



News & Updates March 5, 2018

2018-2019 Calendar

Attached is the 2018-2019 calendar.

The calendar is the result of collaboration between the union and the school district. The union's Board of Representatives reviewed and approved a draft calendar in January. This draft was submitted to the school district administration for their consideration. After reviewing the union's draft calendar, the school district suggested a couple of modifications, primarily to accommodate the Southern Westchester BOCES calendar.

Our contract requires that the calendar follow "the traditional form and configuration of previous calendars," so the school year begins after Labor Day and consists of 182 regularly scheduled days plus two "weather make-up days." It also consists of three one-week breaks (Holiday, Mid-Winter and Spring) and eighteen holidays for 12 month employees.

As proposed by the union and happily agreed to by the district, **the Wednesday before Thanksgiving will be a holiday this year.**

In more happy news, Spring Break is scheduled for April 15 through April 22. **The Monday following Easter will be a part of Spring Break.**

2018 FUSE Scholarships

Every year, the FUSE awards up to ten scholarships of \$1,000 each to the children of FUSE members who are graduating high school in June, 2018.

Scholarship recipients are selected on the basis of demonstrated academic excellence, community service and participation in extra or co-curricular activities. Applications are reviewed by a committee of FUSE members in April, and recipients are notified in May.

Applications are available now in the FUSE office -- please call or email our office administrator Rose Colasuonno to receive one. Completed applications and supporting documentation (transcripts, letter of recommendation, essay) must be received in the FUSE office no later than April 16, 2018.



Negotiations

Contract negotiations with the school district for a successor agreement to our current contract began prior to the mid-winter break. Both sides met at the FUSE office, agreed to ground rules, exchanged contract proposals, engaged in some discussion about specific proposals and set dates for the next several meetings.

Chairing the district's negotiating team is Jeff Kehl, long time legal counsel to the school district. Serving with him are Assistant Superintendents Dr. Joseph Williams, Dr. Magda Parvey, and Jeffrey White. School District Treasurer Heidi Hohlfeld and Civil Service Senior Personnel Assistant Kareem Ali are also on the district's team.

The Negotiating Committee for the union is chaired by Michael Chwick. Serving on the committee are Martin Daly, Sandy Annunziata, Cheryl Smith, Ann Marie Manganiello, Vic Cristiano, Lauren Lanigan, Tania Syriaque, Paul Williams and Bill Coleman.

Prior to this initial meeting with representatives of the school district, the FUSE Negotiations committee has been meeting regularly to review member proposals submitted by the FUSE Building Committees and by individual members to create the final "package" of proposals the union submitted to the school district as well as carefully reviewing the details of recent school district contract settlements in order to inform our strategies and discussions at the negotiating table.

Janus vs. AFSCME at the Supreme Court

On February 26, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case *Janus v. AFSCME*, a case that once again raises the question of whether public employees must pay dues even if they disagree with their union's position. The case, like two others that have reached the high court in recent years, pits unions, who say mandatory fees are necessary to prevent "free riders" from benefiting from union contracts, against dissenting members, who argue that being forced to pay dues violates their First Amendment rights.

NYSUT President Andy Pallotta summed up the issues of the Janus Case in a recent op-ed:

Depending on its outcome, Janus v. AFSCME could forever weaken the ability of working people to fight for better pay, decent health insurance, job security and a secure retirement.

That's not hyperbole. On paper, Janus may be about how public-sector unions collect dues from workers they are obligated to represent, but who don't wish to be members or pay their fair share for that representation. In reality, however, the Janus case is much bigger.

Janus is the culmination of years of attacks by the wealthy elite and corporate interests on ordinary workers. The backers of Janus don't want strong unions; nor do they want workers to have a voice on the job.

Instead, the CEOs and billionaires bankrolling Janus want to destroy unions and roll back pay and benefits for all workers. Without organized push back, they can keep more of the profits



for themselves. They like it better when workers can't stand up for themselves and speak in a strong voice. By further rigging the system against workers, they can profit from a race to the bottom.

The educators and professionals who NYSUT represents clearly understand the value of having a strong voice. They count on our union to ensure they are compensated fairly and treated with respect — on the job and in Albany.

They understand that without that strong voice and the power it brings, who would defend students against over-testing and public education against politicians who want to dictate "reforms," even if they have no idea what it would mean in the classroom?

Who would fight for funding for schools in struggling cities like Mount Vernon and Yonkers? Who would fight for the programs that all students need to thrive?

The answer, of course, is why all workers and all New Yorkers need strong unions

Related reading:

- [NYSUT President Andy Pallotta's Op-ed piece on the important role of public employee unions](#)
- [Fighting for the Right to Rise by AFT President Randi Weingarten](#)
- [Public Employee Unions Helped Integrate America: The Supreme Court Could End That This Year](#)

Looking for a Worthy Cause to Support?

Trish Calo Flanagan has been a teacher in our school district at the Barnard School since 2000. Her daughter, Morgan, has a rare genetic neuro-developmental disorder known as HNRNPH2 mutations.



Trish and the parents of other children who are battling this ultra-rare disease have recently established [The Yellow Brick Road Project](#), aimed at raising awareness about the disease, while at the same time finding therapeutics and ultimately a cure for their children's rare disorder. To accomplish those goals, [The Yellow Brick Road Project](#) is hoping to raise money through online donations.

Have a peek at their website, particularly the video entitled Morgan's Story, if you would. It will take just 5 minutes.