

JEFFERSON TEACHER/PSRP



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Welcome Back

Welcome back to the 2015-2016 school year. This year promises to be an exciting one! We at JFT hope you had an enjoyable and restful summer. We are looking forward to assisting our members during the 2015-2016 school year and working with the school board and administration as it reclaims the promise of public education for our students, parents, teachers, employees, and the community.

Collective Bargaining Agreement

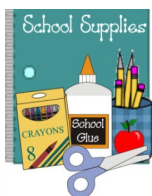


The JFT returned to the bargaining table and an Agreement was reached! Members of the Bargaining Unit unanimously ratified the Agreement between the Jefferson Federation of Teachers and the Jefferson Parish School Board on July 28, 2015. The board then approved the agreement with a vote of 5 to 4 at its August 11th meeting. The board members voting in favor of the agreement were: Cedric Floyd, Marion Bonura, Ricky Johnson, Mark Morgan, and Ray St. Pierre.

This agreement marks the return of teacher voice in educational decisions and a culture of collaboration. "Teachers now feel that their voice matters and they're accepted as professionals. Treating teachers as partners in education, not robots, will help improve the quality of education in our parish and the morale of our educators," said JFT President, Cathy Johnson. "We're thrilled that this school board has a better understanding of what kids need to succeed—commonsense, research-based education reforms and teacher input, not top-down, corporate-driven ideology that doesn't work to improve student achievement."

"This board understands that the path to student success is making sure educators have the authority to make a difference in the lives of kids," says AFT President Randi Weingarten. "That happens when teachers have voice." LFT President Steve Monaghan: "It is a tribute to the teachers and school employees who worked to change the face of the Jefferson Parish School Board, to the voters who supported our public schools at the ballot box, and to the board members who dared to speak the truth to the power of the old board."

Teaching Supplies



Reimbursement for teaching materials will continue to be reimbursed at an amount of \$40 (including sales tax) per semester for which appropriate receipts are furnished. A teacher who does not expend his/her allocation during the first semester shall be permitted to spend such during the second semester. Receipts must be submitted no later than April 30th.

JFT is your union, your professional organization, your voice. We want to help make your school year a success! Please do not hesitate to contact the staff with job related concerns and issues.

JPPSS Teachers & School Employees Get Much Needed Salary Incentive



Louisiana school districts are receiving compensation as part of the BP oil spill settlement. Jefferson Parish Public Schools will receive approximately \$24 million from the settlement. School Board member, Marion Bonura's initial proposal included a salary bonus, a step increase, compensation for extracurricular activities; additional pay for coaches, and retirement funding.

However, at the July 15th meeting his motion was amended because the compensation is "one-time" money and could not become a part of the permanent salary schedule. Therefore, Mr. Bonura sought a one time stipend of \$600 for teachers and \$500 for other employees (this amount may vary depending on job classification). After much discussion, the vote passed unanimously.

The funds are not scheduled to reach the district until the fall. Please check the JFT website for updates on when you can expect the money to be disbursed.

Employee Dress Code

Below is the district's Dress Code policy. If you are a JFT member and have questions or concerns regarding this policy; please contact the JFT office (504) 454-5047.

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

DRESS AND PERSONAL GROOMING

Employees on a daily basis shall dress as professionals, in businesslike attire in order to set a good example for co-employees, students and the general public. Employee dress and grooming shall not detract from the learning/educational environment of students' participation in classes, school programs or other school-related activities. Extremes in style and fit in employee dress and extremes in style of grooming will not be permitted. Administrators shall be authorized to use their discretion in determining extremes in styles of dress and grooming and what is appropriate and suitable for Jefferson Parish School Board employees. No employee shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, blade, symbols, sign or other things that are

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From The Lawyer's Desk

By: Larry Samuel
JFT General Counsel

First, congratulations to teachers and other employees covered by the new JFT/JPSB Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). It's good to see the school board restore respect and dignity for you all.

I want to take this opportunity to address a few issues that pertain to JFT's representation on matters that are included in the CBA and on matters that aren't included in the CBA.

The new CBA applies to teachers, counselors, librarians, speech therapists, social workers, educational diagnosticians, school psychologists and nurses employed by JPSB. If you hold any one of those positions, then you are entitled to the benefits in the CBA. Employees in those classifications are members of what is called the "bargaining unit."

If you are a member of the bargaining unit, and you feel that the school board has violated any provision in the CBA then your first step is to follow the procedure in Article XI of the CBA "Complaints/Grievances." This applies to all members of the bargaining unit, regardless of whether you are a member of JFT. If you have any questions concerning the CBA, you should contact JFT.

However, JFT's services on matters that are not included in the CBA are available only to members of the JFT. That means that if you have a disciplinary conference...if you are falsely accused of something...or if you have a problem with your evaluation...or if you are injured on the job...or if a student is injured under your supervision...or if you are sued...**or if you have any problem at all that isn't covered by the CBA, then JFT's staff will not be able to assist you.**

And remember...if your problem isn't covered by the

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evidence of affiliation with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence or gang related activities.

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

The guidelines of the School Board shall be that no mode of attire will be considered proper for school wear that distracts from or disrupts classroom and school decorum. To maintain a proper image for teachers and other employees, it is the responsibility of principals or supervisors to see that all employees are properly dressed. Principals may include reasonable dress code provisions at schools. Principals may make exceptions to the mode of dress in specific shop-type situations where deemed appropriate. Any condition of grooming or dress judged by the principal to be inappropriate shall not be allowed.

The appropriate footwear must be worn by all employees at all times.

Workers in the maintenance and grounds department may wear uniform caps provided. The custodial staff may wear caps with the school logo provided by their school.

All employees, whether required to wear a uniform or not, must wear assigned I.D. badges at all times.

Any employee who disregards the provisions of the Board's employee dress code policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. '17:81; Board minutes, 10-2-85.

CBA, in order for JFT to assist you then you must be a member when the problem occurred.

Last, a message to JFT members: if you have a problem that isn't covered by the CBA, we strongly recommend that you contact JFT immediately at the onset of the problem, rather than later. For example, if you are injured on the job, or have an evaluation problem, or face disciplinary action for something, contact JFT right away so that JFT can inform you of your rights and look after your interests.

Highlights of the 2015 Regular Legislative Session



LJFT is proud of its work with its' affiliates, the LA AFL-CIO, LAE and friends/coalition members. Together we defeated LABI's fourth and most aggressive attack on the rights of teachers and other public employees to organize.

Here are other highlights of the Legislative Session:

Common Core Compromise

HB 373 requires BESE over the course of the next year to hold public hearings to allow citizen input into academic standards and provides for legislative and gubernatorial review of any changes.

HB 542 changes educational testing standards for the 2015-16 school year by limiting to less than 50% the use of standardized test questions from a multi-state consortium, like PARCC.

Individuals with Exceptionalities

SB 267 requires charter schools to enroll students with exceptionalities proportionately to those enrolled in local public schools and requires funding accordingly.

Retirement

HB 42 for retirees provides a 1.5% cost of living increase for approximately 100,000 retired teachers and state employees and provides for up to a 2% COLA for school employees and state police. A special thank you to Representative Sam Jones for his perseverance on this issue, however, this bill was **vetoed by Governor Jindal**. Please check the LFT website (la.aft.org) for more information regarding the 2015 Legislative Session.



JFT Membership

If you are not currently a member, now is the time to join! Together, we can continue to reclaim our voice, our profession and our schools. Your voice matters!

Contact the JFT office for more information about the benefits of becoming a JFT member (504) 454-5047.