

Vocational Instructor

Local 4200A~AFT, AFTCT, & AFL-CIO



IT PAYS TO BE TAUGHT BY A VO-TECH TEACHER!

Volume MMXXIV Issue 2

March 2024

Time to Show Up

by Paul Angelucci, President

I do hope all is well. As we enter Spring, we've been very busy at the union office. I've given testimony on several bills this session. I testified **the Governors Proposed FY 25 Budget Adjustments for Secondary Education Agencies**. Our district is asking for an additional \$6.5 million to cover staffing and Special Education costs and a Career Center located at Vinal. My testimony, as well as Jamie Lamitie's, covered the rising cost of materials for our shops and how those budgets for teachers has been frozen for years. As the Electrical DH at Norwich, Jamie shared first hand experience on how the budget affects teachers and students. I explained two years prior in **HB 5445 Act Concerning State Staffing Levels** I fought for the need to return the process of Auto Refill to red-line positions, that would cut the time down dramatically on filling open positions. I also testified on **SB 153 An Act Concerning Technical Revisions to CTECS Statues**. When our district became its own agency some of the language and terms needed to change and this Bill addressed those. The issue was the funds that follow a Special Education student from grade 8th to our district is a legal haze that needed the proper terms in place to help that process. The municipalities lobbyists gave testimony to the contrary due to rising special education costs.

Now about the title of this article, I have an ask, On May 8th at 5:00pm we have our General Membership Meeting. You can attend by ZOOM or in person at Prince. This is the best way to catch up on union activity, as well as vote on our budget which has already passed in Budget Committee and Executive Council and by our Constitution must pass at General Membership, if there is a quorum. Lastly, on March 23rd if you live in the Middletown area at the **Red Fox Restaurant** from 11:30 to 1:30 you'll be able to meet your elected officials, either state reps or senators. There is food, its set up like speed dating where they visit each table for a short time. It's helpful to have needs brought up by members to the elected officials you put in office. Also, on the same day if you live in the central part of the state at the same time from 11:30 to 1:30 at the **Gobi Mongolian Grill** in Southington you can meet your elected officials as well. There will be union officers at each of these so stop in and say Hi! Just scan the QR code register and we'll see you there, I do want to thank you for all that you do, and if no one has told you lately you do have the most important job out there!

Learn More About The SEBAC Wage Agreement Before The Ratification Vote

Join a **Zoom meeting on Monday 3/18 at 5PM** to hear specifics.

All members can vote on the Wage Agreement for 2024 - 2025 in person, in your building, on Tuesday, March 19th, before and after school.

A link was sent to your personal email. Please share with other members in your building.

May General Membership May 8th, 2024 - 5PM

A. I. Prince Technical High School

Executive Council members will be in person. General Membership is encouraged to attend in person.

All participation will be in person.

We will live-stream for members that cannot attend, but we will not interact virtually.

A link will be sent to RSVP for planning purposes.

SKILLS Day

by Makenzi Hurtado, Vice President

When I first started teaching in our district, I was very lucky to have a group of academic teachers to guide me. One of the best pieces of advice that they gave me, that I now share with every new academic teacher I meet was: go visit the shops. Use your prep time and check them out. I have never knocked on a shop door and not been welcomed in.

Most of our buildings are geographically very divided and it's easy to get stuck on your own side. Visiting the shops as an academic teacher has a lot of benefits (including getting your steps in!). It's a good reminder of why we are all here. Our purpose, on the trade and academic side, it to develop strong, capable tradespeople. It's also a great opportunity to see our students in a very different light. It is amazing to see the things they do on the trade side. Lastly, our students love to see us there. They love to know that we are interested in what they are doing. Many times, I have even left with a souvenir.

This year I have another recommendation. Go to a SKILLS competition and/or the SKILLS Award Ceremony. I won't begrudge anyone taking a much needed day off, but if you haven't been to a SKILLS competition, I will say that it is a great way to spend the day. Competitions are going on all over the state. You will see our top performing students doing what they do best.

Thank you to all of our SKILLS advisors, teachers, and bus drivers who are working the SKILLS Day. Best of luck to our competitors!

We Filed A Grievance... Now What?

by Bob Riccitelli , Executive Union Representative

I get a lot of questions about the grievance process and when to file a grievance. First off, A grievance can only be filed if the contract has been violated. If that happens, we have 30 days to gather evidence and file the Level 1 grievance. Level 1 is with the school administration. The administrator has 10 days to hold a meeting with us (the grievant, the building rep, and me) and respond to the grievance. If the administrator agrees with us the grievance process is over. More than likely the administrator will not side in our favor because they made the decision in the first place. We would look at the rationale behind the denial and withdraw or forward to a Level 2, which is with Labor Relations. We have 10 days to file the Level 2 and Labor Relations has 10 days to reply. Again, if Labor Relations agrees with us the process is over. But if we cannot reach an agreement, we have 20 days to file for Arbitration. In that 20 days the grievant would meet with our Grievance and Arbitration Committee. The grievant would present their case, I would present the contract violation, and we would answer any questions the committee might have. The committee then has 48 hours to let me know their decision. That decision is final either way. Next, I would file for arbitration with the American Arbitrators Association (AAA). In about a week, the case manager will send the district's attorney and our attorney a list of 15 arbitrators. We have two weeks to rank them and submit back to AAA. The case manager then combines the scores and selects the arbitrator. The arbitrator will send out multiple dates for the arbitration. About a week or two before the arbitration we would meet with our attorney to prepare.

First the arbitrator gets a day or two for the hearing, then both sides submit briefs. The arbitrator sends those briefs to the opposing party and a counter brief is written and submitted. The arbitrator then reviews all the documents and rules on the case.

As you can see, the timeline is very long. From the first day until an arbitrator makes a decision, I continue to meet with management to try to resolve the issue on our own. The grievance process has up to 80 days and the arbitration, if everything goes smoothly, is approximately 3 to 9 months.

Full Time Officer Visits To Schools

Paul, Makenzi, and Bob will be visiting all schools this spring for after school meetings. Please look for information from your building reps on locations and times.

We look forward to seeing you, hearing your concerns, and answering your questions.

March

3/18—Windham

3/19—Oliver Wolcott

3/20—Platt

3/21—Eli Whitney

3/25—Bullard Havens

3/26—Ellis

April

4/3—Wilcox

4/17—Cheney

4/18—Prince

4/22—Emmett O'Brien

4/23—Kaynor

4/25—Goodwin

4/29—Bristol

4/30—Norwich

May

5/1—Grasso

5/6—Abbott

5/7—Vinal

5/13—Wright



AFT Connecticut

A Union of Professionals

presents to our members retiring
under the Teachers Retireemet Board:

TEACHER Pre-Retirement Webinar

April 20, 2024

SATURDAY

9:00am - 11:00am

Zoom

**SCAN TO
REGISTER**



**Come understand your
retirement plan and make sure
you're making the right choices!**

- There is no fee associated with this webinar.
- Link to webinar will be emailed, so please make sure to spell your email accurately when registering.
- Make sure to select the April 20th Webinar option:

Presented by



**CT's Trusted Speakers on
Teachers' Retirement**

SVFT 2024 Scholarship Program

The State Vocational Federation of Teachers Local 4200A is pleased to notify you of twelve (12) \$1,000 scholarships available to members' children who are currently high school seniors and planning to further their education or to begin work in their trade in the fall of 2024.



Include the following:

1. A completed application form
2. An official school transcript
3. One letter of recommendation from a teacher or community leader who knows you well enough to attest to your achievements and/or potential
4. A resume listing accomplishments, contributions and achievements in school, your community, and any other extra-curricular activities that are indicative of future success
5. A letter of intent in 250 words or fewer describing why you are applying for a scholarship and how the funds will be used
6. An essay of 250 words or fewer describing what you believe the role of labor unions should be in our state and country today

Please note: The 2024 scholarships will be awarded on the basis of vocational or academic promise. Applications must be received on time and complete to be considered.

SVFT 2024 Mini-Grant Program

The SVFT is also pleased to announce that up to \$1,000 in scholarship funds are available in the form of **mini-grants** to SVFT members for the purpose of professional growth.

To apply, send a typed essay fully explaining how the funds will be used and the expected professional growth. Make sure to include your name, your school, the amount you are requesting, and any information from the program.

Successful grant recipients will be required to submit a newsletter or website article explaining how the investment was used for professional growth. The purpose of this grant is to enable members to grow professionally, **outside of the activities funded by CTS-43 or the tuition reimbursement program.**

Applications for scholarships or mini-grants must arrive at the SVFT office
no later than Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 3pm.

439 Main Street
Wallingford CT 06492

Announcements of awards will be made on or about June 14, 2024.

Applications are available on our website, svft.ct.aft.org

Questions may be addressed to the SVFT Vice President, Makenzi Hurtado
860-371-6382 or mhurtado@svft.org

We need SVFT voices heard!

Meet your area legislators and let them know what is important to you!

A full time officer will be at each event.

AFT CT staff will also be there to support you and guide you.



AFT CT Regional Legislative Meetings

This is an opportunity for members and area legislators to have informal discussions on AFT CT legislative issues.



SCAN ME **Greater Hartford**
Margaritas, East Hartford
MAR 16 • 11:30am-1:30pm

SCAN ME **Eastern**
Dimitri's, Coventry
Mar 16 • 12-2 pm

SCAN ME **Middletown**
Red Fox Restaurant, Middletown
Mar 23 • 11:30am-1:30pm

SCAN ME **Central**
Gobi Mongolian Grill, Southington
Mar 23 • 11:30am-1:30pm



For more information call 860-257-9782 or email at jvigue@aftct.org



Calendar



- 3/13 Executive Council Meeting
- 3/14 Oliver Wolcott H&S
- 3/22 SKILLS
- 3/29 No School
- 4/3 Executive Council Meeting
- 4/4 BIPOC Teacher Meet & Greet
- 4/8-4/12 or 4/15-4/19 Spring Break

BIPOC Teacher Meet & Greet

A SAFE SPACE FOR THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS BLACK, BROWN, INDIGENOUS, AND/OR A PERSON OF COLOR TO HANG OUT, CONNECT, & SHARE EXPERIENCES.

Thursday, April 4, 2024

3PM—5PM

Sliders Grill & Bar

1265 S Main St, Middletown CT

Please RSVP by April 1, so we can ensure the appropriate space:

203-793-7473 or lhochadel@svft.org

svft.ct.aft.org

Any information you need is on our website! Do you have suggestions for additions to our website?

Email our Secretary, Jamie Lamitie:
jlamitie@svft.org

Future Articles

We would like to have a “School Shout Out” article and a “Member Spotlight” article in each newsletter.

Invite us to attend an event or share something from your school that makes you proud.

What else do you want to see in the Vocational Instructor? Please let us know!

Email Jamie at jlamitie@svft.org

Vocational Instructor

*is the monthly newsletter of the
State Vocational Federation of Teachers*

- President Paul Angelucci**
- Vice President Makenzi Hurtado**
- Executive Union Rep Bob Riccitelli**
- Treasurer Emily DelPiano**
- Secretary Jamie Lamitie**
- Office Manager Lindsay Hochadel**

439 Main Street
Wallingford CT 06492
(203) 793-7996

SVFT Mission Statement

The SVFT is an organization of professional educators that promotes excellence through the mutual adherence to policies, documents, and procedures negotiated with the CTEC. We work to guarantee that the contract is followed and positive working conditions are maintained. This organization shall be to provide a safe and positive teaching environment for all by:

1. Maintaining the integrity of the contract, the Vocational Technical High School System, and the solidarity of the union.
2. Ensuring all members are protected by the contract and equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to make them successful.
3. Protecting the jobs of our members and strengthening our system.
4. Providing members opportunities to further their education and receive quality professional development.
5. Responding quickly to the emerging changes to the workplace and technological challenges.
6. Handling all interactions with fairness and integrity.
7. Striving for productive, open communication between the SVFT leadership and our membership.
8. Building and improving relationships with our union affiliates and local labor councils.