pro-test crowd and students can use to imagine a future with much less testing madness. **CTU**

Ed Dzedzic is a delegate at Whitney Young High School.



Photo: Sarah Jane Rhee

An important development has been the rapid increase in teacher unions openly battling the overuse and misuse of tests and backing the right of parents to opt out.

many states do impose graduation exams and some have test-based grade promotion policies.

At times, administrators threaten students. One New York City activist said even in affluent schools, parents have been told their child faces retention in their grade (though test-based retention was ended in NYC last year) or won't be able to attend the school prom if they do not take the test.

Increasingly, teachers are threatened. A New Mexico student and teacher have been suspended, and a local advocate reported, "Education Secretary Hanna Skandera has asked for the names and license numbers for any teachers who helped or supported students during the walk out." An upstate New York activist added, "Teachers in NY are facing official/unofficial gag orders [and] schools are being punished for actions (legal) taken by parents/families (refusing the tests)." In previous years, no teachers in Seattle, Chicago or New York City were fired or disciplined for aiding mass test boycotts, though they were often threatened.

As in Chicago, state and administrative pressure against refusing to take standardized tests is strongest in low-income communities of color, where local schools also are most likely to rely heavily on federal funding. The false threat of economic loss to their school has been a deterrent. However, communities of color increasingly recognize the damage testing causes, as did parents at Chicago's Saucedo Elementary School last year, where teachers led a boycott of the now-defunct Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).

Several recent surveys found most people of color

increase in teacher unions openly battling the overuse and misuse of tests and backing the right of parents to opt out. Chicago Teachers Union support for last spring's boycotts is a notable example. Nationally, the National Education Association is forcefully pushing Congress to require only grade span testing, and it voted to support parental opt out rights. As unions have stepped up, community-parent-union alliances have grown.

Not surprisingly, authorities in some states, districts and schools are attempting to repress the anti-testing movement. Last year in Chicago, administrators called parents who had opted out to pressure them to change their minds, with some success. Elsewhere, administrators often falsely tell parents that opting out will cost their schools federal funds. Under federal rules, including the NCLB waivers, it will not. (Illinois has a waiver that ends NCLB penalties for all but the lowest-scoring schools.) Some schools have told parents it is illegal to opt out, even where it clearly is not. No state imposes penalties simply for refusing to take the tests, though

are critical of testing. They also recognize that testing is the primary excuse for closing or privatizing schools, as has been done most extensively in Chicago but also in Philadelphia, Newark, Boston, New York and other cities.

Despite misinformation and repression, the anti-testing movement continues to expand by leaps and bounds. As it grows, parents, teachers, students and communities will win more and greater victories as together we roll back the testing onslaught and establish assessment as a tool to support rather than undermine learning. **CTU**

Monty Neill is the Executive Director of the National Center for Fair & Open Testing (FairTest), a group that advances quality education and equal opportunity by promoting fair, open, valid and educationally beneficial evaluations of students, teachers and schools. FairTest also works to end the misuses and flaws of testing practices that impede those goals.

FairTest compiled two reports on the 2014 movement. One is on victories, <http://www.fairtest.org/new-fairtest-report-testing-reform-victories-first>. The other is on the development of the movement, <http://www.fairtest.org/testing-resistance-and-reform-movement>. For weekly newsclips from around the nation, see <http://www.fairtest.org/news/other>, or get them directly in your email by subscribing at <http://www.fairtest.org/weekly-news-signup>.



CPS Cowers to Federal Threats and Administers the PARCC Assessment

BY **CTU COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chicago Teachers Union is extremely disappointed in the decision of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's handpicked Chicago Board of Education to administer the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) throughout Chicago Public Schools (CPS) in the wake of intimidation and financial retribution by the Illinois State Board of Education and U.S. Department of Education. The district's choice to back down from the original decision to administer the PARCC this year only to a set of pilot schools because of state and federal threats to withhold education funding if the test was not administered throughout CPS, allows for continued policy measures to disrupt the lives of students, handcuffs classroom educators and holds the sword of disinvestment over children and communities who need this funding the most.

"This decision has the potential to blow up and be a tremendous failure, because CPS itself has said the district may not be able to handle a proper rollout at this time due to technical issues and frustration among students, teachers and administration over administering the test properly," said CTU President Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT. "But instead of understanding those issues, the state and the feds decided to threaten to withhold funding from a district that's one of the most poorly resourced in the nation."

By changing course on a previous decision to limit the PARCC to just 10 percent of CPS schools, the district will continue to burden elementary school students with the inhumane pressure of over-testing and take valuable time away from classroom instruction. A number of CPS teachers who have taken the sample PARCC test have stated that the assessment is inappropriate for 3rd through 8th grades, and is coyly designed for students to fail. **CTU**

Myths and Facts about PARCC in Illinois

MYTH: States and districts will lose Title I Funding for our schools because of opt out
FACT: Your district will not lose federal funds because of opt out

There is no federal or state law that requires penalties for schools or districts if parents opt out or refuse the test. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law did include a mandate that required schools to have a 95% participation rate on state tests or face sanctions. However, since 2014, Illinois has had a waiver to NCLB that replaces those sanctions with a new accountability system.

The [IL NCLB waiver](#) says that to receive points on factors in the Multiple Measures Index (MMI) used to grade schools that depend on test results, schools must have participation sufficient for results to meet a 95% confidence level. If large enough numbers opt out, a school or district could fail to meet that confidence level.

Schools that do not meet their MMI targets are “priority schools” and are targeted for interventions. Priority schools are primarily designated as such by being in the lowest 5% of schools based on various performance ratings. Note that **interventions for priority schools do not include withholding of funds**. Additionally, we know of no cases in other states where schools have been identified as “priority schools” solely on the basis of low participation rates. There have been schools that did not meet participation rates last spring in New York State, and even some in Chicago as well. One year on from massive opt outs, there have been **no** consequences. You can [read more about this issue here](#).

ISBE is making overblown threats to scare districts and families from opting out of the test. See [our letter to ISBE debunking their misinformation here](#).

MYTH: There is no "opting out" of PARCC.
FACT: Your child can refuse the test.

Students **can** refuse PARCC testing. [Parents should notify their school in writing that their child is refusing the test](#) and they expect their child to be treated with kindness and respect.

Although the IL State Board of Education has said that [“Opting out is not an option,”](#) they have also said districts [“can develop a policy for those students who refuse to take assessments on testing days.”](#)

Though some states do have opt out laws or regulations or broadly allow opt out in practice, Illinois does not. As a result, parents are not permitted to refuse the test on behalf of their children; special needs children, children with anxiety and children as young as 8 are expected to refuse the test themselves.

We are working to get [an opt out bill passed in IL, HB306](#). We need your help; please [call your state representatives](#) and tell them to support HB306 so that there is a clear and humane policy for families that don’t want their children to take PARCC or other state-mandated assessments.

MYTH: Illinois would lose millions in federal funding if the opt out bill HB 306 became law
FACT: Other states already have laws clearly permitting opt out of state-mandated testing

The following states have opt out laws or regulations: California, Wisconsin, Utah, Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Oregon. Other states, like Washington, have allowed parents to opt their children out without formal provisions with no adverse consequences; Rhode Island plans to do so this year. Some other states, including North Carolina and Massachusetts, with no opt out provision in law or regulation have informed school districts they should create alternative education settings for children whose parents refuse the tests.

MYTH: PARCC has been properly field tested
FACT: PARCC has not been shown to be valid and reliable

The PARCC field test was given to determine if schools had the proper technological “bandwidth”. Results of how well students did or did not do have not been released to any district. Neither PARCC nor the state has done any study on the validity of the field test results. (We filed a Freedom of Information Act request for the studies; we were told none existed.) No data has been released advising the public how much money has been spent to meet the technical requirements of PARCC.

MYTH: PARCC is the only way to truly assess our students

FACT: Standardized testing provides an incomplete picture of what students are learning and how schools are performing

Teachers assess students every single day. Parents see the results through quizzes, tests, projects, homework and through these results have the ability to see how their child is learning and what problems they may need to work on at home and school. PARCC results will not be provided until the following school year -- at which point students will have moved to the next grade. In any case, standardized testing is primarily a measure of the socio-economic characteristics of a school’s community.

At this time, there are only 9 states plus the District of Columbia that are still participating in PARCC testing this year: Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Rhode Island, Massachusetts. (RI and MA not using the test for all students.) **13 states that originally planned to use PARCC have dropped out.**

Over 70 superintendents in IL have publicly asked the state board to delay this test because the test isn’t ready, and our schools aren’t ready for this test.

MYTH: Students might be held back or not graduate if they refuse PARCC this year
FACT: PARCC is not attached to any high-stakes decisions this year

The IL State Board of Ed has said that [PARCC will not be used for anything for students this year](#):

“This is a baseline year so there are no consequences for schools or students.” In future years, Illinois intends to use the PARCC test that students will take during their 3rd year of high school coursework as a graduation requirement. Schools/districts have no idea what PARCC scoring will be like and have no idea how testing will proceed this year, so it is unlikely that an individual school or district could attach their own high-stakes to this test. Ask to be shown policies in writing if administrators make threats like this.

MYTH: Students have never opted out of a state test; it can’t be done

FACT: Thousands of students opted out of state tests last year

Students across Illinois refused to take the ISAT last year. In Chicago alone, more than 2000 students were recorded as “Code 15”, i.e. refused to engage with the test. In New York State more than 50,000 students opted out of testing even though NYS has no laws about opt out.

MYTH: Children opting out of PARCC must be kept home during the test window

FACT: Your child can refuse the test at school and do an alternative activity

Write a letter to your child’s principal to let them know that your child will refuse testing. Explain that ISBE says that districts can create their own refusal policy. State that your child will be reading a book or engaging in another quiet activity during testing time.



PARCC: What Teachers Need To Know:

- The Chicago Teachers Union opposes PARCC and supports parents and students who refuse the test.
- PARCC is a drain on our financial resources, our technological resources, and our teaching time.
- The overemphasis on high stakes testing and data collection in our district is starving our classrooms of creativity, curiosity, and joy.
- High stakes tests have no place in our evaluations, which should be based on our teaching practice and authentic assessments
- These tests take an emotional toll on our students, many of whom suffer from additional stress and trauma on a daily basis.
- There is no risk to CPS funding when students refuse PARCC. Students coded as refusals do not count for AYP purposes and no district has ever lost funding due to student refusals or opt outs.
- These tests do nothing to address issues of inequality in our city, they simply measure it. Instead of testing, we need:
 - smaller class sizes
 - less bureaucracy and paperwork
 - more autonomy to teach according to the needs of our students

What you can do:

- You have the right to talk to parents about their rights on non-school time.
- Opt your own children out of PARCC testing if they are CPS students
- Share information on Facebook, Twitter and other social media
- Write letters to the editor and to your legislators urging them to support HB0306, legislation that would protect parents' right to opt out of testing.
- Get involved in your PPLC and LSC to make sure curricular and spending decisions are not driven by testing considerations and test prep
- Incorporate discussion of the history of standardized testing and current debates into your curriculum
- Get involved in your contract committee to organize for a contract that demands the schools our students deserve
- For more information for teachers and parents visit www.morethanascorechicago.org



“... It is the policy of the State of Illinois that the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, the depth of their impact in our society, and the triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country is the proper concern of all people, particularly students enrolled in the schools of the State of Illinois.”
 —Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-21)

Inaugural CTU Black Caucus Heritage Curriculum Fair

BY MICHAEL E. BRUNSON

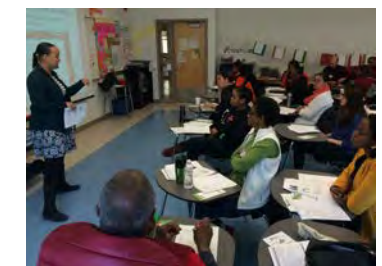
On March 28, the Chicago Teachers Union Black Caucus held its first Heritage Curriculum Fair at Westinghouse College Prep High School. Close to 100 educators attended to view and discuss creative curriculum ideas for teaching African-American history in our public schools. Presenters included Chicago Public Schools teachers, staff and representatives from such groups as Urban Landscapes and the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter museum. The event was capped off by spoken word performances from Dianna “Goddess Warrior” Tyler, Ollie “Hood Raised” Woods and Kente Kizer.

African-American history is a critical part American history.

Our nation will never truly experience healing and redemption until the entire story is told. Understanding the impact of slavery, Jim Crow and racism is crucial

to understanding the current state of our society and America’s activity on the global stage. **CTU**

Michael E. Brunson is the CTU Recording Secretary.



Photos: Ronnie Reese



▲
A school library
not in a Chicago
public school
Photo: Hellebardius
from flickr

School Libraries: An Essential Component of the Education Our Students Deserve

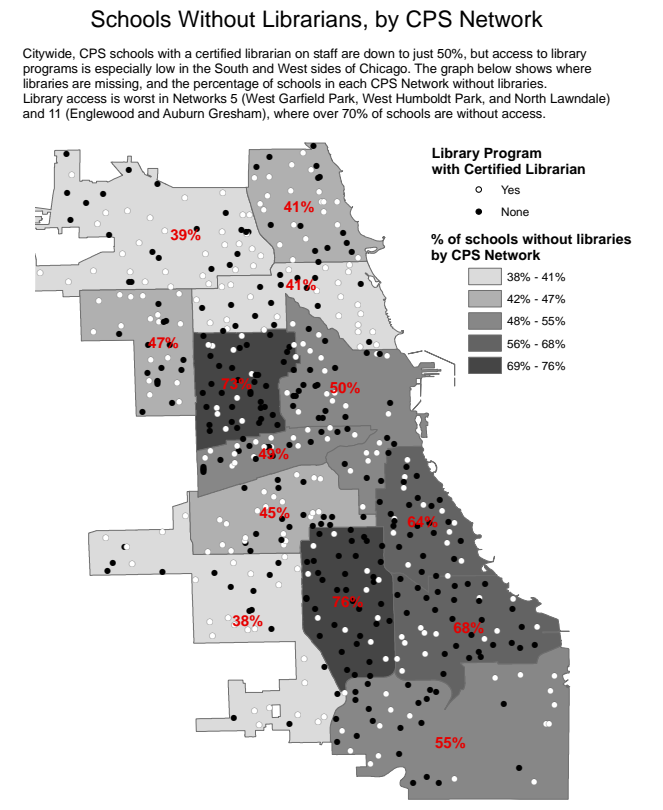
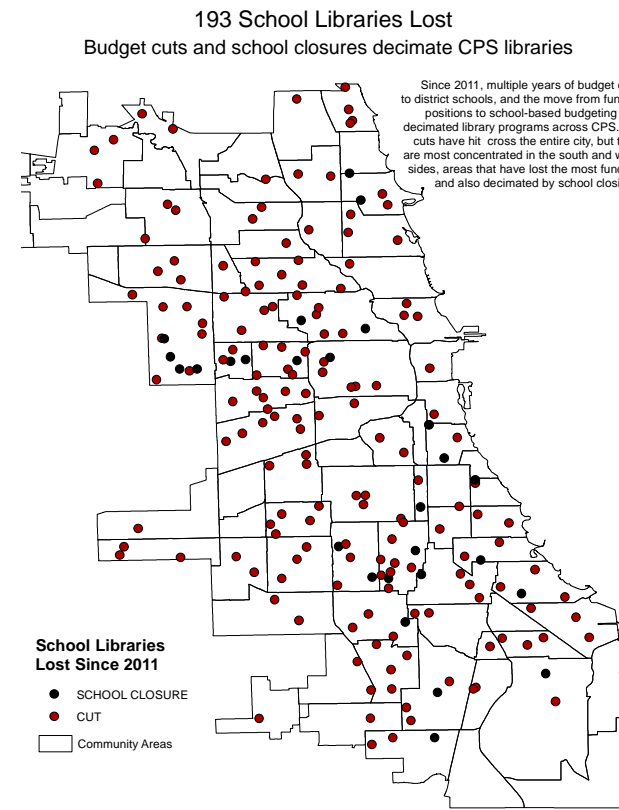
BY CTU LIBRARIANS COMMITTEE

The map accompanying this article shows something we had suspected for a while—professionally staffed libraries are disappearing from the Chicago Public Schools. In the summer and fall of 2013, several of us heard from librarian colleagues who had been reassigned or displaced due to the closing of libraries. The anecdotal evidence was alarming. In one school, a National Board Certified librarian was moved into an elementary classroom and the library operated with a patchwork of volunteers. In another school, the librarian was moved to a social studies classroom and the library left unstaffed. Subsequently, a few of us gathered and discussed how we might respond, and last winter, the Chicago Teachers Union Librarians Committee—also known as Chi School Librarians—was born. With the help of the CTU and a close examination of the following year’s budget, we learned that

more than 200 library positions were eliminated in just two years. The entire district has been impacted, but the South and West sides were the hardest hit.

Two major events have precipitated this trend. The first was the closing of 50 schools—a move that CPS officials and Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s appointed Chicago Board of Education claimed would result in additional resources for all remaining schools. In the first year alone, 31 of 50 receiving schools did not have a professionally staffed library. Only one out of the 4 receiving schools that had brand new library spaces built had enough funds to hire a librarian. The second event was the Board’s decision to shift to a per pupil/per school funding model. Again, CPS officials and the Board claimed this was necessary to distribute adequate resources across the district. In fact, the results have been devastating. Neighborhood schools lost millions of dollars and principals were forced to cut critical positions, including those of school librarians. Today, only 38 high

School libraries are the hub of vibrant learning communities and, like any classroom, require facilitation by trained, licensed professionals.



schools have licensed librarians. We believe this is in direct conflict with the district’s mission to prepare students for success as 21st century learners.

School libraries are the hub of vibrant learning communities and, like any classroom, require facilitation by trained, licensed professionals. School librarians nurture a love of reading and provide instruction on the continuum of literacy skills—from reading to research to the creation and exchange of information. In today’s information society, school librarians are critical partners in educating our students. More than 20 studies confirm that students

in schools with professional librarians perform better in assessments of reading and writing, even when adjusted for socio-economic status and other variables. Moreover, with a poverty rate well above 80 percent, we know that our school libraries are often the first point of consistent access to print and digital resources for our students.

Last summer, Chi School Librarians brought our concerns to the Board of Education and the media, and we continue to raise the importance of having professionally staffed libraries for our students. We do not advocate for the restoration of school librarians

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100%

of CPS schools are required to include literacy in their improvement plans. Strong school libraries are the foundation of strong literacy programs; school librarians support information needs and integrate literacy development across the curriculum and across grade levels.

More than 50% of Chicago Public Schools do not have a certified librarian. This is a sharp decline in professionally staffed libraries in the past two years, yet the Board of Education promised that school closings would result in better resources for our students.



More than 20 research studies show a direct link between professionally staffed school libraries and increased student performance.

How can we fund

school libraries?

Stephen Krashen,

retired professor and

nationally recognized reading expert, recommends reducing

spending for standardized

testing and using those funds

towards quality school libraries.

87% of CPS students are from low-income families. For many of our children, the school library is the first place they have regular, safe access to books.



100%

of Chicago's elite private schools have professionally staffed libraries. A school library program is integral to every child's education and shouldn't be available only to students in wealthy schools.



Sources:
American Association of School Librarians. "Strong School Libraries Build Strong Students." 2013.
Chicago Public Schools. "Stats and Facts." February, 2014. http://www.cps.edu/about_cps/at-a-glance/pages/stats_and_facts.aspx
Chicago Teachers Union Research Department.
Krashen, Stephen. "Protecting Students Against the Effects of Poverty: Libraries." New England Reading Association Journal. 2011.

Infographic created by @ChiSLibrarians.
Facebook: Chi School Librarians
Undated August, 2014.

at the cost of other essential positions. In fact, we assert that there are funds within CPS that should be redirected to the schools and classrooms so that every child has access to essential resources. First and foremost, we need to reduce the inordinate amount of money spent at the school, network and district levels on over-testing our students. This is money spent that does not benefit students. We also believe the Office of Innovation and Incubation should be eliminated and other district offices, such as Public Relations, reduced. Finally, we support the Union's call for the Board of Education to renegotiate some of its ill-ad-

vised and unfavorable borrowing arrangements. Clearly, this map demonstrates the continued inadequacy and lack of equity in distribution of resources across our district. With per pupil funding, it is impossible for any school in the district to offer the comprehensive educational program—including school libraries—that we know our children need to be successful. We need to move beyond the "if" and get back to the "how" to make essential resources available to all of our students. [CTU](http://www.ctu.edu)

The CTU Librarian Committee advocates for a certified teacher-librarian in every Chicago public school.



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How Do Teachers Choose an Appropriate Text for Their Students? A Quick Guide to Understanding Text Complexity

BY **THERESA INSALACO-DECICCO**, M.ED., NBCT

Regardless of your grade level, content area, or discipline, in some way you are probably responsible for implementing the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards. Because of this, many teachers are now incorporating the “close reading” process in their instruction. Additionally, the CPS Framework for Teaching makes it clear that teachers at the Proficient and Distinguished levels incorporate disciplinary literacy in their planning and instruction and teach using “complex” texts. In order to determine if a text is complex, you need to analyze the text, focusing on these three aspects: quantitative (sentence length, word frequency, and text cohesion), qualitative (language, knowledge demands, text structure, levels of meaning), and reader and task considerations (does this text make sense to use with the group of students with whom you plan to use it). Then you decide when and how you will use the text in your instruction.

However, many teachers struggle to find complex texts that align to their instructional plans. Two common misunderstandings are that the texts teachers have been using for years, or the way they have been using the text in their instruction, no longer will align to the new standards, and that these old texts are not considered complex enough. However, unless you know what a complex text is, it is difficult to know which texts can and should remain part of your repertoire and which texts need to be permanently shelved. In many cases, the texts teachers have been using all along are still appropriate, if those texts/lessons are implemented in the correct way for the correct purpose when teaching specific skills and reading strategies.

As with most educational topics, there are several

Unless you know what a complex text is, it is difficult to know which texts can and should remain part of your repertoire and which texts need to be permanently shelved.

schools of thought on how best to use complex texts, but here is a quick guide to get you started.

- 1. Don't let familiar texts slip away.** Many teachers are afraid that using a text students may have previously read or heard before will negatively impact instruction. Often it is just the opposite! Familiarity with a text gives students a chance to focus on specific passages when in class. Instead of waiting for students to read a text, you can start a class discussion or Socratic Seminar right away using a text previously read in class. You also have the opportunity to scaffold and challenge students immediately at the start of class if you plan to use texts familiar to students (and don't forget to incorporate higher order questions).
- 2. Don't just go with quantitative data from reading level systems to choose a text.** Lexile, Flesch-Kincaid, Fountas & Pinnell, and all the other leveling systems available are neither perfect nor, in isolation, reliable tools for reviewing and selecting texts. Even the CCSS Appendix A issues a warning for using quantitative tools like these alone to determine readability levels of texts. Although many

This article is designed to help teachers master the CPS Framework for Teaching Components 1a, 3c, and ELA CCSS Anchor Standards 1 and 10.

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This course addresses implementation of authentic, timely, and embedded technology use for all practicing K-8th grade classroom teachers. Participants study current technology instruction and its communicative, collaborative, and creative aspects. They analyze and create timely appropriate formative and summative assessment tools, and digital writing avenues and products. Attendees produce learning activities and assessments using embedded technology, analyze how to implement in a classroom setting, and reflect on their practice, instruction, and implementation of effective technology integration. During these Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) sessions, teachers explore and plan the use of technology-based activities and multimedia in support of the Common Core State Standards and the **CPS Framework for Teaching, Components: 1a, 1d, 1e, 2c, 3a, 3b, 3e, and 4d.** Instructor: Michelle Nash, NBCT



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standardized test results include a student reading level, it isn't necessarily accurate since students' interests, prior knowledge, and background knowledge, among other qualities, indicate the types of texts they can and will read.

3. **Read the text before you teach it.** It is difficult to teach a text if you don't know it yourself. Look for qualities in the text that you know align to your instructional purpose and student learning objective(s). Decide if the text structure, language features (vocabulary, structure of sentences, and convention use), meaning, and prior/background knowledge demands are appropriate for your purpose. A general rule of thumb for a "close read" is that the reader should be able to get most of the context from the text itself. If you choose a piece that requires the reader to know a lot more than

what is presented in the text, it probably should not be used for a "cold read" or assessment.

4. **Not all texts you teach must be complex.** While you want to ensure that students are exposed to a large amount of complex texts at their grade level, some texts you need and want to use during read-alouds, demonstrations, and for discussion just aren't complex. That's okay! As adults, we read various levels of text on a regular basis—the newspaper, magazines, blogs, etc. Students need to know that everything they read is not going to be analyzed at great lengths and then discussed. Some texts are just read to be read, and the interaction is a one-way street. (Although you might want to take the time to teach students to know the difference!)
5. **Teach students disciplinary literacy.** Historians read texts differently than mathematicians and chemists, etc. While historians will spend more time looking for the time when a piece was written, information about the author, and biases of the era, a mathematician just wants to know if the proof or problem is accurate and if the author listed all of the steps to get the solution in the correct way. If you are a middle-school or high-school teacher, you might find this was part of your own learning process as you became specialized or endorsed in specific subject areas. For generalists, you might want to focus on teaching one or two texts per unit and teach through the lens of that discipline.

Once you get started selecting texts for specific instructional purposes, it is highly recommended that you read more about text complexity from some of the contemporary literacy researchers to expand your knowledge. Tim Shanahan (<http://shanahanonliteracy.com/>) and Grant Wiggins (<https://grantwiggins.wordpress.com/author/grantwiggins/>) write interactive blogs that often focus on this topic; Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey, as well as Kylee Beers and Robert Probst, have entire books for teachers that cover the use of complex text and close reading. **CTU**

Theresa Insalaco-DeCicco, M.Ed., NBCT, is a CTU Quest Center Professional Development Facilitator. For more on this topic and the process of close reading, contact Theresa at (312) 329-6270 or email TheresaInsalaco-DeCicco@ctulocal1.com.

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Celebrating 2014 National Board Certified Teachers

BY **GLORIA HENLLAN-JONES**, NBCT

This year's celebration honoring Chicago Public Schools' most recent class of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), bringing the district's total to more than 2,000 NBCTs, took place on Friday, March 27th, 2015, at the Back of the Yards College Preparatory High School. Eighty-eight new NBCTs and their families, friends, and mentors were welcomed by Principal Patricia Brekke, who spoke of how highly she values the NBCTs on her staff. Lynn Cherkasky-Davis, Chicago Teachers Union Director of Professional Learning and head of the Quest Center's Nurturing Teacher Leadership program which supports National Board Certification (NBC) for all CPS teachers, served as mistress of ceremonies.

CTU President Karen Lewis, herself an NBCT, welcomed the new NBCTs, via video, to this advanced level of certification. She congratulated the teachers who completed the rigorous certification

process over the past one, two, or three years, which culminated in a series of pedagogical knowledge and content area exams, and the development of a portfolio that included videos of their teaching, analyses of their students' work showing growth over time, reflections on their practice, and highlights of their contributions to the profession, their work with families and community, and how their own professional learning led to student learning. President Lewis said "going through the process of deep, deep professional development and reflection that is required to become an NBCT is an outward sign of the commitment you have made to your students, your colleagues, and yourselves." She encouraged them to become activists and lobbyists in the fight for continuation of the state's financial support for National Board Certification in the face of Governor Bruce Rauner's education budget cuts that include funding for NBC application fees. She thanked CPS for recognizing the value National Board Certified Teachers

bring to the district and contributing financial resources for candidate support.

The NBCTs were also honored by Peggy Brookins, NBCT, Executive Vice-President of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, in her keynote speech, and by Dr. Paulette Poncelet, CPS Chief of Educator Effectiveness. Joe Clark and Adam Ramirez, NTL Class of 2014 NBCTs, shared their successful journeys through the NBC process. Adam also movingly remembered his teaching colleague Dan Greenfield, an NBCT and long-time mentor of NBC math candidates including Adam; sadly, Dan passed away last year as Adam and his cohort completed the certification process.

In addition to the new NBCTs, 41 CPS teachers were recognized for renewing their National Board

Certification, initially earned 10 years ago. The evening's enjoyment was heightened by delicious hors d'oeuvres provided by CPS Culinary and Hospitality Program students, and by music from the CPS Advanced Arts Jazz Combo students. The names of the new NBCTs can be found at <http://ow.ly/LByjr>. **CTU**

Gloria Henllan-Jones, NBCT is the CTU Quest Center National Board Certification Project Director.

CPS NBCTs receive a yearly stipend of \$1,875+ and preference for CPS leadership opportunities. The Chicago Teachers Union manages all NBC initiatives for the Chicago Public Schools. If you are interested in this advanced certification, please visit our website at <http://www.ctunet.com/pd> or write nationalboard@ctulocal1.com.

▶ **The CPS 2014 class of National Board Certified Teachers received a pin, certificate and a sign for their door.**



▶ **Larger than life, CTU President Karen Lewis congratulates the new NBCTs and encourages them to become advocates for their profession.**



▶ **NBCT Joe Clark, Special Education teacher at Northside Learning Center, addresses the class of 2014.**



▶ **Adam Ramirez, 2014 Early Adolescent Math NBCT, with mentors Ryan Peet and Michael Moriarty.**



▶ **Lynn Cherkasky-Davis, CTU Director of Professional Learning, flanked by National Board for Professional Teaching Standards VP Nancy Schwartz (left) and Executive VP Peggy Brookins.**



▶ **Culinary students prepare hors d'oeuvres for the 300 guests.**



All photos: Nathan Goldbaum



GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY™

Advance your career faster than you imagined. Educators who are certified from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBCT) can transfer up to 12 credits toward a Master of Education degree from Grand Canyon University.

GRADUATE IN LESS TIME AND ENJOY:

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MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS:

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- Secondary Education
- Special Education
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- TESOL

▶ **Shape the future and learn more at gcu.edu/CTU**

Grand Canyon University is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. (800-621-7440; <http://hlcommission.org/>). For more information about our graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed the program and other important information, please visit our website at gcu.edu/disclosures. Please note, not all GCU programs are available in all states and in all learning modalities. Program availability is contingent on student enrollment. 15COEE0076



Chicago Teachers Union Scholarship Awards

Karen GJ Lewis, President

Awarded to the daughters and sons of CTU members

In honor of

Jacqueline B. Vaughn CTU president from 1984 to 1994, vice president from 1972 to 1984, recording secretary and field representative from 1968 to 1972. President of the Illinois federation of Teachers from 1989 to 1994. Vice president of the American Federation of teachers and Illinois State AFL-CIO. Initiated education reform and restructuring initiatives through the establishment of the CTU Quest Center.

John M. Fewkes First CTU president from 1937 to 1941 and from 1947 to 1966. President of the American Federation of Teachers, 1942 to 1943. Signed original CTU charter in 1937 amalgamating five small unions into Local 1 of the American Federation of Teachers.

Jonathan G. Kotsakis CTU assistant to the president for education issues and field representative from 1972 to 1994. Under the leadership and guidance of President Jacqueline B. Vaughn, he spearheaded the CTU Quest Center for restructuring and reform.

Robert M. Healey CTU president from 1972 to 1984, financial secretary from 1968 to 1972. President of the Illinois Federation

of Teachers from 1971 to 1989. Vice president of the American Federation of Teachers. President and secretary-treasurer of Chicago Federation of Labor from 1984 to 1994.

Charles E. Usher An active member of the Chicago Teachers Union and more than thirty year teacher in Chicago Public Schools. Served as member of the CTU House of Delegates and as a delegate to several conventions of the American Federation of Teachers and the Illinois Federation of Teachers. Career education teacher at Forte Dearborn School.

Mary J. Herrick First editor of the *Chicago Union Teacher*. Vice president of the American Federation of Teachers. Signed original CTU charter in 1937 amalgamating five small unions into Local 1 of the American Federation of Teachers.

Ernestine Cain Brown CTU Functional vice president for teacher assistants, field representative for paraprofessionals, and finally assistant to the president for paraprofessionals. Retired from the Chicago Teachers Union in 1993.

David M. Peterson Chief CTU lobbyist from 1972 to 2001 and was highly respected on the local, state and national levels. Helped draft legislation which benefitted the working men and women of the Chicago Teachers Union, the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers.

John E. Desmond CTU president from 1966 to 1972, vice president, treasurer and legislative director. Secured collective bargaining right in 1966 and negotiated first CTU contract in 1967. Vice president of the American Federation of teachers and Illinois State AFL-CIO.

William "Bill" Buchanan Bill was a Board employee for 24 years, teaching math and special education at Farragut and Foreman High Schools, and later as a math coach for teachers throughout Chicago.

Glendis Hambrick CTU treasurer from 1972 to 1984. Vice president of the Illinois Federation of Teachers. Special vocational and occupational scholarship established to honor his leadership in this area.

FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT AND IN ORDER TO AVOID DELAYS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS, we ask you to carefully read and complete the steps applicants must follow to be considered for a scholarship.

Awards

The Chicago Teachers Union shall present regular, vocational and special education awards each in the amount of \$1,000.

Eligibility

The Awards are entirely unrestricted as to race, religion, political affiliation, or choice of accredited college, university, business, trade, or vocational school. The applicant must be a son or daughter of a currently employed, active member in good standing of the Chicago Teachers Union, or a son or daughter of a deceased member who was in good standing with the Chicago Teachers Union at

the time of death, and a high school senior who will graduate this year before August 31, 2015. Special education student are eligible for all scholarships and are encouraged to apply.

How to apply

Please make certain that the application is completed in full, and that it is signed by the applicant AND the parent or guardian so that membership in good standing can be verified before presentation to the Scholarship Committee of the Chicago Teachers Union.

The following information must be submitted with this application:

1. Transcript including class rank.
2. Extracurricular activities record.
3. College entrance test scores. (Write "none" if applicant has not taken any test.)

4. List of all monetary scholarships or awards received. (Write "none" if no awards have been received.)
5. Applicant's work employment record, including type of work, approximate number of years, approximate hours per week. (Write "none" if applicant has no work employment record.)
6. A 500-word or less, typed, statement from applicant—"What I hope to gain from a post-secondary education."
7. Statement of recommendation from a teacher, dean, counselor or other school educator.
8. For special education—proof of enrollment in a special education program from a teacher, dean, counselor or administrator.

INCOMPLETE INFORMATION WILL BE CAUSE FOR REJECTION.

This application must be postmarked or delivered to the CTU office before 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 4, 2015. The completed forms should be mailed to: Scholarship Committee, Chicago Teachers Union, 222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 400, Chicago Illinois 60654-1016.

All winners will be notified by letter of the committee's decision by Friday, May 18, 2015. A list of the winners will be published in the *Chicago Union Teacher*. The Material received by the committee will become the property of the committee and will not be returned.

Application for Scholarship Award

Please print or use a typewriter.

Name of applicant _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Name of high school now attending _____

Address of high school _____

Expected date of graduation _____

Name of parent/guardian who is/was a CTU member _____

School where parent/guardian is/was assigned _____

Address of CTU member _____

I hereby apply for a Chicago Teachers Union scholarship award and agree to abide by the decision of the scholarship committee. I understand that the decision of the scholarship committee is final.

(Signature of parent/guardian who is/was CTU member in good standing)

(Signature of applicant)

Don't forget to include a 500-word, or less, typed statement on "What I hope to gain from a post-secondary education."

Chicago Shakespeare Theater Now Accepting Applications for “Bard Core” Professional Learning Seminar

When Reading Gets Tough...Play!

BY CHICAGO SHAKESPEARE THEATER

Shakespeare remains a cornerstone in our urban classrooms. His portrayal of our human nature is encompassing and timeless, his language unparalleled, and his plays bridge generations and cultures. But Shakespeare does pose a real challenge—to students and to teachers alike—and his work is some of the most difficult that a high school student is required to read.

Chicago Shakespeare Theater (CST) on Navy Pier supports teachers approaching this challenge through “Bard Core Curriculum: Reading into Shakespeare”—a free, 30-hour course for English teachers at non-selective CPS high schools—that introduces drama-based strategies for engaging all students, including struggling and reluctant readers, diverse learners and English language learners, with Shakespeare and other challenging texts.

Over the course of eight morning sessions (one week in summer and three Saturdays interspersed throughout the school year), teachers practice a range of skills used in the rehearsal room to break open Shakespeare’s text and engage with it actively and creatively, combining theater practices with best practices in reading—in Shakespeare and beyond. With instruction by curriculum and reading experts, as well as educator artists and structured peer-learning, teachers work toward mastery of these skills through “on-your-feet” instruction, as they actively explore the implications of these strategies for their own students and teaching environment.

Each year, Bard Core’s 24 participants are overwhelmingly recruited by the word-of-mouth from their own colleagues who have graduated from this uniquely dynamic and powerful seminar. According to one 2014-15 Bard Core participant, an English teacher at Lake View High School, “Being able to apply drama-based strategies in class, and not just talk about them, was where the rubber hit the road. The impact of bringing these strategies into the class has been felt by both my

students and myself. Engagement and understanding both grew in ways that they had not before.”


Each Bard Core session is aligned with CPS learning objectives and supports teachers’ development in several domains of the CPS Framework for Teaching. “I can see my students being more engaged while taking responsibility for their learning. I feel more confident as a teacher and a risk taker in the classroom and because of this, my students perform better,” attested a Bard Core 2014-15 participant, an English teacher at Hyde Park Academy.

The seminar begins with a week-long summer workshop, August 3-7, 2015, and concludes with three Saturday mornings on October 3, December 5 and March 19, 2016. In the summer, teachers will build a toolkit of strategies, which includes text work, scene work, arts-integrated writing, improvisation and active reading strategies; Saturday mornings will bridge Bard Core lessons with participants’ unique classroom experiences.

Teachers who complete the seminar receives 20 free tickets to a student matinee of Chicago Shakespeare’s abridged *Twelfth Night* in March 2016. Each year, teachers participating in Bard Core have earned Lane and CPDU credits.

Teachers are encouraged to participate with a colleague from their school. To foster service to schools across the city, no more than two teachers per school are accepted. Now entering its twelfth successful year, Bard Core has served more than 200 CPS teachers in over 60 high schools across the city.

Interested teachers are asked to submit a short application form and participate in a brief phone interview; a \$50 deposit then secures one’s place and is refunded on the seminar’s first day.

For high school English teachers who wish to apply, call 312-595-5678 or email mtopper@chicagoshakes.com to request an application. 



Procedures for Filling Vacancies for Functional Groups

There is one high school teacher vacancy and one elementary school teacher vacancy.

All voting members of the functional groups of the House of Delegates may vote for one (1) candidate for each vacancy, no matter how many are nominated.

The procedure is as follows:

1. Nominations for vacancies shall be advertised in the Chicago Union Teacher preceding nomination meeting, on the CTU website and in the meeting notice bulletin for the month of the election.
2. Only those members of the House of Delegates, who represent the functional group to be voted on, may nominate, second the nomination and vote. Only persons in the functional group may be nominated. Associate delegates may vote. City delegates will sign in as high school or elementary.
3. At the May and June House of Delegates meetings, citywide delegates will be asked to declare which functional group they will vote with – elementary or high school.
4. Nominations will be taken from the floor and seconded from the floor.
5. Voting shall take place at the June House of Delegates meeting following the nomination meeting.
6. Pre-printed ballots will be provided by the Rules-Elections Committee. To prioritize the order, the Rules-Elections Committee will put names in a hat and list them in order of selection. Elected members of the Executive Board may vote within their functional group. Non-voting members of Executive Board may not vote, unless they are a delegate.
7. At the meeting where the voting is to take place, each nominee shall have the opportunity to speak for one minute in the order in which they appear on the ballot, if they so desire.

8. Delegates will be called to the voting area to pick up the ballots, have their badges checked and sign the voters’ signature list.

9. Voters will place cast ballots in boxes at the designated locations.


10. When voting is complete, Rules-Elections Committee members will count the ballots.

11. Up to two representatives may be present during the counting. The candidate may be one of the representatives.

12. The results will be given to the President for announcement at the end of the meeting.

13. In case the candidate does not receive a majority (50 percent plus 1) of the votes cast, there will be a runoff for the position at the next House meeting. Whichever candidates receive 50 percent plus 1 will be automatically seated as functional vice presidents. Candidates in the runoff election will be those who received the greatest number of votes. The number of candidates in the runoff election will be equal to twice the number of remaining vacancies for the position. Runoff ballots will list candidates in order of the number of votes received and beginning with the highest number of votes. For example, if four (4) high school Functional Vice President’s vacancies remain after the initial election, the eight candidates who received the greatest number of votes (excluding the candidate who received 50% + 1 of the vote) will participate in the runoff. In the case of a runoff, each remaining nominee will be given one minute to speak in the order in which they appear on the ballot, at the meeting where the runoff voting is taking place.

14. Prior to the House of Delegates meeting where voting will take place, all eligible candidate names will be posted on the CTU website in alphabetical order by functional groups.

The Rules-Elections committee requests that the voting take place at the meeting as early as possible. 



Why Teachers of Diverse Learners Need a Union

BY **BENJAMIN J. COYLE**

When I decided to pursue my career in education, I, like many other potential teachers, was directed towards being a special education teacher by both current teachers and my academic advisors. They told me a special education certification almost guaranteed employment and job security at any school of my choice. I quickly realized early in my career that special education required skill and passion and is not simply a “job.” I also realized that the security I was promised was only as strong as the union that was supporting me.

Equality

In Chicago, we hear about how important “choice” is for students and parents. The same can be said for teachers. The Chicago Teachers Union has championed the efforts of equitable school funding and diversity of socioeconomic groups in our public schools. The CTU promotes having necessary resources and wrap-around services in all schools so that the gap

between academic ability and achievement closes. Special education teachers, in particular, count on these services to be in place so that our training and commitment to our students’ education becomes the primary focus of our day.

Advocate Without Fear

Teachers unions have historically fought for educators’ First Amendment rights. Whether we reflect on the 1930s and the American Federation of Teachers’ fight against requiring teachers to take an anti-Communist oath, or speak out currently against the U.S. Department of Education’s standardized testing procedures, the union has committed to helping teachers express concerns without intimidation and (or) penalty. Teachers are not privy to controlling the school’s budget or writing legislation that affects us; consequently, the balance of power tips heavily in favor of whatever administration, be it local or national, that affects our daily performance. If special education teachers are not able to advocate for their students, then they are subject to any inexperienced or transient

▲
Photo:
woodleywonderworks
from Flickr

power that is placed over them by people whose motivation may not always be in the right place. It is our duty to speak for those who cannot advocate for themselves, but this cannot be done if retaliation and fear are a constant presence.

Professionalism

We’ve all heard the critics pontificate about how teachers unions only exist to help funnel money to political parties or protect teachers. There could be no statement further from the truth. The CTU provides professional development activities year-round so teachers learn new techniques and constantly improve their practice. I have attended informative professional development from both Chicago Public Schools and CTU concerning special education issues—including laws and classroom management. The CTU presents its development and data from a teachers’ perspective. I have a personal distaste for people who are there to “develop” me, when they have never actually taught a day in a public school classroom. I prefer to take advice from those who can tell me what they’ve successfully done, then tell me what I need to do to be successful.

Exposing “Reform”

Was there anything more gratifying than when House Bill 3232 was signed into law in the state of Illinois in July of 2014? The CTU flexed its political muscle by encouraging politicians to support fairness and accountability for charter schools. No longer would charter schools be able to siphon tax dollars from our community without being accountable for their policies and procedures. This was particularly important to special education, because many of our classrooms would become more populated if charter schools found reasons for dismissing students with special needs or accommodations. What’s worse is that the charter schools kept the tax money provided specifically for these children, even as the students returned to public high schools. When special education teachers were asked to do more with less, the CTU began to use its media and political power to let the public know what was happening. As public outrage grew, politicians began to make the right decisions for our public schools and communities. [CTU](#)

Benjamin J. Coyle is a CTU delegate at Hubbard High School and a PAC/Big Bargaining Committee Member.



NURTURING TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The **National Board Certification** Support Program
for CPS teachers/counselors/librarians

Learn how you can earn an extra \$1875+ a year

Accepting applications for 2015-16 school year

ATTEND OUR INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

4:45 – 8:15 p.m.

Chicago Teachers Union

Quest Center

222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 400

Chicago, IL 60654



Find out about pursuing National Board Certification, Illinois Master Teacher Certification, and the role of the Quest Center in supporting Chicago Public School teachers through the process.

Requirements:

- 3 years teaching at current certificate level
- 3 years commitment to teaching in CPS
- Successful completion of professional profile

Register Online:

at ctunet.com under the "Quest Center" tab

Transportation:

Brown Line comes into the 2nd floor of the Merchandise Mart

After 3 p.m. parking - \$11 at MartParc Orleans, indoor self-park lot on the northeast corner of Orleans and Hubbard.



NATIONAL BOARD
for Professional Teaching Standards



What is Nurturing Teacher Leadership?

Nurturing Teacher Leadership is a 2 year program of professional development and candidate support that prepares CPS teachers for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. It includes:

- ✓ Weekly professional development and small group facilitation
- ✓ Collaboration with a cohort of other CPS teachers going through the certification process – professional learning community
- ✓ Technical support
- ✓ Assessment Center preparation simulations
- ✓ Individual mentoring
- ✓ Professional lending library
- ✓ Computer lab access

NTL: The sole support program for CPS teachers

The Chicago Teachers Union Quest Center's **Nurturing Teacher Leadership (NTL)** program offers a small supportive group setting in which National Board Certification (NBC) candidates work collaboratively and are mentored by National Board Certified Teachers. We read, study and discuss literature and research on current issues and concepts in education, applying our new or refined insights to our teaching practice. We provide multiple resources, support, and incentives. Our focus is on developing, improving, and validating teaching, thereby increasing student achievement.

During weekly meetings, successful teaching practices are recognized and shared. NTL facilitates all aspects of the intensive new 2 year NBC process. We assist teachers with descriptive, analytical, interpretative, and reflective writing required for the National Board portfolio. We provide technical assistance for required documentation of your work, facilitation with analyzing student work, professional development on differentiation of instruction, individual coaching and mentoring, and preparation for the rigorous Content Knowledge Assessment Center exercises. NTL supports all CPS teachers throughout the entire certification process, providing technical, professional, intellectual and moral support. After achieving National Board Certification, opportunities are available for you to support others—at a professional wage. The CTU Quest Center is *teachers working for teachers* to improve the achievement of Chicago's children.

What is National Board Certification?

NBPTS Certification offers teachers the opportunity for career advancement. It:

- ✓ provides an advanced credential consistent with what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do,
- ✓ certifies that you have the status of one who has met professional teaching standards,
- ✓ certifies that you have prepared a professional portfolio demonstrating your teaching abilities,
- ✓ certifies that you have fulfilled the rigorous Assessment Center exercises, and
- ✓ entitles you to receive the Illinois Master Certificate endorsement on your Professional Educator License

What are the Benefits of NTL?

- ✓ 94% success rate
- ✓ annual pensionable cash award - \$1,875+
- ✓ National Board Certified Teacher mentors
- ✓ Illinois Master Certification
- ✓ 39 graduate credits offered
- ✓ opportunity for a Masters Degree in Teaching and Learning
- ✓ 12 CPS Lane Placement credits awarded
- ✓ professional learning community
- ✓ 10 day Summer Institute August 3rd – 14th from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- ✓ public recognition
- ✓ 1st consideration for Consulting Teacher roles
- ✓ coaching incentives
- ✓ teacher leadership roles
- ✓ becoming a better teacher



LCD:oteg-743-tr

For more information on **Nurturing Teacher Leadership**, or to register for the informational meeting, visit us online at www.ctunet.com/pd or contact Lynn Cherkasky-Davis at (312) 329-6274 or LynnCherkasky-Davis@ctulocal1.com.

For more information on **Nurturing Teacher Leadership**, or to register for the informational meeting, visit us online at www.ctunet.com/pd or contact Lynn Cherkasky-Davis at (312) 329-6274 or LynnCherkasky-Davis@ctulocal1.com.



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SUITE 200 FAX: (312) 263-6935
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60631 WWW.BK-CPA.COM

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Chicago Teachers Union
Chicago, Illinois

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of Chicago Teachers Union, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of June 30, 2014 and 2013, and the related consolidated statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Chicago Teachers Union as of June 30, 2014 and 2013, and the changes in their net assets and their cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Bansley and Kiener, L.L.P.

Certified Public Accountants

March 26, 2015

MEMBERS: AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CPA'S • ILLINOIS CPA SOCIETY
AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE BDO ALLIANCE USA



CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
JUNE 30, 2014 AND 2013

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$12,002,166	\$11,292,460
Certificates of deposit	433,951	432,847
Receivables		
Due from Foundation	164,135	149,452
Due from affiliates	1,031,865	1,400,962
Other receivables	48,986	9,230
Leasehold improvement allowance	415,980	415,980
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	137,462	252,650
Total current assets	<u>14,234,545</u>	<u>13,953,581</u>
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, net	<u>1,585,681</u>	<u>1,587,775</u>
Total	<u>\$15,820,226</u>	<u>\$15,541,356</u>
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current maturities of capital lease obligations	\$ 114,820	\$ 110,632
Accounts payable	1,652,626	3,366,254
Accrued expenses	1,323,990	1,294,923
Deferred income	6,920	44,966
Total current liabilities	<u>3,098,356</u>	<u>4,816,775</u>
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES		
Capital lease obligations, less current maturities	287,646	335,579
Deferred rent	2,279,955	2,398,872
Total long-term liabilities	<u>2,567,601</u>	<u>2,734,451</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted		
Designated	227,881	222,947
Undesignated	9,192,631	7,318,975
Temporarily restricted	731,757	446,208
Permanently restricted	2,000	2,000
Total net assets	<u>10,154,269</u>	<u>7,990,130</u>
Total	<u>\$15,820,226</u>	<u>\$15,541,356</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
 YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2014 AND 2013

	2014			2013		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted
SUPPORT AND REVENUE						
Support and revenue						
Dues and fees	\$ 25,682,996	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26,166,586	\$ -	\$ -
IFT organizational and other assistance	2,841,825	332,951	-	2,894,858	355,209	-
AFT reimbursement and special assistance	166,747	-	-	623,391	-	-
Contributions	4,721	188,068	-	290,206	175,615	-
Interest	(9,208)	1	-	5,373	221	-
Gain (loss) on disposition of equipment	36,010	-	-	-	-	-
Grant revenue	71,574	149,720	-	34,334	-	-
Tuition	1,129,003	-	-	38,403	-	-
Other	1,514,194	(1,514,194)	-	31,383	337,372	-
Net assets released from restrictions	30,308,959	285,549	-	1,040,658	(1,040,658)	-
Total support and revenue	12,971,484	-	-	31,123,192	8,387	-
EXPENSES						
Affiliations						
Program services						
Salaries	3,386,700	-	-	3,579,583	-	-
Employee benefits	797,746	-	-	764,793	-	-
Travel and staff expenses	417,353	-	-	344,752	-	-
Collective bargaining	337,388	-	-	716,170	-	-
Meetings	251,896	-	-	538,976	-	-
Defense	1,050,007	-	-	1,187,405	-	-
Publications	376,561	-	-	441,394	-	-
Death benefits	11,000	-	-	15,000	-	-
Quest center expenses	945,584	-	-	627,604	-	-
Political action committee	632,314	-	-	455,808	-	-
All other	238,049	-	-	668,334	-	-
Total program services	8,444,398	-	-	9,339,819	-	-
Administrative and general						
Salaries	3,018,293	-	-	2,934,110	-	-
Employee benefits	1,165,467	-	-	982,182	-	-
Travel and staff expenses	102,769	-	-	122,289	-	-
Rent and utilities	1,220,517	-	-	1,180,557	-	-
Telephone	75,314	-	-	100,262	-	-
Office supplies and expense	449,656	-	-	479,342	-	-
Depreciation and amortization	252,145	-	-	264,107	-	-
Conventions and conferences	111,746	-	-	148,514	-	-
Executive board	33,858	-	-	34,254	-	-
Election expenses	-	-	-	318,337	-	-
Professional fees	519,093	-	-	597,075	-	-
Interest expense	17,929	-	-	27,230	-	-
Insurance	47,700	-	-	37,394	-	-
Total administrative and general	7,014,487	-	-	7,225,653	-	-
Total expense	28,430,369	-	-	29,855,888	-	-
Increase in net assets	1,878,990	285,549	-	1,269,304	8,387	-
Net assets, beginning of year	7,541,922	446,208	2,000	6,272,618	437,821	2,000
Net assets end of year	\$ 9,420,912	\$ 731,757	\$ 2,000	\$ 7,541,922	\$ 446,208	\$ 2,000

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
 CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
 YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2014 AND 2013

	2014	2013
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Increase in net assets	\$ 2,164,139	\$ 1,277,691
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	252,145	264,107
(Gain) loss on disposition of equipment	9,208	(34,334)
Deferred rent	(118,917)	(88,654)
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) decrease in:		
Due from Foundation	(14,683)	(12,428)
Due from affiliates	369,097	(296,063)
Other receivables	(39,756)	70,104
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	115,188	(178,712)
Increase (decrease) in:		
Accounts payable	(1,713,628)	1,220,090
Accrued expenses	29,067	(174,813)
Deferred income	(38,046)	42,880
Total adjustments	(1,150,325)	812,177
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,013,814	2,089,868
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of property and equipment	(191,040)	(211,599)
Purchase of certificates of deposit	(1,033,145)	(831,745)
Proceeds from maturities of certificates of deposit	1,032,041	829,937
Net cash used in investing activities	(192,144)	(213,407)
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Reduction of capital lease obligations	(111,964)	(109,486)
Net cash used in financing activities	(111,964)	(109,486)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	709,706	1,766,975
Cash and cash equivalents		
Beginning of year	11,292,460	9,525,485
End of year	\$12,002,166	\$11,292,460
Supplemental disclosures of cash flow information		
Cash payment for:		
Interest	\$ 17,929	\$ 27,230
Non-cash investing and financing activities:		
Obligations under capital lease for the acquisition of property and equipment	\$ 84,301	\$ 389,400
Termination of capital lease	\$ 16,082	\$ 130,086

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 1 – Nature of Activities and Significant Accounting Policies

Nature of Activities

The Chicago Teachers Union (“Union”) is an organization whose objective is to improve the status of teachers, educational workers and other workers in the City of Chicago.

The Chicago Teachers Union Political Action Committee (Committee) was organized on January 4, 1975. The Committee is comprised of the officers and a trustee of the Union. Contributions to the Committee are voluntary from Union members.

Principles of Consolidation

The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the Union and the Committee after elimination of all significant interfund balances and transactions.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions. These estimates and assumptions affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

For purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, the Union considers all cash accounts, which are not subject to withdrawal restrictions or penalties, and all money market funds to be cash equivalents.

Promises to Give

Conditional promises to give are recognized when the conditions on which they depend are substantially met.

Property and Depreciation

Depreciation of property and equipment is computed principally on the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

	Years
Office equipment	5-7
Leasehold improvements	15

Maintenance and repairs of property and equipment are charged to operations and major improvements are capitalized. When assets (including equipment under capital lease) are sold, retired or otherwise disposed of, the cost and accumulated depreciation are removed from the accounts and any resulting gain or loss is included in income.

Deferred Income

Deferred income represents grant and other income received in the current year that is applicable to the subsequent year.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 1 – Nature of Activities and Significant Accounting Policies (Continued)

Restricted and Unrestricted Revenue and Support

Donor-restricted support is reported as an increase in temporarily or permanently restricted net assets, depending on the nature of the restriction. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the Statement of Activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Death Benefits

The Union provides a discretionary death benefit for beneficiaries of individuals who are Union members at the time of death. The benefit is a one-time payment ranging from \$300 to \$1,000 based on the individual’s length of membership. The Union’s policy is to expense these benefits as they are incurred. Death benefit expense for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013 was \$11,000 and \$15,000, respectively.

Income Tax Status

The Union is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Chicago Teachers Union Political Action Committee, as a political organization under Section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code, is exempt from income taxes with the exception of its net investment income. No provision for income taxes was required for 2014 or 2013. The Union’s and Committee’s tax filings for the prior three years are subject to review by the IRS, generally for three years after the returns have been filed.

Evaluation of Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through March 26, 2015, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Reclassification

Certain accounts in the prior year financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform with the presentation in the current-year financial statements.

Note 2 – Property and Equipment

Property and equipment at June 30, 2014 and 2013 consist of the following:

	2014	2013
Office equipment	\$5,367,314	\$5,059,617
Office equipment held under capital lease	567,179	567,179
Leasehold improvements	<u>1,402,365</u>	<u>1,398,765</u>
	7,306,200	7,025,561
Less accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>5,751,177</u>	<u>5,558,043</u>
	1,555,023	1,467,518
Construction in progress	-	<u>120,257</u>
	<u>\$1,585,681</u>	<u>\$1,587,775</u>

Implementation of a comprehensive membership database system began in February 2013. The total cost of the database system is approximately \$233,500. This database was completed and implemented in January 2014.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION

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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 3 – Cash and Certificates of Deposit Concentration

The Union maintains cash balances and certificates of deposit at several banks. Accounts at these institutions may from time to time exceed amounts insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Note 4 – Due from Chicago Teachers Union Foundation, Inc.

The Union is affiliated with the Chicago Teachers Union Foundation, Inc. (Foundation). Major transactions with the Foundation include payment of individual scholarships and related expenses on behalf of the Foundation. The amount due from the Foundation at June 30, 2015 and 2014 is \$164,135 and \$149,452, respectively.

Note 5 – Leases

Operating Lease

During May, 2009, the Union renegotiated its lease agreement for office space which, among other matters, extended the expiration date from October 31, 2014 to October 31, 2021. As an inducement, the lessor agreed to provide the Union an allowance of \$975,854 to be used for certain leasehold improvements and monthly rental payments as detailed in the lease agreement. The monthly rent abatements totaling \$559,874 began on October 1, 2009 and continued through September 30, 2010. The allowance for leasehold improvements totaling \$415,980 must be utilized before the end of the term of the lease.

The operating lease agreement for office space provides that the lessee pay its proportionate share of the operating costs plus a base rental amount. In conformity with accounting requirements, the Union is recognizing the prior deferred rent credit over the combined period of the remainder of the original lease term plus the extended lease term. The Union is recognizing office rent expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Minimum future rental payments under the non-cancelable operating lease which has a remaining term in excess of one year as of June 30, 2014, for each of the next five years and thereafter are as follows:

Year Ending June 30,	Amount
2015	\$ 1,297,026
2016	1,343,172
2017	1,376,751
2018	1,411,170
2019	1,446,449
Thereafter	<u>3,596,934</u>
Total minimum future rental payments	<u>\$10,471,502</u>

Rent expense under these operating leases was \$1,190,275 in 2014 and \$1,155,226 in 2013, net of rental payments received under sublease rental agreements.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION

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NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 5 – Leases (Continued)

The Union leases office space to the Chicago Teachers Union Tower Corporation on a month to month basis at an annual rental of \$5,160 for each of the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013.

Capital Leases

The Union leases office equipment under contracts qualifying as capital leases. Such contracts have original terms between four and six years. The contracts qualifying as capital leases each contain a bargain purchase option. Some of the leases also provide for a monthly charge for equipment maintenance which is included in the lease payment.

The capitalized leased assets included in office equipment at June 30, 2014 and 2013 are detailed as follows:

	2014	2013
Office equipment	\$567,179	\$567,179
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>190,685</u>	<u>144,690</u>
	<u>\$376,494</u>	<u>\$422,489</u>

Minimum future rental payments under capital leases having remaining terms in excess of one year as of June 30, 2014, for each of the next four years and in the aggregate are:

Year Ending June 30,	Amount
2015	\$202,852
2016	195,934
2017	175,182
2018	<u>139,924</u>
Total minimum lease payments	713,892
Less amount representing maintenance	273,490
Less amount representing interest	<u>37,936</u>
Present value of net minimum capital lease payments	402,466
Less current portion of obligations under capital leases	<u>114,820</u>
Obligations under capital leases, excluding current portion	<u>\$287,646</u>

Note 6 – Pension Plans

The Union contributes to various defined contribution pension plans that cover substantially all of the Union's employees. Contribution expense for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, amounted to \$956,351 and \$919,933, respectively, and is based on a percentage of each participating employee's salary.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 7 – Affiliations

The Union is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (“AFT”) and the Illinois Federation of Teachers (“IFT”). Major transactions with these affiliates include receipt of organizational assistance funds and COPE reimbursements from IFT, and special assistance and legal fee reimbursements from AFT. The Union is also required to pay fees to both IFT and AFT based on the number of Union members. The amounts due from affiliates at June 30, 2014 and 2013 are \$1,031,865 and \$1,400,962, respectively.

Note 8 – Designation of Unrestricted Net Assets

As of June 30, 2014 and 2013, the executive committee of the Union had designated \$227,881 and \$222,947, respectively, of unrestricted net assets for selected purposes. Since that amount resulted from an internal designation and is not donor-restricted, it is classified and reported as unrestricted net assets. Designated unrestricted net assets are held in certificates of deposit and money market accounts. Due to the nature of these types of accounts, an investment policy has not been adopted. The following is a summary of activity in designated accounts for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013:

	2014			
	Building	Special Loan	Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Total
Balance, beginning of year	\$108,620	\$21,823	\$92,504	\$222,947
Additions	-	-	4,390	4,390
Interest	381	2	161	544
Expenses	-	-	-	-
Balance, end of year	<u>\$109,001</u>	<u>\$21,825</u>	<u>\$97,055</u>	<u>\$227,881</u>

	2013			
	Building	Special Loan	Deaf and Hard of Hearing	Total
Balance, beginning of year	\$108,241	\$21,821	\$95,923	\$225,985
Additions	-	-	-	-
Interest	379	2	971	1,352
Expenses	-	-	4,390	4,390
Balance, end of year	<u>\$108,620</u>	<u>\$21,823</u>	<u>\$92,504</u>	<u>\$222,947</u>

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Temporarily Restricted Net Assets

A summary of temporarily restricted net assets and net assets released from temporary restriction for the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013 follows:

	2014			
	Beginning Balance	Additions	Net Assets Released	Ending Balance
RAPP Memorial	\$ 9,739	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,739
Financial assistance	-	1,269,800	881,880	387,920
Political action committee	432,392	529,942	632,314	330,020
Thomas H. Reece Scholarship Fund	4,077	1	-	4,078
	<u>\$446,208</u>	<u>\$1,799,743</u>	<u>\$1,514,194</u>	<u>\$731,757</u>

	2013			
	Beginning Balance	Additions	Net Assets Released	Ending Balance
RAPP Memorial	\$ 9,519	\$ 220	\$ -	\$ 9,739
Financial assistance	102,217	482,628	584,845	-
Political action committee	322,004	566,196	455,808	432,392
Thomas H. Reece Scholarship Fund	4,081	1	5	4,077
	<u>\$437,821</u>	<u>\$1,049,045</u>	<u>\$1,040,658</u>	<u>\$446,208</u>

Net assets are released from donor restrictions when the Union incurs expenses satisfying the restricted purposes, or by occurrence of other events specified by the donors.

Following is a summary of temporarily restricted net assets:

- RAPP Memorial – accumulated earnings, which may be used for the benefit of deaf and hard of hearing children attending the public schools of Chicago.
- Financial assistance – contributions to be used by the Union to train teams of educators in fashioning restructured approaches to learning and instruction.
- Political action committee – contributions which have been received from Union members on a voluntary basis to be used by the Union to support candidates in state and local governmental elections.
- Thomas H. Reece Scholarship Fund – contributions which were received from an affiliate to be used by the Union to pay scholarships.

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 9 – Temporarily Restricted Net Assets (Continued)

The Board of Education of the City of Chicago has agreed to provide annual support to the Union in the amount of \$8,000 per National Board Certification candidate, with a minimum of \$300,000 per year for the years 2013 through 2015, for the purposes of professional development and mentoring. The Union received \$1,072,000 and \$300,000 during the years ended June 30, 2014 and 2013, respectively.

Note 10 – Permanently Restricted Net Assets

Permanently restricted net assets in the possession of the Union at June 30, 2014 and 2013 consist of the following:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
RAPP Memorial – earnings on the fund may be used to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing children attending the Chicago public schools	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$2,000</u>

Note 11 – Functional Allocation of Expenses

The costs of providing the various programs and activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the statement of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefited.



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
ON SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Chicago Teachers Union
Chicago, Illinois

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Chicago Teachers Union as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014, and our report thereon dated Month 26, 2015, which expressed an unmodified opinion on those consolidated financial statements, appears on page 1. Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The schedule of functional financial position on page 13 is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or to the consolidated financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the consolidated financial statements as a whole.

Bansley and Kiener, L.L.P.
Certified Public Accountants

March 26, 2015

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SCHEDULE OF FUNCTIONAL FINANCIAL POSITION
June 30, 2014

ASSETS

	General	Building	Special Loan	Deaf and Hard of Hearing	RAPP Memorial	Financial Assistance	Political Action Committee	Thomas H. Reece Scholarship	Grand Total
CURRENT ASSETS									
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 11,218,555	\$ -	\$ 21,825	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 452,195	\$ 300,513	\$ 9,078	\$ 12,002,166
Certificates of deposit	200,059	108,981	-	113,172	11,739	-	-	-	433,951
Receivables									
Due from Foundation	164,135	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	164,135
Due from affiliates	862,553	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,031,865
Other receivables	37,015	20	-	56	-	11,895	-	-	48,986
Due from other funds	841,457	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	841,457
Leasehold improvement allowance	415,980	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	415,980
Prepaid expenses and other current assets	137,462	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	137,462
Total current assets	13,877,216	109,001	21,825	113,228	11,739	464,090	469,825	9,078	14,234,545
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, net									
	1,585,681	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,585,681
Total	\$ 15,462,897	\$ 109,001	\$ 21,825	\$ 113,228	\$ 11,739	\$ 464,090	\$ 469,825	\$ 9,078	\$ 15,820,226

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES									
Current maturities of capital lease obligations	\$ 114,820	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 114,820
Accounts payable	1,613,594	-	-	-	-	39,032	-	-	1,652,626
Due to other funds	643,478	-	-	16,173	-	37,001	139,805	5,000	*
Accrued expenses	1,323,990	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,323,990
Deferred income	6,783	-	-	-	-	137	-	-	6,920
Total current liabilities	3,702,665	-	-	16,173	-	76,170	139,805	5,000	3,098,556
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES									
Capital lease obligations, less current maturities	287,646	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	287,646
Deferred rent	2,279,955	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,279,955
Total long-term liabilities	2,567,601	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,567,601
NET ASSETS									
Unrestricted	-	109,001	21,825	97,055	-	-	-	-	227,881
Designated	9,192,631	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,192,631
Undesignated	-	-	-	-	9,739	387,920	330,020	4,078	731,757
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	2,000	-	-	-	2,000
Permanently restricted	9,192,631	109,001	21,825	97,055	11,739	387,920	330,020	4,078	10,154,269
Total	\$ 15,462,897	\$ 109,001	\$ 21,825	\$ 113,228	\$ 11,739	\$ 464,090	\$ 469,825	\$ 9,078	\$ 15,820,226

* Eliminated in grand total.

In memory of...

2014		February 17	Ruby A. Jackson , McCosh
June 20	Arthur D. Booker , Esmond	February 17	Frances M. Jennings , Hanson Park
September 14	Anne W. Flaska , Fulton	February 17	Jane M. Johnson , Lemoyne
October 2	Marian W. Huffman , Young	February 18	Evelyn S. Adams , Lewis
		February 18	Patricia B. Stevens , Farragut HS
		February 18	Christine Gillet-Stewart , Clemente HS
		February 19	Louis B. Snider , Harlan HS
		February 19	Diane Stamper , Hammond
		February 20	Bernice Sobel , Budlong
		February 22	Ralph Robert Barba , Fulton
		February 23	Margaret Franzman , Stockton
		February 24	Ora J. Bonner , Kozminski
		February 24	Julia Carolyn Shelton , Sullivan
		February 25	Patricia Dukes , Guggenheim
		February 25	Richard A. Jones , Cook County Jail
		February 26	Marcia P. Harris , Jones
		February 27	Ernestine D. Moore , Kelly HS
		February 27	June C. Pappas , Stewart
		February 28	Michael P. Lazaris , Young Magnet HS
		March 1	Henrietta Heinen , Lane Tech HS
		March 1	Jerome J. Laz , Madison
		March 1	Gloria J. Schwartz , Young Magnet HS
		March 1	Mamie Augusta Wilson , Lee
		March 2	Fred D. Hearn , Bowen HS
		March 2	Marcell Elizabeth Hooks , Bouchet Academy
		March 3	Stephanie Biernat , Tonti
		March 3	Arline Gordon , Kenwood HS
		March 3	Francine-Olivia Ermelda Lynch
		March 3	Frank McClenahan , Central Office
		March 3	Ronald R. Schuckert , Sub
		March 5	Evangeline Binkley , McCosh
		March 6	John M. Bean , Disney Magnet
		March 6	Minette K. Brooks , Dyett
		March 6	Bessie M. Davis , Barton
		March 8	Joseph Victor Francis Twarowski , Eberhart
		March 9	Yacoub Y Dr Al-Ubaidi , Gage Park HS
		March 9	Alice H. Harper , Peck
		March 9	Chattie Estellea Henderson , Paderewski
		March 10	Denis H. Gully , Young Magnet HS
		March 10	Ella Ward
		March 10	Leona Williams , Hirsch HS
		March 11	Carol Hirsch , Williams Multiple
		March 11	Anthony Maravilla , Bowen HS
		March 12	Diana S. Burns , Amundsen HS
		March 12	Jorge Gonzalez , Castellanos
		March 12	Morris Gordon , Alex Haley Acad
		March 13	Clifton A. West , Cook Co Juv Det Ctr
		March 14	Barbara June Berry , Mount Greenwood
		March 14	Marie S. Wilson , South Shore HS
		March 15	Mary Patricia Casey , Schurz HS
		March 15	Ellen M. Hardy , Revere
		March 15	Elaine C. Thurau , Shields
		March 16	Alice G. Boland , Twain
		March 16	Charles N. Haverly , Jungman
		March 17	James R. O'Dea , Washburne Trade
		March 19	Eddice M. Young , Pickard
		March 20	Marion C. Krucek , Clissold
		March 24	Dorothy Sullivan , Mt Greenwood
		March 24	Mabel C. Waters , West
		March 25	Michael Frederick , Whitney Young HS
2015		January 7	Gwendolyn R. Ferguson , DuSable HS
January 20	Henry C. Bronars , Cauty	January 20	Ellen B. Kirby , Schneider
January 20	Gerald Woodruff , Curie Metro HS	January 22	Rosemary S. Dowd , Luella
January 22	Evelyn F. Moore , Schurz HS	January 23	Jeanette Jackson , Sherman
January 24	Martha Miller , Sub	January 26	Sunday M. Ikoh , Chopin
January 26	Barbara J. June , Lloyd	January 28	Bennie D. Creed , Westcott
January 29	Mary V. Glavin , Dawes	January 29	Magdaline M. Pappas , Bogan HS
January 30	Joseph Gusic , Dore	January 31	Laura Hudson , Earhart
January 31	Carlos M. Rosa , Office Of Research	January 31	Marjorie S. Siemieniak , Marshall Metro HS
January 31	Ethel Brown-Simmons , Dunbar Voc HS	February 1	Lucia A. Long , Funston
February 1	Emily F. Paul , Sub	February 1	Mitsuru Shimasaki , Peabody
February 1	Elaine C. Murphy , Coleman	February 2	Francisca Caro-Rivera , Jungman
February 3	Manooshak N. Salvador , Prescott	February 3	Doris T. Shepard , Delano
February 3	Edward Bradach , May	February 4	Albert M. Iskander , Gallistel Lang Ac
February 4	William N. Phillips , Morgan Park HS	February 4	Victoria Brierty , Seward
February 5	Arthur Diez , Lake View HS	February 5	Leslie E. Avina , Jackson
February 5	B Leroy Kohutynski , Lane Tech HS	February 6	Ruth R. Kolar , Gershwin
February 6	Jacqueline R. Oliver-Holton , Central Office	February 6	Mary I. Zotti , Lovett
February 7	Margaret M. Dawn , Clemente HS	February 8	Janice A. Armstrong , Phillips Academy
February 8	Ann S. Mark , Medill	February 9	Ann Lorraine Adams , Christopher
February 9	Lorna M. Hymen , Taylor	February 11	Anthony Picciola , Cook County Jail
February 11	Esther M. Klun , Gage Park HS	February 12	Zebedee Taylor , Foster Park
February 12	Valerie M. Mathison , Palmer	February 13	Rosetta A. Daniel , Spaulding HS
February 13	Ruth V. McDonald , Hinton	February 14	Mary C. Finnegan , Sutherland
February 14	Nancy T. Griffin , Marshall HS	February 14	Marna Shapiro , Lincoln Park HS
February 14	Milton Weiner , Field	February 15	Alfred J. Gagnon , Taylor
February 16	Ernest Randall Jones , Lake View HS	February 16	Nancy Ann Kristan , Oriole Park
February 16	Shirley G. Dubois , Bradwell	February 17	