

CORE Calendar

After the House of Delegates Meeting:
Connie's Pizza • 2373 S. Archer Avenue

EVERY FRIDAY, ALL DAY:
WEAR RED for SOLIDARITY

Friday, November 18, evening
Honduran Teachers Speak Out
Go to COREteachers.org for details

Saturday, November 19, 10:00 - 5:00
Social Justice Curriculum Fair
Orozco Elementary, 18th & Damen

Monday, November 21, 4:30 p.m.:
CORE meeting at 3850 S. Wabash

Contract Demands: Fight to Keep Pay and Jobs Smaller Classes and a Broad Curriculum Are Key Demands

Chicago Teachers Union will soon begin talks with the Board of Education over the next contract, which follows the one expiring on June 30, 2012. The keys to winning a good contract will be unity and activity. We demonstrated our power when we showed CPS they couldn't get more than 13 schools to break our current contract despite bribes, threats and illegal tactics. So, what do we hope to win with that power?

see "Contract" page 2

CTU: Class Size Matters

By Jim Cavallero, CORE Issues Editor

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) announced its educational platform with lower class size at the top of the list. Research shows that lower class size plays a significant role in student achievement. CTU an-

see "Class Size" page 4

CPS Backs Down on Illegal Waiver Votes

By Jim Cavallero, CORE Issues Editor

On Friday November 4 the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) announced that the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) would cease any further waiver votes regarding an extended school day this year. The pull back by CPS comes as Attorney General Lisa Madigan was surely going to file an injunction blocking the Chicago Public Schools from extending the longer school day to any

see "Waivers" page 3

School Closings the Next Big Fight

The new law regarding "school actions" won through CORE and CTU's collaboration with State Representative Cynthia Soto and State Senator Iris Martinez last year requires CPS to publish its "hit list" of schools before December 1. CORE cut its teeth fighting closings, turnarounds, phase-outs and consolidations. We are

see "Closings" page 2

CORE and Teachers Score Big Wins on Pension Board of Trustees

By Kimberly Bowsky

Reggie's Bar and Restaurant was the scene of much merrymaking Friday, November 4, 2011, the evening of the Teacher Pension Trustee elections at the Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund. Active teacher candidates Tina Padilla and Ray Wohl received approximately 52% of the vote. The other three candidates received 40% of the vote, collectively. More than 15,000 teachers and clinicians

see "Pension Election" page 3

Closings, *continued from page 1*

gearing up again this year, as CPS clearly wants to continue its failed policies.

We know that “underutilized schools” are simply not as overcrowded as the rest. We know that CPS’s “performance standards” don’t show what actually happens in our schools. We need you to mobilize and testify.

Teachers know when their school might be under the gun. Have you seen suits from downtown sizing up the school? Does your principal have that nervous look? Are you suddenly scrambling to meet even more ridiculous new demands? Now is the time to prepare.

Come to the next CORE meeting on Monday, November 21 at the National Association of Letter Carriers Hall, 3850 South Wabash. We will develop our plan of action to work with the Union and with community groups for school stability and security.



Contract, *continued from page 1*

In the past, our contract demands were pages and pages of strikeouts and additions to the Agreement. We will have those again this year, but CTU’s leadership under the CORE administration sees the need to establish early our priorities and speak them loudly to our members and to the public.

Three clear demands anchor our priorities:

- 1) Maintain our pay and benefits
- 2) Strengthen job security
- 3) Smaller classes and a broad curriculum

1. Pay and Benefits Rahm and Brizard have repeatedly stated their desire to impose “pay for performance” (merit pay) and do away with our lane and step system. Merit pay will hurt learning, as educators are pitted against one another, undermining collaboration.

In no study has merit pay been shown to benefit students significantly and it only serves to divide and weaken our union. We will stand strong against this attempt to base our pay on test scores and favoritism.

2. Job Security CPS’s dramatic increase in E3 termination proceedings as well as the unwarranted layoffs these past two years were the Board’s opening salvos against the Union as we enter negotiations. We have fought and continue to fight over the old contract loophole in Appendix H that allowed CPS to deny laid off teachers their right to work. Tenure and job security allow teachers to defend sound practices against the drill-and-kill madness of corporate-driven “school reform.” It’s good for teachers and for kids.

3. Smaller classes and a broad curriculum Corporate reformers with no sense of reality continually tell us they can improve children’s learning without concern for funding, class size or support. We’ve seen their dead-end proposal: constantly test math and reading, making that the basis for every decision. Our curriculum has narrowed. Our class sizes are among the highest in the state. Parents know that’s no good.

Smaller class sizes and broader curriculum are good for kids, but they also mean more jobs for classroom teachers and instructors like school librarians, gym teachers, world language teachers, and computer teachers.

The key to winning these three big demands and all the other little ones is that we have to know them, repeat them, and organize our schools to stand for them. Be active in your Contract Action Committee. Wear red on Fridays. Support one another. Together we win.



Pension Election, *continued from page 1*

system wide voted for candidates who expressed their dedication to protecting pension investments for educators. To that end, the two CORE candidates visited schools from September through November, spreading that message.

Not only did that message resonate with non-CORE educators, but scores of CORE members joined Ms Padilla and Mr. Wohl in full faith by enlisting members to call, confer with friends, visit schools, arrange “meet the candidate” sessions, and leaflet the city.

Tina and Ray will face an uphill battle against forces in the economy and the Illinois General Assembly, as City Hall pushes to rid educators of their hard-won pension benefits. Ever mindful of this, Ray Wohl told his audiences, “Here’s my check. I never missed a (pension) payment, and neither did you.” Tina Padilla showcased her prior work as a concerned teacher petitioning in Springfield, confronting legislators to educate them about public pension policy.

Jim Ward, a current Retiree Trustee running on the CORE ticket, was re-elected to another term. Congratulations to everyone!

The fight to maintain pension benefits is ongoing, and one we all should take part in. Now we must move ahead with our agenda of making CTPF fight for secure pensions, demand CPS compliance with reporting, and promoting an aggressive legislative agenda in Springfield. ●

Waivers, *continued from page 1*

more schools by unlawful means. Madigan had been authorized by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board (IELRB) on October 20th to file an injunction because it found that CPS had violated fair labor practice by negotiating with individual schools rather than with the collective bargaining agent, the CTU, of the educators affected. An unfair labor practice was filed by the CTU when CPS started asking union members to take waiver votes for an extended day. Schools that voted for the waivers were coerced by means of promised comp days, iPads and favored status with CPS and City Hall. Other schools were threatened with possible closure if they did not vote for an extended day. The CTU victory is also a victory for CPS students as a plan for not just a longer school day but a better school day as the CTU has called for can be planned.

It’s important to note that this could not have happened without the action of rank and file CTU members at the 13 schools that still face an IELRB hearing in December. Members contacted CTU and reported the waiver votes they were being asked to hold and the actions of principals and CPS administrators regarding the votes. Several members came forward and signed their names to the IELRB complaint and provided testimony. We salute our brothers and sisters that stood up to the illegal, union busting tactics of CPS. ●

JOIN CORE!

Help CTU continue to take on corporate privatizers and the Board’s dirty tricks. Go to *coreteachers.org* to join **OR** send the info below with \$35 to:

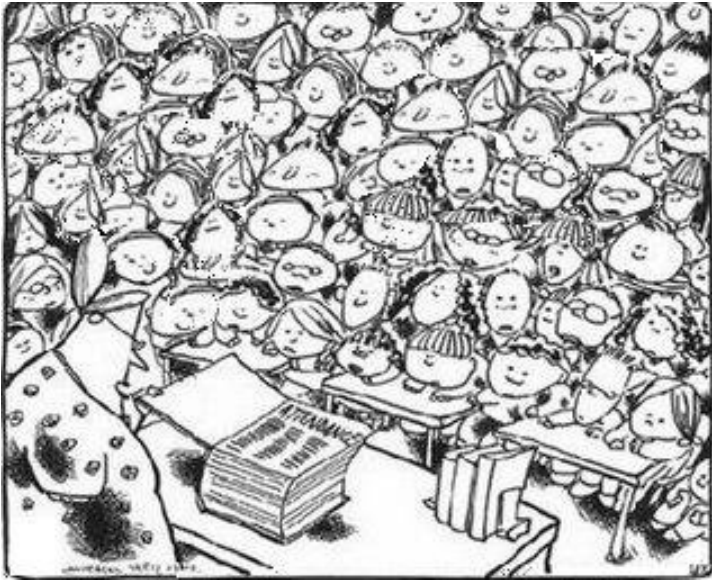
CORE
2522 W. 40th Street
Chicago, IL 60632

Name _____

School _____

Phone _____

Email _____



Class Size, *continued from page 1*

nounced that it had conducted research that found CPS to have the 5th highest class size at the high school level. There are 485 districts in Illinois with high schools. The research also found that at the elementary school level CPS has the 14th highest class size in Illinois and in grades K-1 CPS has higher class sizes than 95% of all Illinois school districts.

Chicago is the only district in Illinois whose union is not allowed to bargain over class size. The 1995 School Reform Act included a list of topics that were either prohibited or permissive of bargaining, meaning the Union can bargain over the impact of class size but the not actual class size. Educators know that lower class size increases student learning. Why don't politicians get it? Why is Chicago the only district in Illinois that cannot bargain the actual numbers for class size?

CORE supports the CTU in calling on CPS and the State of Illinois to recognize the injustice being done to our children in the Chicago Public schools. Contact legislators and ask them to take action and give the CTU the right to negotiate lower class size for our children. Talk to students, parents and community members. Let them know that they and their children deserve the same learning conditions as the rest of the State of Illinois. Ask them to contact their legislators and the Board of Education. They have the right to know why their children are being overcrowded in the classroom by those who say, "Children First." ●

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