



News & Updates April 23, 2018

2018-2019 Calendar Change

After lengthy consultation with the Superintendent, the union and the school district have agreed to modify the 2018-2019 calendar.

Schools will be closed on June 5, 2019 in observance of the Muslim observance of Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting.

Adding this holiday to the calendar is laudable, and speaks to the district's commitment to diversity and religious tolerance.

In order to add this holiday and still meet the statutory and contractual mandates that govern the school year calendar, two other changes were made to the calendar:

- **April 22**, (the Monday after Easter), originally slated to be a holiday **will now be “weather makeup day 2.”**
- **May 28**, (the Tuesday after Memorial Day) originally slated to be “weather make-up day 2” **is now a regular day of school.**
- May 24 will still be on the calendar as “weather make-up day 1.”
- Our contract provisions requiring three one-week vacations, and the long standing practice of 182+2 days in the ten month work year remain intact.
- **SRP members still have 18 holidays as required in our contract.**
The April 22, 2019 holiday has been moved to December 31, 2018.



Originally, it had been suggested that the holiday on November 21 be transferred to June 5. The union would not agree to losing the Wednesday before Thanksgiving under any circumstances. In communication with Dr. Osborne, I wrote "*The “Wednesday before Thanksgiving” is widely and consistently sought by FUSE members in any year when there are enough available days to grant it, and adding this when possible follows from both the FUSE members’ interests as well as adhering to the contractual language that requires the negotiated calendar follow the “traditional form and configurations of previous calendars.”* Happily, Dr. Osborne fully agreed with that sentiment.

In the end, the union and the district were able to get to “yes” by making the changes outlined above. In making April 22 a “make up day” there is at least the possibility that the Monday after Easter may still be holiday - even though as a “weather make up day” it precludes staff members from planning on travel or other vacation activities on that day. If the winter is a mild one, the Memorial Day weekend may even be a

be a four day weekend! And in deeds, not just words, the school districts demonstrates its commitment to our core values of diversity and inclusion.

Special Election - Tuesday, April 24

Voters will go to the polls on Tuesday to elect a state senator to replace George Latimer who was elected Westchester County Executive, and a County Legislator for District 11.

Assemblymember Shelley Mayer has been endorsed by NYSUT -- her record of supporting strong public schools, public employee unions and common sense gun safety laws put her head and shoulders above her opponent. “Working people need strong voices in the Assembly who will speak up for them on matters that are important,” said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta, “and Shelley Mayer is one of their best advocates.”



In District 11, our own **Terry Clements, a teacher at Columbus School**, has been endorsed by every major labor organization in the region, including the Westchester Labor Council, (of which FUSE is a proud member), the AFL-CIO, Teamsters and more. These organizations have learned what we in New Rochelle have long known: Terry is a dedicated and skillful teacher, a stalwart union member and an active member of the New Rochelle community. Terry would bring to the legislature a principled and collaborative approach to solving the problems that face our communities -- she is a leader who is diligent, knowledgeable and fair minded. Her experience as a teacher informs her thinking on a host of issues and she that common sense approach to work in the legislature.

Remember to vote in the special election on April 24 -- and to support Shelley Mayer for State Senate and Terry Clements for the County Legislature, District 11.

Questions and Answers About Janus vs. AFSCME

Anti-labor forces funded by the wealthy elite and their well-heeled friends have launched another assault on working Americans, this time with a case before the U.S. Supreme Court known as Janus v. AFSCME.

The Janus case — challenging fair-share fees and threatening public-sector unions — culminates decades of assault on working people by right-wing ideologues and wealthy special interests. This Q&A outlines briefly what is at stake in the Janus case. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask your local union president what it would mean if New York became a “right-to-work-for-less” state.



Here's what you need to know to protect your labor rights:

Q: I saw an ad that said I should give myself a raise and stop paying union dues. Why shouldn't I?

A: Because it's not true. Pending cases before the U.S. Supreme Court might give you a chance to stop paying dues. But you won't get a raise. It will cost you.

A weakened union would lead to long-term cuts, loss of benefits and salary stagnation for everyone. You gain myriad benefits from having a strong union representing you at the bargaining table. If the union loses, you lose, period.

Q: What is the motivation behind these pending cases?

A: These court cases — including *Janus v. AFSCME*, to be decided in 2018 — are backed by corporate profiteers and hedge-funders. Their goal is to weaken unions, which will hurt all workers, to the benefit of the 1 percent. That's who is spreading the bogus claim that you can give yourself a raise — the wealthy. They will get a raise, not you.

Q: What's at stake in this Janus case?

A: Back in 1977, another U.S. Supreme Court decision established that, if you benefit from union representation, even if you don't join the union, it is fair and reasonable to expect to pay something for it. Your wages, benefits and retirement security all come from the union's influence over terms and conditions, even if you're not a member.

An adverse decision in *Janus* would overturn that decision and force cuts in resources directed toward union services. Dues and fair-share revenues fund union services, including bargaining power, legal representation and much more. Loss of revenue means loss of strength, and there's no question that a weaker union would have an adverse effect on terms and conditions.

Q: What would happen?

A: We've already seen what happens to union strength in states like Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana, three states that lost the right to collective bargaining in the past several years. Compared to union workers in neighboring Illinois, Minnesota and Ohio, the workers in the right-to-work states earn 8 percent less annually, according to research from the Illinois Economic Policy Institute. Salaries go down, benefits evaporate, jobs disappear and the economy stagnates.

Q: A law firm advertises that it can provide me with protection for a fraction of what we pay in dues.

A: Don't be misled. No slick, hourly billed law firm can match the range of benefits, rights and opportunities your union card guarantees. Your union gives you access to member benefits, discounts, professional development, help with certification and licensing, a contract that protects your salary, benefits and working conditions and a strong voice in determining what those are. For-profit opportunists use misleading advertising in an attempt to make a buck — there's no comparison.

Q: What does NYSUT's legal team do?

A: NYSUT has the largest labor legal team in the country with unmatched expertise. It represents hundreds of NYSUT members every year, protecting their rights to due process and ensuring enforcement of the provisions in their hard-earned contracts. NYSUT legal also represents the total membership — more than 600,000 people — in legal challenges that affect our professions, our public institutions and our rights to represent the best interests of those we serve. NYSUT has litigated, and won, on historic issues such as



equitable school funding, unfair evaluation and testing schemes, threats to struggling schools, the education department's "gag order" on educators and much more.

Q: Bottom line: Why should I stay with the union?

A: Our local union negotiates for competitive pay and better benefits, and makes sure our contract is honored. NYSUT, our state affiliate, fights to protect our labor rights, retirement security and our professions. Together, we have the power to exercise and protect our rights, to defend the things we value and to give our members a voice. Defending our union means preserving our voice, defending our values, and protecting what we need to succeed in our professional lives.

If our voice is diminished, our students, our schools and the people we serve lose.

We have the will and the power to fight this threat and protect what is ours. When we all commit to our union, we can protect what's ours and defend what we have earned.

Signing a re-enrollment form is the best way to defend our voice, our values and our union.