



# The Classifieds

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### **United Steelworkers**

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Freeport, IL 61032**

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## **A FEW THOUGHTS FROM THE UNIT CHAIRMAN** LuAnne Beintema

I have never been more excited to start a new year! I am hopeful in 2021 that we will see the pandemic wind down and we once again see normalcy in our daily lives.

No one knows what the rest of the school year will bring, but if we are to go remote again we have been assured that we will continue to be paid. While the vast majority in food service, security, and IMT's did our best and what we could while we were remote, paras struggled without having access to Schoology or Clever to help our students with their online learning. The Classified Advisory Council has been working on that issue and trying to get access for paras. The District has been met with roadblocks trying to grant our request. Don't look for access to these sites anytime soon but know we are aware and doing our best to fix the issue. Also, while I am hopeful we will not have to go remote

again, I need to share that if it does happen, please make sure you are making yourself available during your working hours for zoom meetings and communication with your school. There were a few instances with Classified Staff counting remote days as non-working days and I want to avoid that happening again, especially since we are still receiving our full pay.

Your GNC (Ricky Robinson, Andrea Misek, Denise Hayunga, Cindy Erb, and myself) finished negotiating the new contract in October and membership voted in November to accept it. While everyone has their new salaries and increases, we still do not have contracts printed and ready to pass out. The reason for that is USW questioned a clause that FSD moved to strike from our contract. That issue is being resolved and contracts will be printed and distributed soon. I will keep you updated on when that will happen.

If you are on social media, please join our Facebook group USW Classified Staff

of FSD145 as I share all union news there first. It is important to stay on top of what's going on in the District and with our job!

### INTERESTED?

2021 is an election year for FSD 145 USW Officers. At the March 9th monthly union meeting nominations will take place. At this time, we do not know how that will happen if it's by social distancing or virtually, but those decisions will be made soon. Positions open for election will be:

- Unit Chair
- Unit Secretary
- 3 GNC positions

All five of these positions make up the GNC or Grievance and Negotiating Committee.

Duties of this committee include:

- attending any discipline meetings and making sure the contract is not violated
- Meeting monthly
- Negotiating the next contract

Additional duties for Unit Secretary include:

- Taking notes at monthly membership meetings
- Sending out Welcome Packets to new members

Additional duties for Unit Chair include:

- Meeting monthly with HR
- Lead GNC and Membership meetings

To be a membership where we flourish and FSD a place where we can be proud to work, we need everyone involved. Consider becoming an officer and become a part of the future of Classified Staff. Contact me or a member of the GNC with any questions or come to a monthly union meeting to find out more.

We need you!

### THE MORE YOU KNOW . . .

Our contract contains many benefits for you, are you utilizing them?

- At retirement you are given \$40 for every unused sick day up to a max of 300 days.
- You can now request a leave of absence after being employed for two years. Previously it was three years.
- Every September the District puts \$1000 in an account for each employee working 5 or more hours each day and not receiving health insurance. This account is under Northern IL Health Plan and if you do not use the money it does accumulate. This is how I get my new glasses and pay for the dentist. I am always surprised by the number of people who don't utilize this benefit.
- Tuition reimbursement of \$525 for any pre-approved coursework, workshop, or conference.
- Free annual flu shot
- \$15,000 life insurance policy
- The District will pay for any license fees for paraprofessionals and food service.
- Upon your written request, verbal warning letters can be removed from your personnel file after one year and letters of reprimand can be removed after 24 months if you have not had any additional discipline.
- Any unsafe working conditions will now be investigated by HR and the Unit Chair.

Know your contract and understand the benefits you deserve!

**NEW CONTRACT LANGUAGE,  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

A new section was added in our contract under Article VI, Section K, titled Safety Concerns. It states:

“Employees may report concerns about unsafe working conditions to the Unit Chairperson. The Unit Chairperson and the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Human Resources will review the reported concerns, including jointly visiting the worksite if necessary, and will perform a safety analysis. If the concern is deemed valid, the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Human Resources will determine the appropriate response with input from the Unit Chairperson.”

This clause was added to bring attention to and resolve Classified Staff that are asked to work in what they feel are unsafe working conditions. This would not mean a para who is getting hit or kicked by a child. That would be part of the child’s disability and the only solution there would be for you to transfer to a different position. This clause could mean being made to work/cook food in an area infested with insects, being asked to serve food to students after the expired date, or walking your mobile book cart across an icy playground to the mobile classrooms. You can now report unsafe working conditions to the Unit Chair and they can work at getting it resolved. One more way your Union is working for you and your safety in the workplace.

**1ST QUARTER BIRTHDAYS**

**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Darlean Brooks	FMS	6
Catherine Cornelius	Center	8
Nemesis Garcia-Rodriguez	Carl Sandburg	8
Sheryl Hoff	FMS	10
Tim Kleckner	Center	14
Kyle Larson	Blackhawk	15
Angela Poage	Carl Sandburg	17
Patricia Siemens	FMS	22
Connie Zettle	Carl Sandburg	27

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Sheila Fane	Banks-Bergagna	1
Heather Lassandro	Empire	1
Ruth Hattula	Senior High	6
Traci Heitz	Carl Sandburg	7
Jodi Langill	Center	7
Heather Holloway	Senior High	10
Jori Nott	Blackhawk	11
Diane Pfile	Lincoln Douglas	12
Amanda Gempeler	Banks-Bergagna	15
Kaitlin Jewell	Empire	26

**MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

Lucy Maupin	Lincoln Douglas	5
Tammy Stewart	Blackhawk	8
Beverly Castle	Carl Sandburg	10
Tina Maize	Blackhawk	10
Sarah Martin	Empire	10
Vicky Losco	Lincoln Douglas	14
Kim Sims	Banks-Bergagna	15
Bobbie Trost	JFELC	23

### 1ST QUARTER CALENDAR

Date	Time	Location	Event
January 12	4:30 p.m.	Freeport Public Library	District 145 Membership Meeting
January 19	6:00 p.m.	Administrative Building	Administrative Board Meeting
January 24	9:00 a.m.	Union Office	Local 745 Membership Meeting
February 2	6:00 p.m.	Administrative Building	Administrative Board Meeting
February 9	4:30 p.m.	Freeport Public Library	District 145 Membership Meeting
February 14	9:00 a.m.	Union Office	Local 745 Membership Meeting
February 16	6:00 p.m.	Administrative Building	Administrative Board Meeting
March 2	6:00 p.m.	Administrative Building	Administrative Board Meeting
March 9	4:30 p.m.	Freeport Public Library	District 145 Membership Meeting
March 14	9:00 a.m.	Union Office	Local 745 Membership Meeting
March 16	6:00 p.m.	Administrative Building	Administrative Board Meeting



*Coming together is a beginning;  
 keeping together is progress;  
 working together is success.*

#### Friends and Family Discount Program

A Friends and Family Program Discount card can be picked up at the Union office at 2496 E. Maize Road or by contacting a G.N.C. member. Area participating businesses include: Butitta Brothers, CarQuest, Brightflower Nursery, Big O's, 4 Seasons Bowling, Loescher Heating, Hampton Inn, Cimino's Little Italy, Amsoil, Carlson Canine Camp, Freeport Quiznos, Auto Logic, and TJ's Truck Accessories.