

RESOLUTION NO. 1

ADVOCATE CHANGES TO PUBLIC ACT 97-0008 (SB 7)

Submitted by: Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, Public Act 97-0008 negatively impacts the collective bargaining rights of all Illinois teachers and especially teachers in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Public Act 97-0008 is an attack on tenure, seniority, and the right of professional teachers to determine their working conditions, all under the guise of an “education reform” bill; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of Public Act 97-0008 strengthened non-educator, “Astroturf” school-reform groups’ ability to shape education policy in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the most effective response to Public Act 97-0008 has been direct action by IFT members across the state, including several victorious strikes and highlighted by the 2012 Chicago Teachers Union strike; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) will lobby the Illinois State Legislature to pass legislation amending Public Act 97-0008 to remove the anti-union collective bargaining restrictions and anti-professionalism aspects of the bill; and be it further

RESOLVED that the IFT will initiate a campaign that informs its members and the public of this anti-union legislation and will mobilize the membership in order to keep our collective bargaining rights; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the IFT will encourage all locals to undertake direct action against anti-union and anti-teacher efforts, including workplace actions and strikes.

RESOLUTION NO. 2

ADVOCATE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL WORKFORCE COUNCILS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois as of July 2013 ranks second in the nation for highest unemployment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago has the 5th worst unemployment of the 49 largest metropolitan areas (over one million residents, as of May 2013, Bureau of Labor Statistics, United States Department of Labor); and

WHEREAS, only six percent of Chicago students advance from the bottom fifth of family income to the top fifth of family income (25th place out of the 30 largest United States cities, according to *The New York Times*) in part due to lack of accessible professional training opportunities; and

WHEREAS, no workforce council coordinates Career Technical Education (CTE) training from pre-high school through high education; and

WHEREAS, low unemployment rates have been demonstrated in other countries that coordinate CTE training through cooperative councils represented by business, industry, organized labor, educators, and community representatives; and

WHEREAS, Illinois sits at the crossroads of the United States, which is accessible as an inland port and the intersection of most of the nation's roads, railways, and airlines, and is able to produce and distribute a broad cross-section of commodities, products, and services to the nation and the world; and

WHEREAS, Illinois contains a rich variety of educational institutions potentially available to provide instruction in all of the current technologies; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers advocates for the state of Illinois and all of the metropolitan areas to establish Workforce Councils that include representatives of each of the following:

- **educators from each level of education;**
- **organized labor representatives from the ten largest industries, services, and education;**
- **business representatives from the ten largest industries and services; and**
- **civic representatives from the elected municipal and state governments to plan, implement, and supervise comprehensive, coordinated education and training programs to meet the Career Technical Education needs of the future.**

RESOLUTION NO. 3

AFFIRMING THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN CLIMATE SCIENCE COURSES

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, science is a systematic method for investigating natural phenomena through experimentation, observation and measurement leading to falsifiable explanations that are open to continuous testing; and

WHEREAS, science proceeds on the basis of methodological naturalism and assumes observed phenomena of the universe are real, nature is consistent and understandable, and nature is explainable in terms of laws and theories; and

WHEREAS, a scientific theory is consistent with evidence from multiple and independent sources of evidence, explains many different facts, and allows predictions of subsequent discoveries; and

WHEREAS, the current model of the human influence on climate changes is a product of scientific process of inquiry, and is therefore subject to revision, scrutiny, and debate that are common and integral to the scientific process; and

WHEREAS, the revisions, scrutiny, and debates are healthy aspects of the scientific process; and

WHEREAS, the political will to see a specific outcome is not a proper justification to overthrow models resulting from the scientific process; and

WHEREAS, powerful economic interests have shown willingness to deny the existence of climate changes; and

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the American Federation of Teachers and the Illinois Federation of Teachers to preserve the integrity of science in the classroom; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) affirms and urges the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to also affirm, through a positional statement on its website, the validity of using scientific inquiry methods to address the issue of global climate changes; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT affirms and urges the AFT to affirm, through a positional statement on its website, that arguments against the current scientific model on climate change be subjected to the standard rigor and scrutiny of the relevant field instead of being subjected to manipulation by special interest groups; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls upon its members to assist those engaged in overseeing science education policy to understand the nature of science, the content of contemporary climate science and the inappropriateness of including non-science in our science curriculum, and urges the AFT to take similar actions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT communicates to the local, regional and national public media, to educational authorities and to appropriate legislators its opposition to the inclusion of non-science approaches and subjects into the science education curricula of our public school system, and urges the AFT to take similar actions; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT members also promote these concerns and help resolve these issues in their home communities among educators, parents, school boards, and students in appropriate public forums, and urge the AFT to promote similar activities.

RESOLUTION NO. 4

APPROPRIATE USES OF PRIVATE AND EDUCATIONAL DATA

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, there has been broad-based support from education stakeholders, state agencies and state government to modernize school district data systems to more easily allow teachers access to their students' data; and

WHEREAS, members of the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) seek information to help them perform more effectively and efficiently in their roles as teachers on behalf of their students; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes that an appropriate use of education data occurs when teachers and school staff are given the time and resources to access multiple sources of data. The IFT has long advocated that education plans be based from multiple sources of data, not an isolated state test, and that data must be linked to collaborative analysis and interpretation for improvement to occur; and

WHEREAS, the IFT recognizes that there are uses and limitations to educational data. While data play an important role in educational decision-making, they do not encapsulate every aspect of a classroom environment or student learning needs. There is a strong role for educator expertise and professional judgment; and

WHEREAS, IFT members who are experienced classroom educators understand that excessive reliance on quantitative data does not provide a full picture of their students' learning and can actually *impede*, rather than aid, in-depth understanding of their students, their school's performance, and judgments made about their own practice as professional educators; and

WHEREAS, the state has sought funding from a variety of state, federal and private sources that creates, in effect, a de facto national student database that has the ability to track teachers, as well as students, by their personal information from preschool through their educational career into the workforce; and

WHEREAS, as a way to fund the state goal of getting data into the hands of teachers, private dollars were sought by Illinois through a \$100 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation which created the non-profit entity "inBloom, Inc."; and

WHEREAS, inBloom, Inc. is offering states and districts a cloud-based service to store longitudinal data on students, teachers, and schools in a way that inBloom, Inc. claims is more efficient, effective, and secure than the way districts store such data now; and

WHEREAS, information within inBloom, Inc. will be stored in an electronic "data store" built by Wireless Generation, a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, which has been found to have illegally violated privacy in Great Britain and in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, in Illinois, the state has committed Race to the Top districts to join the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE), requiring select districts to input student and teacher data into ISLE which uses inBloom, Inc. technology; and

WHEREAS, this confidential data could potentially include children's personally identifiable information, including name, social security number, address, grades, test scores, disciplinary records, attendance, race, ethnicity, economic status, disabilities, health conditions, and other highly sensitive information; and

WHEREAS, inBloom, Inc. has already stated that it "cannot guarantee the security of the information stored...or that the information will not be intercepted when it is being transmitted"; and

WHEREAS, all this is happening in Illinois without parental notification or consent and without sufficient oversight; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes without the written consent of the parent or eligible students, no personally identifiable information should be disclosed to any party for commercial use or for profit; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes that personally identifiable information should not be disclosed to any other party unless that party has a legitimate educational interest without full oversight and written consent from the parent or eligible student; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes districts have an obligation and responsibility to define clear uses for educational data prior to the release of data to outside third parties and should only be used to support educational achievement; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) encourages its members to urge our state and local elected officials to pass legislation to protect the privacy and security of educational data and to ensure that parents are provided full notification and the right to consent before any disclosures occur; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT urges state officials to provide the oversight and guidance for district policy on the appropriate use of educational data; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT advocates for equity of access to technology and electronic tools that will allow our members to efficiently access multiple data points that provide information about their students and their schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports professional development for our members to increase their assessment literacy and include multiple sources (not just isolated assessment data) to understand what data can and cannot provide in creating a picture of student learning; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports our members in bargaining methods to preserve time during the school day to collaborate with their colleagues and develop action plans based on multiple sources of data as well as their expertise and judgment, leading to quality educational experiences for students; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT advocates on behalf of its members and their students that Illinois Shared Learning Environment maintains an educator/student-centered vision to support more efficient and effective teaching with better student outcomes while maintaining each educator's control over the classroom; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT opposes any legislative measure or effort on the federal, state, and local levels to disclose personally identifiable information to for-profit companies; and be it finally

RESOLVED, the IFT opposes all data systems that are vendor, profit driven uses of technology and products as a replacement for educators and their professional expertise in increasing student learning.

RESOLUTION NO. 5

BASIC PREVENTIVE CARE MUST INCLUDE CONTRACEPTION

Submitted by: Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers resolved in 1998 to commit our Union to upholding the rights of women and men in the area of reproductive choice and quality healthcare; and

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Labor resolved on December 6, 2001, to work with the government to ensure that contraceptive coverage was included in healthcare plans just as other drugs, devices, and preventive care were covered; and

WHEREAS, covering contraception does not raise healthcare costs and may help reduce employee absenteeism and medical costs related to unintended pregnancies; and

WHEREAS, providing contraception as a covered health benefit ensures fewer unintended pregnancies, healthier women, and stronger families; and

WHEREAS, President Obama's Affordable Health Care Act recognizes that birth control is basic healthcare for women and states that insurers must cover all prescribed FDA approved contraceptives; and

WHEREAS, nearly all women of reproductive age use contraception, including 98 percent of Catholic women, despite opposition by religious leaders; and

WHEREAS, extremists demanding no birth control coverage in the name of religious freedom held a congressional hearing in February 2012 in which they allowed no women or dissenting witnesses to speak and insisted that employers be allowed to deny healthcare coverage to their employees based on their personal beliefs; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) affirms its position that reproductive healthcare, including contraception, is basic healthcare for women and must be covered as a preventive health service; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT opposes efforts to restrict healthcare coverage on the grounds of religious freedom; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT affirms the right of all employees to make their own personal healthcare decisions regarding reproduction and other health issues; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT recognizes the denial of contraceptive coverage as discrimination against women and an attack on workers' right to basic health coverage; and be it further

RESOLVED, that IFT members, officers, and locals will utilize collective bargaining and other appropriate methods to gain coverage for contraception without co-pay in all workplaces as part of the implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act, and will actively oppose legislation that restricts contraceptive coverage; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reaffirms its commitment to advocate for contraceptive coverage as basic preventive healthcare for women at union meetings, women's committees, civil and human rights committees, local and community meetings, media events, and other places; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will urge the AFT and AFL-CIO to be visible and vocal in support of working women's rights to preventive healthcare including contraception coverage without co-pay as part of the implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act and will urge the AFT and AFL-CIO to use their resources to oppose legislation that restricts contraceptive coverage.

RESOLUTION NO. 6

BOYCOTT STATES DENYING WORKERS' RIGHTS

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, public sector unions are under vicious and sustained attack in Wisconsin where collective bargaining rights are threatened; and

WHEREAS, other states are poised to make similar attacks; and

WHEREAS, public sector unions spend considerable amounts of money in such states on meetings, summer institutes, office space, conventions, and on other expenses necessary for the running of large, complex organizations; and

WHEREAS, states and other entities that do not support public sector unions ought not to get our support; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) will not spend money such as for conventions and similar events, in Wisconsin or other states that deny collective bargaining rights to public sector employees or otherwise significantly constrain and reduce the rights of employees to organize and act collectively; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will direct its representatives to the Board of the American Federation of Teachers to do what it is in their power to have these organizations also withhold financial and material support from those who do not support collective bargaining.

RESOLUTION NO. 7

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION RESOLUTION AGAINST SCHOOL ACTIONS

Submitted by: Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, Chicago Public Schools school actions destabilize communities, alienate youth from the adults they trust, and increase urban violence; and

WHEREAS, these school actions displace teachers with strong ties to students and the community, deprive neighborhood schools of much needed resources, and demoralize students, teachers, and families; and

WHEREAS, these school actions do not lead to sustained, research-based school improvement once turnaround funds are depleted; and

WHEREAS, these school actions discriminatorily push students into charters, lowering enrollment and paving the way for school closures due to "underutilization"; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) furthermore maintains that "wall-to-wall International Baccalaureate (IB) initiatives" can be used as another form of turnaround, and create a form of selective schools that disproportionately place low-performing students into local neighborhood schools, thereby pulling high-performing students out of neighborhood

schools, ultimately increasing racial and socio-economic segregation, and further exacerbating the disparities between the schools and widening the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, to date there exists neither a convincing argument, nor compelling evidence, that any model of school closure, turnaround, or other initiatives such as “wall-to-wall IB” have, or will, increase sustained student achievement; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes with strength and conviction that not only do these ill-conceived school actions run contrary to the vision, mission, and value of a free public education for all, but also place profit over people and will constitute a gross misuse of taxpayer money; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) opposes and will vigorously resist the transfer of public assets to private interests as this leads to increased and unnecessary destabilization, segregation, and the creation of a two-tiered public school system: one for the rich and one for the poor; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT unconditionally and unanimously opposes any and all disruptive school actions, including closings, turnarounds, restarts, the use of International Baccalaureate programs to eliminate members, the removal of Career Technical Education programs, and any other action which diminishes the respect and educational curriculum that all communities deserve.

RESOLUTION NO. 8

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION OF IFT MEMBERS AND LEADERS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) membership has been undergoing a generational change over the past decade and has been challenged by meeting the needs of younger members and nurturing a new generation of union members and leaders; and

WHEREAS, “Gen Y” workers (traditionally, those born since 1977) across all industries are projected to make up nearly half of the workforce in 2020 and the IFT’s membership reflects that national trend; and

WHEREAS, younger members constitute a culturally distinct group among the IFT who often have professional concerns, desires, and beliefs distinguishable from others; and

WHEREAS, despite the claims of those who say that younger teachers and others will only practice for a short while and then move onto other careers, surveys show that the vast majority of Gen Y professionals want to stay and grow in their professions over the long-term; and

WHEREAS, the union should play a key role in helping younger workers develop in their professional lives and careers, and to sustaining them as they build excellent schools, colleges, universities, government offices, public facilities, and other workplaces; and

WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) have both studied the particular needs of younger workers and called on their affiliates and locals to develop the tools to support and engage a new generation of membership and leadership; and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO has called on its affiliates to “provide assistance in strategic planning and organizational development to young worker groups, without constraining their creative energy by imposing an overly structured process or template upon them,” (AFL-CIO Young Worker Groups Research Project, 2012); and

WHEREAS, in July, 2012, the IFT President and Executive Board established an “Engaging Younger Members Work Group” composed of IFT Vice Presidents, administrators, professional and support staff, and the IFT President to study the issues surrounding our younger members and how to engage them more effectively, and that group met repeatedly over the last year to study and develop a strategic plan for the engagement of younger members, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) Executive Board considers the creation of a “Younger Members Constituency Council” on par with the union’s other existing councils that will guide the Executive Board in the development and implementation of policy and programs designed to assist and engage young members and integrate their energy, creativity and power to help us build a stronger IFT; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT, through listening to its own younger members and their concerns and needs, develops a set of programs and practices to assist them as professionals in their workplaces and in their unions, and that aid IFT locals to better engage with, serve, and activate younger members and utilize their strengths and perspectives to improve our professions, our union, and the labor movement.

RESOLUTION NO. 9

FAIR AND ADEQUATE REVENUE COLLECTION FOR ILLINOIS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, Illinois’ economic output is the 5th largest among the states in the Union, while the State’s investment in critical public services ranks 42nd in the nation; and

WHEREAS, for decades Illinois has, and continues to, rank dead last in state investment in K-12 education, contributing only about 30 percent of total dollars associated with education spending; and

WHEREAS, Illinois state investment in higher education has dramatically decreased with colleges and universities experiencing funding levels comparable to 1998, and nationally a student loan debt crisis that surpassed the \$1 trillion in 2012; and

WHEREAS, at 102 workers for each 10,000 residents, Illinois ranks 49th in the nation among states with the fewest number of state employees per capita; and

WHEREAS, data from the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability reveals that, over the past three decades, inflation-adjusted real wages for most Illinois workers has declined, while at the same time the upper 10 percent of income earners have experienced a dramatic 23.3 percent increase; and

WHEREAS, Illinois’ decades-old system of revenue collection is antiquated and insufficient in maintaining reasoned growth with changes in the economy; and

WHEREAS, because of the State's outdated revenue system, a substantially larger tax burden is placed on low- and middle-income Illinois workers and their families; and

WHEREAS, of the 41 states with an individual income tax, all but seven – including Illinois – have in place a modernized, graduated rate structure that relies on a worker's ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, every neighboring state of Illinois has in place revenue collection systems which include taxation on various services; and

WHEREAS, one of the State's largest and most profitable industries includes financial and commodities trading services, resulting in billions of untaxed transactions annually; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of increased profits, many of Illinois' large corporate businesses have negotiated special revenue sucking tax deals not afforded to small independent businesses, resulting in both the removal of hundreds of billions of dollars from public investment and higher local tax rates to make up for the loss; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' flawed tax system drives deficit growth; and

WHEREAS, a tax system should be sound and stable to fund a modern economy, should be fair to tax payers such that the tax burden should be assessed in a manner that corresponds to a taxpayer's ability to pay, and should generate adequate revenue during poor economic times; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) recognizes and advocates that substantial adjustments to the state's system of taxation and revenue collections should be comprehensive to fulfill the obligations of government to provide quality services to the public; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT maintains a strong role in leadership, advocacy, and support of coalitions such as "A Better Illinois," who seek to change the Illinois Constitution by establishing an end to the antiquated, regressive simple income tax rate and replace it with a system that reflects workers' income, applying lower rates to lower income and higher rates to higher income; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT will support and advocate for a revenue collection system that includes taxation on varied consumer services, which is the fastest growing segment of the state's economy; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT will also support and advocate efforts to apply a tax or fee on the hundreds of billions of transactions associated with the financial trading and exchange industry in Illinois; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT will continue to support and advocate for the end of billions of dollars in special tax cut deals afforded to highly profitable corporate entities at the expense of small businesses and low- and middle-income families; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT commits to identifying community and labor allies for its locals, conducts canvasses, and builds forums in our local communities to generate support for fair taxation in Illinois; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that, upon the success of securing fairness in our state's system of taxation and revenue collections, the IFT will advocate for varied tax relief programs aimed at Illinois working families to assist with their efforts in achieving the financial security needed to grow Illinois' middle class.

RESOLUTION NO. 10

FORGING COMMUNITY ALLIANCES

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, alliances between unions and community organizations strengthen the voice of all workers and all community constituencies; and

WHEREAS, the union movement has played a central role in issues of economic fairness and social justice throughout its history; and

WHEREAS, union-community coalitions can extend their reach through shared resources, broaden community support on workplace issues, and create relationships that engage, mobilize, and empower community members into action; and

WHEREAS, recent attacks on public education and services, social services, social safety nets, collective bargaining, and voting rights have been central to legislation passed in several states around the country; and

WHEREAS, the Citizens United Supreme Court decision has threatened the dynamics of democracy and created an era where the voice of a few can outweigh the voice of the many; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, a union-community coalition successfully defeated a call for a constitutional convention, which could have removed constitutional protections for workers; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Chicago Teachers Union and its community partners fought and won a fair contract which focused on students and high-quality education for all; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers continues to collaborate on specific campaigns which affect the rights of our members; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) expands its work with coalitions and community organizations beyond member workplace issues to broader issues of economic fairness, social justice, and a revitalized middle class; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT engages with statewide civic and community organizations and other partners to achieve shared goals; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT provides materials and ongoing training for local unions on establishing community partnerships and developing new approaches that turn unfavorable conditions into opportunities for more positive outcomes; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT recognizes regional and constituency diversity in devising solutions to engage all members in collaborative partnerships that improve the quality of services; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT makes community engagement a cornerstone in its work with local unions along with collective bargaining and workplace rights.

RESOLUTION NO. 11

IFT CONVENTION IN ILLINOIS

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) Convention is regularly hosted in St. Louis, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, the size of the IFT Convention generates significant economic benefits to the host city, including tax revenues; and

WHEREAS, most IFT members are employed by public entities in the state of Illinois that are significantly or solely funded on taxes collected in the state of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, hosting the IFT Convention in the state of Illinois would help produce tax revenues for the state of Illinois and the host city; and

WHEREAS, hosting the IFT Convention in the state of Illinois would help develop good will among elected officials by keeping revenue in the state of Illinois; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers hosts its convention in the state of Illinois from this point forward.

RESOLUTION NO. 12

ILLINOIS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS REQUESTING A COST ANALYSIS OF TESTING AND TEST PREP

Submitted by Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 increased accountability requirements necessitating an increase in assessments and requirements for disaggregated data; and

WHEREAS, for nearly a decade, implementation of accountability reforms has been a priority for states' education policymakers; and

WHEREAS, each state has its own process for developing, adopting, and implementing standards and assessments, what students are expected to know and be able to do can vary widely from state to state; and

WHEREAS, development of the art and science of pedagogy has encouraged and improved the use of regular classroom assessments to inform instruction; and

WHEREAS, program evaluation often requires the use of regular and timely student assessments, especially for students who are struggling academically and who are receiving intervention or remediation in reading or mathematics; and

WHEREAS, English language learners participate in testing to determine their respective levels of English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, the individual education plans of students with disabilities include monitoring and frequent assessment; and

WHEREAS, research indicates the need for increasing instructional time, particularly for low-performing students; and

WHEREAS, increasing the number and frequency of assessments has concomitantly decreased instructional time; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2009, governors and chief state school officers from across the United States began the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative to develop a set of shared national standards ensuring that students in each state are held to the same level of expectations as students in the world's highest-performing countries; and

WHEREAS, forty-five states and the District of Columbia's public education department in 2010 approved CCSS for mathematics and English language arts; and

WHEREAS, efforts are currently underway to develop CCSS in science and social studies; and

WHEREAS, the transition from many states' current standards-based assessments to assessments aligned to the CCSS is scheduled to be implemented in many large urban areas during the 2012-2013 school year and completed everywhere by 2014-2015; and

WHEREAS, assessments aligned to the CCSS are increasingly being used as a percentage of teacher evaluations; and

WHEREAS, many of the aligned evaluations are designed and distributed by testing and publishing companies, and not by educators in the classrooms; and

WHEREAS, testing has become a multi-billion dollar industry with a lack of oversight to ensure that student welfare is prioritized over profits; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) lobbies state legislative bodies to mandate an analysis of time and funding of assessments; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the study determines the following:

- A. the number and kinds of tests required by various entities, such as the federal government, state government, district and school or classroom assessments;
- B. the per-student cost of assessments;
- C. the amount of instructional time spent both on preparing students to take assessments and on the time spent by students taking assessments; and
- D. the ways in which the data are used; and be it further

RESOLVED, that study data be disaggregated into the following groups of students:

- A. English language learners;
- B. students receiving intervention or remediation services;
- C. students with disabilities;
- D. general education students;
- E. students by ethnicity; and
- F. economically disadvantaged students; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the report includes a comprehensive audit of campaign contributions by test-publishing companies and other organizations profiting from the testing industry; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the legislative finance committee and the legislative education study committee report the results of the study to the 2014 legislature and the governor; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the elected heads of all local affiliates of our union and to other education union allies where deemed appropriate.

RESOLUTION NO. 13

INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, if the federal minimum wage had been tied to the earnings of the top one percent it would be nearly \$30 an hour; and

WHEREAS, if the federal minimum wage had kept up with increased rates in worker productivity it would be \$22 an hour; and

WHEREAS, if the federal minimum wage had been tied to the real wages of the average worker, it would be in excess of \$10 an hour; and

WHEREAS, the federal and state minimum wage is less than \$10 an hour; and

WHEREAS, the bottom 99 percent of U.S. workers experienced a 0.4 percent decline in pre-tax income during the 2010-2011 fiscal year economic recovery; and

WHEREAS, half of the U.S. population, or 146 million individuals of whom nearly 2 million reside in Illinois, lives in poverty; and

WHEREAS, without indexing the minimum wage to the rate of inflation, workers are locked in perpetual and increasing poverty; and

WHEREAS, ten states have passed laws requiring annual adjustments to the minimum wage relative to the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) supports legislation establishing a meaningful increase to the Illinois minimum wage to meet the real world financial demands that low income workers face; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports annual increases to the Illinois minimum wage equal to the percentage increase of the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will strongly encourage the American Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations to use their resources to advocate for legislation at the federal level which would increase the federal minimum wage and index for inflation.

RESOLUTION NO. 14

INVESTIGATE SOCIAL SECURITY OPTIONS/CHANGES

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois does not contribute to Social Security for educators; and

WHEREAS, state employees who are enrolled in the state's self-managed pension plan do not have a guaranteed retirement income; and

WHEREAS, many of these state employees signed up for the self-managed plan may not have anticipated a life-long career in Illinois and may not have a spouse/partner with guaranteed benefits; and

WHEREAS, many of these state employees who are signed up for the self-managed plan have had life changing/altering events that have significantly changed their career goals and retirement needs; and

WHEREAS, Illinois state law prohibits employees from changing their retirement benefit options once an individual selects a retirement plan; and

WHEREAS, this provision prevents any state employee from changing his/her retirement plans based on changing personal needs; and

WHEREAS, all state employees who receive a pension and have qualified for Social Security benefits through other employment are penalized by Social Security for having earned a pension; and

WHEREAS, federal Social Security is a separate retirement system from the State of Illinois' pension system; and

WHEREAS, the federal Social Security's windfall elimination provision and spousal offset provision penalize those who have worked two careers and faithfully paid into each retirement system; and

WHEREAS, these provisions have created significant harm because they impact a person's retirement security; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) studies the possibility of changing the pension code to potentially permit an employee to change his/her pension decision; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT studies the possibility of adding a provision to the self-managed plan that either guarantees some level of return or a member's option to enroll in Social Security; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT, working in conjunction with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), studies the legal ramifications due to the economic harm created by the windfall elimination provision and spousal offset provision to those who have both a state pension and qualify for Social Security; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that if the results of these studies demonstrate harm, the IFT will work cooperatively with the AFT to change federal law to alter the windfall elimination provision and spousal offset provision to create fairness and protect retirement security.

RESOLUTION NO. 15

MAINTAIN, SALVAGE, AND DEVELOP CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, Career and Technical Education (CTE) is critical for the prosperity of the economy and the talent development of the individual; and

WHEREAS, the Obama administration is promoting a manufacturing revival as labor-saving technology, rising costs overseas, and cheap energy at home have prompted some manufacturers to bring factory jobs back from overseas; and

WHEREAS, the American Society of Civil Engineers projects that between now and 2020, the country will need to spend \$2.75 trillion on infrastructure and stated that major infrastructure repairs will be needed for the nation's roads, bridges, dams, and public structures, thus creating a need for the skills a robust CTE can provide; and

WHEREAS, the ability to design, manufacture, construct, and repair not only foster and develop creativity and problem solving abilities in the individual and are intrinsically valuable skills for the sake of personal accomplishment and fulfillment, but also contribute to the good of society, the well-being of the community, and the economic competitiveness of the nation; and

WHEREAS, all of the statements above indicate the need to continue to train students in the skills of design, carpentry, welding, plumbing, machining, and the various other skills needed for manufacturing and construction; and

WHEREAS, it can be proved that there has been systematic diminishment, closure, and defunding of CTE programs and classes reported in certain districts throughout the state of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, a crucial role and an incumbent responsibility of our education system is to enable our students to become not only college ready, but career ready; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) will advocate for a halt to the closing, altering, under-staffing, or diminishing in any way of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs without adequate and research based justifications; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT will advocate for the maintenance and development of CTE courses and programs throughout the state of Illinois to promote full employment and economic development throughout the state; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will devote the appropriate time resources and study of the phasing in and coordination of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs in order to make recommendations to ensure the appropriate alignment within the ongoing and developing CTE programs for the good of our students, our state, and our national economy.

RESOLUTION NO. 16

MANDATED CURRICULUM TO ADDRESS ERIN'S LAW

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, members of the Illinois Federation of Teachers Civil, Human and Women's Rights Constituency Council recognize the need to fulfill the recommendations of the *Erin's Law Taskforce* which was signed into law in January of 2013; and

WHEREAS, Erin Merryn, a young woman from Schaumburg, bravely disclosed that she had been the victim of childhood sexual assault (CSA); and

WHEREAS, this led to the creation of *Erin's Law Taskforce*, which investigated the prevalence of CSA in Illinois and found that CSA cuts across socio-economic characteristics; is often perpetrated by someone whom the victim trusts; and that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday (Center for Disease Control, 2006); and

WHEREAS, sexual assault has profound lasting emotional and psychological effects on the victims; and

WHEREAS, young students in Illinois schools participate in bus drills, fire drills, and tornado drills. They learn about 'stranger danger' and how to resist initiation into drug and alcohol use through Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) curriculum; and

WHEREAS, most school sexual education programs, if they address sexual assault, only do so for students in grades 6 through 12; and

WHEREAS, teaching our youngest students about "safe touch vs. unsafe touch" and "safe secrets vs. unsafe secrets" and empowering them with a voice, we may save them from enormous harm; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that members of the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) collaborate with school officials to develop age-appropriate sexual and family health education curriculum for grades pre-K through college, which will prepare our young people with the strategies to stay safe and get vocal should they ever be in danger of sexual assault; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that members of the IFT will urge our elected officials to fund the recommendations made by the *Erin's Law Taskforce*, so as not to repeat Ms. Merryn's experience.

RESOLUTION NO. 17

PEER EVALUATION

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) believes that evaluation is a means of enhancing the professional expertise of employees and retaining quality educators; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes that practicing educators can provide dedicated, expert, and high quality peer evaluation when implemented thoughtfully and with a shared vision of labor management balance and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, the IFT also believes that the planning and implementation of peer evaluation programs must be negotiated or cooperatively developed and maintained by the local union and the school district; and

WHEREAS, the IFT further believes that the duties and responsibilities of all parties must be locally bargained, clearly defined, and uniformly administered. Peer evaluators must be selected through a defined process with articulated criteria, be properly trained and prequalified, be provided with adequate time to fulfill their responsibilities, and be properly compensated; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers should provide State level supports for local unions wishing to implement a peer evaluation program at the local level.

RESOLUTION NO. 18

POLITICAL CANDIDATE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the Illinois General Assembly has significant influence over our members' compensation and benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois General Assembly has a significant influence over the academic missions of our state universities and community colleges; and

WHEREAS, many members of the Illinois General Assembly do not have an understanding of higher education; and

WHEREAS, despite endorsements and political contributions, many of our supported elected General Assembly members still do not reach out to faculty and staff to better understand the issues that affect higher education; and

WHEREAS, many of our members may have an interest in engaging in local and state elections but lack sufficient understanding of campaigns; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) develops a candidate recruitment program to identify and recruit prospective candidates from their respective members that reflect our values and goals regardless of political affiliation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT develops a candidate training program for recruited candidates to help prepare them to run effective campaigns at any level of state and local government; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT offers issues training to any interested candidate.

RESOLUTION NO. 19

PROTECTING MEMBERS' RIGHTS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, anti-labor corporate interest groups are working under the pretext of education reform and taxpayer rights to attack unions, limit collective bargaining rights, and ultimately dismantle all public sector unions; and

WHEREAS, the economic and fiscal constraints confronting school districts, local and state governments, and public colleges and universities create pressure to maintain services with fewer resources, erode public confidence in the quality and effectiveness of public services, and accelerate the trend toward privatization and contracting out of public services as a quick-fix solution; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent on the Illinois Federation of Teachers to support members in organizing their communities to fight these attacks so as to defend our members, students, schools, taxpayers, communities, and the continued promise of public education and public services; and

WHEREAS, to ensure a high-quality work force, the union must play a role in developing and/or implementing quality effective recruiting and hiring practices, strong induction and mentoring programs, high-quality professional development, meaningful evaluation, and, when necessary, fair, timely intervention and dismissal procedures; and

WHEREAS, due process ensures employment-related decisions are made fairly and, during layoffs, will ensure fairness, security, and transparency by preventing employers from manipulating the layoff order to suit personal preferences or biases and to prevent employers from seeking to lay off the most senior employees as a cost-cutting measure; and

WHEREAS, unrepresented employees have no control over their working conditions, ironic especially for Chicagoans where one of the most significant union-related incidents in the history of organized labor, Chicago's famed Haymarket incident of May 4, 1886, was sparked by workers' demands for the eight-hour work day; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) aggressively promotes legislation that guarantees full representation rights well beyond the National Labor Relations Act by restoring members' rights under the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act and the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act for all employees who are employed in tax-supported public schools and agencies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports candidates whose platforms include fighting to ensure such representation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT works to maintain and improve worker quality along with enhancing our profession and protecting the rights of our profession; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT continues to provide support to defend against attacks on our members in every constituency as they arise – an attack on one is an attack on all

regardless of whether it is an attack on public employees, health professionals, higher education faculty and staff, and/or preK-12 educators and staff.

RESOLUTION NO. 20

QUALITY PUBLIC EDUCATION: A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, a strong public education system is essential to the individual and collective well-being of our state, our communities, and our economy, and the guarantee of access to a free and quality public education is a right accorded to every student; and

WHEREAS, students in public education deserve equal opportunity and access to highly qualified teachers, staff, and instructional resources on day one of each school year; and

WHEREAS, the complex and considerable challenges facing public education require a public school environment that fosters thoughtful labor/management solutions, shared responsibility, consideration of proven strategies and programs, and public education policies that help ensure access to the excellent public education every student deserves; and

WHEREAS, for the past several years, Illinois' fiscal crisis has affected public education, not just through cuts to core programs, but through job losses that destabilize our students' families, cuts to other critical services that the communities we serve depend on, and the stress that pulls at the social fabric that unites us; and

WHEREAS, our shared pain, rather than divide us, must instead become the impetus for our shared efforts to force a local and state commitment to programs and policies designed to invest, not disinvest, in public education, creating equal opportunities for all students; and

WHEREAS, "so-called" education reformers demonize our state's public education system based on carefully selected examples to argue that education will be improved when unionized teachers are blamed and taxpayer money is redirected to corporate priorities focused on the private sector; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon all of us to stand against shortsighted arguments that focus on affixing blame rather than finding solutions to the problems that confront us, and to stand up for the students and young adults we educate to become productive members of our democratic society; and

WHEREAS, the current focus on low-level, high-stakes tests and their extreme misuse as a result of ideologically and business-driven education policy has not improved public education. Several studies have shown the exact opposite: test-based rewards and sanctions for public education have slowed our progress in narrowing the opportunity gap and have diverted attention away from many other important educational goals; and

WHEREAS, testing has become a multi-billion dollar industry with a lack of oversight to ensure that student welfare is prioritized over profit; and

WHEREAS, research indicates the need for increasing instructional time as well as educator collaboration time for a better school day rather than only a longer school day, a better school year rather than only a longer school year, particularly for low-performing students; and

WHEREAS, the public needs to be made aware that the emphasis on testing and accountability diminishes the well-rounded education young people deserve; and

WHEREAS, parts of the curriculum like the fine arts, music, career and technical education, and physical education are being shortchanged or abandoned as teachers are forced to spend too much time on test preparation and data collection at the expense of more engaging instruction; and

WHEREAS, all students deserve a rich, meaningful public education that provides them the opportunity to learn how to think critically and creatively and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and challenges that await them as they become contributing members of a democratic society; and

WHEREAS, a parent's income, education level, and ethnicity have been proved to be strong indicators of student achievement in school and on standardized tests (*Test Scores, Poverty and Ethnicity: The New American Dilemma*; D. Orlich and G. Gifford, 2006); and

WHEREAS, in 2011 about 1 in 5 public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013) were considered high poverty, and recent research indicates an income achievement gap showing that family income is now the biggest determining and predictive factor in a student's educational achievement (Reardon 2011); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) supports a quality public education for all of our students as a fundamental right; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports members' rights to a voice in order to define and maintain standards of excellence for our profession; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT provides support to local unions to mobilize programs and policies critical to building strong and vibrant schools and communities throughout Illinois; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT insists on collaboration with educators as a necessity during drafting of legislation and implementation of regulations to ensure that high-quality learning standards, instruction, and content are given their proper emphasis; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT promotes legislation to ensure that all students continue to have qualified teachers, school staff, and administrators and an engaged and enriching curriculum; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT promotes the expansion of wrap-around services to ensure a level playing field for all students that addresses poverty, social, health and emotional issues to create safe, collaborative environments for students and teachers, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports legislation and programs that promote teaching and learning – not testing – as the driving force for classroom instruction so that we can give all students the rich, meaningful public education they deserve and need to be productive citizens, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT partners with anyone who is committed to the shared goal of advancing what is good for students and fair to educators.

RESOLUTION NO. 21

RECLAIMING THE PROMISE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) TEACH 2013 conference AFT president Randi Weingarten laid out a vision for reclaiming our public schools; and

WHEREAS, together we can reclaim the promise of public education and unite for public schools; and

WHEREAS, our public schools represent our nation's and our state's commitment to helping all students dream their dreams and achieve them; and

WHEREAS, a high-quality public education for all students is an economic necessity, an anchor of democracy, a moral imperative, and a fundamental civil right, without which none of our other rights can be fully realized; and

WHEREAS, it's time to reclaim the promise of public education, not as it is today or as it was in the past, but as we imagine it for our students to fulfill our collective obligation to help all students succeed; and

WHEREAS, reclaiming the promise is about fighting for neighborhood public schools that are safe, welcoming places for teaching and learning; and

WHEREAS, reclaiming the promise is about ensuring that teachers are well-prepared, are supported, and have time to collaborate so they can meet the individual needs of every student; and

WHEREAS, reclaiming the promise is about making sure our students have an engaging curriculum with art, music, physical education, social studies, writing, and science, as well as math and reading, to bring the joy back to learning; and

WHEREAS, reclaiming the promise is about ensuring that students have access to wraparound services to meet their emotional, social, and health needs; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) works in partnership with the American Federation of Teachers to spread the word and unite our members' voices with the people we serve and the communities in which we live to reclaim the promise of public education; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reclaims the promise of public education through rebuilding of the middle class, providing for economic opportunity, fairness, and the future of our state; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reclaims the promise of public education through creative and innovative ways, including the collective bargaining process, that simultaneously refute our critics and advance our values; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reclaims the promise of public education by fighting against what doesn't work and by advocating for what does; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reclaims the promise of public education by fighting for neighborhood public schools that are safe, welcoming places which support the joy of teaching and learning; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports legislation, public policies, and collective actions that make every public school a place where parents want to send their students, where teachers want to teach, and where all students are engaged and have opportunities to succeed.

RESOLUTION NO. 22

REPEAL OF THE STATE CHARTER COMMISSION

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) believes that a quality education for every child, regardless of heritage or circumstance, is the key to equality, freedom, and the realization of individual potential; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes that without quality public education, a great divide will exist between the educated and the uneducated, corresponding to a divide between the prosperous and the impoverished; and

WHEREAS, the continued erosion of financial support for public education serves to deepen the inequalities and diminish the opportunities for every Illinois child to be well educated, achieve the American dream, and contribute to this nation's greatness; and

WHEREAS, the IFT as a participant in the Alternative Authorizer Task Force along with other education stakeholder partners, suggested that the legislature should move cautiously when considering policies which are intended to open charter schools in communities across the state, and we continue to feel it is incumbent on the legislature and the governor to require a rigorous approval process, strong regulatory oversight, and a process to ensure educator, community, and parental input; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Charter School Commission was created in 2011 by the Illinois Legislature and has proved to operate in a manner that consistently authorizes, against the will of the local district and communities, additional charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the IFT supports locally approved charter schools which are determined to be in the public interest and are under the control and management of democratically elected local boards of education; and

WHEREAS, the IFT is concerned about this newly created mechanism to expand a separate system of state-authorized charter schools; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) urges the governor and state legislators to commit to adequately fund quality public school education for all K-12 students throughout Illinois; to acknowledge the countless, unheralded successes of public schools across the state; to cease efforts to erode local control of public schools; and to encourage the innovation, flexibility, and accountability that are necessary for Illinois' public schools to continuously improve; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT does hereby requests that support be given to legislation introduced to repeal the Charter School Commission; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports any appeal of a locally denied charter application go directly to the Illinois State Board of Education for a final decision.

RESOLUTION NO. 23

RESOLUTION ON HIGH STAKES TESTING

Submitted by: Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, the “Whereas” sections of this resolution are modeled on the resolution passed by more than 360 Texas school boards as of April 23, 2012, and was written by Advancement Project; Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund; FairTest; Forum for Education and Democracy; MecklenburgACTS; Deborah Meier; NAACP Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.; National Education Association; New York Performance Standards Consortium; Tracy Novick; Parents Across America; Parents United for Responsible Education-Chicago; Diane Ravitch; Race to Nowhere; Time Out From Testing; and United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries; and

WHEREAS, our nation’s future well-being relies on a high-quality public education system that prepares all students for college, careers, citizenship, and lifelong learning, and strengthens the nation’s social and economic well-being; and

WHEREAS, our nation’s school systems have been spending growing amounts of time, money, and energy on high-stakes standardized testing, in which student performance on standardized tests is used to make major decisions affecting individual students, educators, and schools; and

WHEREAS, the overreliance on high-stakes standardized testing in state and federal accountability systems is undermining educational quality and equity in U.S. public schools by hampering educators’ efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, democracy, and an increasingly global society and economy; and

WHEREAS, it is widely recognized that standardized testing is an inadequate and often unreliable measure of both student learning and educator effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, the over-emphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many schools, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing the love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and undermining school climate; and

WHEREAS, high-stakes standardized testing has negative effects for students from all backgrounds, and especially for low-income students, English language learners, children of color, and those with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the culture and structure of the systems in which students learn must change in order to foster engaging school experiences that promote a joy in learning, depth of thought, and breadth of knowledge for students; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) calls on the governor, legislature, and state education board and administrators to reexamine public school accountability systems in the state of Illinois and to develop a system that more accurately reflects the broad range of student learning, is based on the complete reliance and professional judgment of teachers as the central way of evaluating students, and is used to support students and improve schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT urges the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to call on the U.S. Congress and Administration to overhaul the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (currently known as the “No Child Left Behind Act”), eliminate testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating educators, and

promote democratic, local control as the central power to be used to determine quality of schools, teaching, and learning; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls on the governor, state legislature, and local education boards and administrators to examine public school accountability systems to provide full transparency of all standardized tests with disclosure of all items (including scoring materials and scoring rubrics) once a test has been administered and results have been reported; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT urges the AFT to call on the U.S. Congress, the Administration, the governors, state legislatures, and state and local education boards and administrators for the full exposure of the costs and interests of all parties associated with the acquisition and implementation of all standardized tests.

RESOLUTION NO. 24

RESOLUTION FOR THE ILLINOIS FEDERATION OF TEACHERS TO SUPPORT FINANCIAL TRANSACTION TAX BILLS

Submitted by: Chicago Teachers Union, Local 1

WHEREAS, a government must provide for the common good in order to function properly, and there is a direct correlation between the number of citizens whose fundamental needs are met and the percentage of citizens that can be classified as productive members of society, with the rate at which they are advanced educationally, economically, and technologically; and

WHEREAS, workers in the field of Education have a natural concern for the welfare of children and the family structures that support them, and in the years since the 2008 financial crisis, the number of homeless students (children living on the streets, in shelters or doubled-up with other families) increased 38 percent to 1.6 million nationwide; and

WHEREAS, in the last five years, 43 states have cut student funding for higher education as the cost of post secondary public education continues to rise faster than the cost of healthcare; and

WHEREAS, across America we see high levels of unemployment, and broad declines in healthcare, deteriorating infrastructure, shrinking pensions, and retirement savings, as workers in the fields of education, healthcare, and public safety are laid off as a result of a financial crisis they did not create; and

WHEREAS, Wall Street and the big banks have failed our economy and are exploiting tax loopholes while generating record profits and being rewarded with billions in bailouts and bonuses while leaving millions of Americans to suffer; and

WHEREAS, a recent national iteration of a financial transaction tax bill called the "Inclusive Prosperity Act" popularly known as the "Robin Hood Tax" (H.R. 1579) calls for the revenues gained to be used for such critical needs as education and job training, student debt relief, rebuilding public infrastructure, public sector jobs, public sector pensions, green jobs, expanding and improving Medicaid and Medicare, housing assistance for low income households, and protecting our environment; and

WHEREAS, the concept of a financial transaction tax is not novel, but has been in existence in England since 1694 at the London Stock Exchange, existed in the United States from 1914 to 1966 as a “securities transfer tax,” was in effect in the state and city of New York in the 20th century, and was approved in 2013 by the European Union for 11 Eurozone countries; and

WHEREAS, the United Kingdom’s 0.5 percent tax on stock trades raises their government billions of dollars a year and this is not a tax on the public but for the public. This tax would apply to Wall Street banks, hedge funds, and other financial institutions and would not apply to ordinary Americans, their personal savings, their pensions, or everyday business and consumer activity such as purchases using Automated Teller Machines or debit cards; and

WHEREAS, the rate of this tax would be set as low as 50 cents on every \$100 of trades and would target reckless short-term financial speculation that drove previous economic crises, pushed up gas and food prices in the United States and around the world, and continues to threaten financial stability; and

WHEREAS, this Act is supported by such organizations as the Chicago Teachers Union, National Nurses United, the National Organization of Women, Jobs with Justice, Oxfam America, MoveOn.org, Greenpeace, 350.org; and Noble Prize winning economists Joseph Stiglitz and Paul Krugman, and business leaders Bill Gates, George Soros, and Warren Buffett; and

WHEREAS, in addition to H.R. 1579 filed at the national level, there have been two bills for a Financial Transaction Tax filed at the Illinois state level in 2013, House Bills 1554 and 3732, which would produce revenues of anywhere from 6 billion to 40 billion dollars annually depending upon the taxing formula; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Illinois Federation of Teachers publicly supports, promotes, and publicizes Financial Transaction Tax bills that can be implemented at state and national levels, and its members educate and encourage other locals, nationals, grassroots and non-profit organizations, and individuals to do the same until the time as such bills become law.

RESOLUTION NO. 25

RESTORING ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, Scott Turow stated in *Huffington Post* that “Widespread access to knowledge, like public education, is one of the pillars of our democracy, a guarantee that we can maintain a well-informed citizenry.”; and

WHEREAS, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has at least five different draft bills available to state legislatures that use various methods to undermine the capacity to create great public schools in every neighborhood by diverting resources they desperately need; and

WHEREAS, the vultures of education, most notably, the Gates Foundation, Eli Broad, and the Walton Family prey on the damage current fiscal policy has done to our schools across the country and most recently Chicago; and

WHEREAS, these corporate interests are poised and fully intend to destroy the already wounded public education system; and

WHEREAS, battles have been waged in communities across Illinois and specifically in Chicago to fight this corporate takeover; and

WHEREAS, the first step in this destruction occurs when self-determination by elected school boards is replaced by corporate interests determined to privatize education; and

WHEREAS, in 1995 the Illinois General Assembly placed the Chicago Public Schools under the control of the Chicago city mayor; and

WHEREAS, since their establishment by legislation in 1988, there has been systematic undermining and abridgement of the power and authority of Chicago's local school councils; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) removed the school boards in East St. Louis and North Chicago, replacing the governance with non-elected boards appointed by the State Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, the precedent set by removing the democratically elected school boards could impact local education governing boards throughout Illinois; and

WHEREAS, in 2011 the Illinois General Assembly established a State Charter School Commission whose primary authority is to override democratically elected school boards and grant charter schools applications when a school district opposes them; and

WHEREAS, this nine-member Charter School Commission appointed by ISBE includes a five-member majority representing corporate interests; and

WHEREAS, as a direct result of teachers union opposition to the privatization of public education and the erosion of adequate public investment for schools, the corporate and ALEC agenda strives to weaken teachers unions and demonize the public education profession; and

WHEREAS, democracy in public education is paramount because quality public education creates citizens dedicated to a democratic society; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) calls upon the Illinois General Assembly to formulate and pass laws restoring and requiring a democratically elected school board in Chicago; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls upon the Illinois General Assembly to maintain the spirit and integrity of the laws sustaining the local school councils in Chicago; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls upon the Illinois General Assembly to formulate and pass laws that restore local autonomy to the school boards in East St. Louis and North Chicago; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls upon the Illinois General Assembly to formulate and pass laws restoring local control over the determination of charter school authorization; and be it finally

RESOLVED, the IFT will encourage locals to take an active role in civic responsibility and electing qualified and responsible individuals to local school boards that will perpetuate the goal of great public schools in every neighborhood.

RESOLUTION NO. 26

RIGHT TO ORGANIZE AND COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, collective bargaining promotes workplace democracy, reduces conflict through the resolution of labor disputes, honors existing collective bargaining agreements, and ensures recognition and protection of workers' voices, rights, wages, benefits, and working conditions; and

WHEREAS, unionized workers are better trained and more highly skilled than non-unionized workers leading to a safer and more stable work environment which results in 27 percent greater productivity; and

WHEREAS, the right to collectively bargain resulted in the eight-hour work day, the forty-hour work week, healthcare, retirement security, and wage standards that built the middle class in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Wisconsin banned bargaining over benefits and working conditions and limited wage increases to the Consumer Price Index for all public employees; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, Michigan and Indiana became the twenty-third and twenty-fourth states to pass so called "right-to-work" laws restricting worker rights and driving down wages; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Policy Institute, an American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) affiliate, is expanding resources to pass right-to-work legislation in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the percentage of private sector workers in the United States with a union job has declined from approximately 35 percent at its peak to less than 7 percent in 2012; and

WHEREAS, the share of income going to the top 10 percent of society increases as the percentage of union workers declines; and

WHEREAS, the average CEO in the United States makes 380 times as much as the average worker; and

WHEREAS, the average Walmart worker would have to work one thousand years to earn as much as Walmart CEO Michael T. Duke earns in a single year; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) supports legislation and public policies to secure the right of all workers, public and private, to organize and collectively bargain; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT reaffirms a commitment to organize public and private sector workers in Illinois and educate current members regarding the value of a collective voice for ALL WORKERS; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports other organized labor affiliates in their concerted actions to secure the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will strongly encourage the Illinois American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), the American Federation of Teachers and the AFL-CIO to use their resources to advocate for legislation at the

state and federal levels to protect and facilitate workers' rights to organize and collectively bargain.

RESOLUTION NO. 27

SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, community schools are a place for partnership between a school and supportive community resources integrating academics, health, social services, youth and community development, and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, community schools lead to improved educational achievement and overall student learning, stronger families, and healthier communities that emphasize practical learning and community problem-solving; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) recognizes the fundamental principles developed by the American Federation of Teachers that govern the creation of community schools; and

WHEREAS, the IFT believes all students have a right to learn and achieve academic success regardless of where, or under what circumstances, they live. Too often, children from disadvantaged areas, whether in urban centers or rural communities, lack the additional supports other children have at home and in their communities that promote learning; and

WHEREAS, research shows that access to healthcare, social services, and extended and additional learning and recreational opportunities, as well as increased parent involvement, are critical to student success; and

WHEREAS, when community schools are carefully designed and built with input from the school staff through their union and the community, they are better able to accommodate the various services and activities they provide. Research finds that a well-designed, sustainable school environment supports academic goals and can significantly improve students' learning, productivity, health, and overall well-being. Studies continue to show that student attendance is consistently better in sustainable, well-balanced community schools located in disadvantaged areas and students demonstrate real progress; and

WHEREAS, existing Illinois community school models – like the Community Schools Initiative in Chicago, which has launched more than 175 community schools in partnership with nearly 50 non-profit organizations that serve as hubs in their communities to meet students' and families' academic and non-academic needs to develop educated citizens and strengthen local neighborhoods, and the Peoria Full Service Community Schools project, which serves three Peoria schools, targets health, families, community, and academics by providing a continuum of care and support that empowers students and their families to become productive, engaged members of the community – provide established results and solutions that demonstrate how schools and communities can connect to help all students learn and thrive; and

WHEREAS, by forging strategic partnerships, community schools have the potential to strengthen a school's academic program, engage parents, and meet the varied needs of students as well as communities. Community schools connect and educate all partners to the issues of school, community, and family life; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) supports local affiliates' partnerships with school districts, local government entities, political leaders, and labor and community leaders to transform the schools serving our neediest students into community schools, to bring together, under one roof, the services and activities that our children and their families need; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports the creation of additional community schools statewide that mirror successful community school initiatives; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports legislation and comprehensive strategies to institute community schools incorporating high-quality research into community schools' best practices, staffing models, approaches to implementation, and student outcomes such as student learning; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT rejects the use of community schools to bypass contractual agreements, reduce standards for existing, normal operating school hours, lessen those standards during after-hours operations, displace existing services and/or staff, or weaken existing crucial health and safety regulations.

RESOLUTION NO. 28

SUPPORT FOR EARLY INTERVENTION AND EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITIES BY, FOR, AND WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, *Our Nation's Children at Risk: A State-by-State Report on Early Intervention* found that of the 540,688 students ages 0-3 in Illinois in 2011, on average, fewer than 20 percent of them (approximately 108,137) are properly screened to identify their special need; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, 70,289 Illinois kids under the age of three were at risk of developmental delays or disabilities that will hinder them when they start school, yet only about half of these students are currently receiving early intervention services through Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, resulting in many never reaching their full potential or attaining similar educational outcomes as non-developmentally delayed peers; and

WHEREAS, Illinois' allocation for early intervention funding has remained flat from 2012 to 2013 at \$160 million; and

WHEREAS, it is harder than ever for families to access care because essential programs to treat young students with disabilities are chronically underfunded and in danger of being scaled back even further; and

WHEREAS, Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) members, based on career experience, have expressed strong concerns about abuses and potential inequities arising from allowing flexibility and/or eliminating statewide protections for class size/caseloads limitations, as they serve an increasingly diverse population of special education students through different service delivery models; and

WHEREAS, the promises of statewide Response to Intervention processes have been compromised by lack of adequate statewide training, support, resources, and funding for equitable implementation across Illinois' schools, impacting IFT members' abilities to provide all necessary early interventions and instructional supports to all of their students; and

WHEREAS, persons with disabilities, even as adults, remain the most marginalized segment of society, often discriminated against through exploitation and violence and excluded from mainstream activities, including participation in political and public life, education, and employment; and

WHEREAS, about 8 in 10 working-age Americans with disabilities do not hold a job, and of those who are actively looking, about 13 percent remain unemployed, compared with 7 percent of the broader work force (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) recognizes the profound social, cultural and economic disadvantages and exclusion experienced by many persons with cognitive or physical disabilities and support proactive measures towards altering the perception of disability and ensuring that societies recognize that all people must have the opportunity to reach their full potential; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT will promote early intervention and identification of disabilities, especially for students, by advocating for increased state funding for early intervention programs, including effective implementation supports for Response to Intervention, and urge the American Federation of Teachers to advocate for full funding for Part C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports programs and legislation that enable young students with disabilities or developmental delays the opportunity to achieve similar educational possibilities as their nondisabled peers, or enhance their development so they can better learn and grow; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT advocates for the Illinois State Board of Education to maintain and enhance the long standing state protections for class size/case load and age requirements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT supports a collaborative effort with K-12 schools, public colleges, universities, and organizations of persons with disabilities, to engage in cooperative arrangements aimed at removing barriers for persons with disabilities by providing adequate resources and access to appropriate assistive devices, which help to ensure full inclusion and participation in the classroom and workplace; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will advocate on behalf of our members with disabilities by developing model contract language to allow local unions to address issues of discrimination and equalization of opportunity in the workplace, which includes reasonable accommodations to address the needs of persons with disabilities.

RESOLUTION NO. 29

SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEMS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois passed the Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 (PERA) and created Part 50 of the Illinois Administrative Code, which required school districts and local unions to develop new teacher evaluation systems that incorporate both multiple observations of teachers' practice as well as measures of student growth through a phased-in process between 2012 and 2016; and

WHEREAS, Illinois School Code requires that if the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) does not fulfill in a timely manner any of the specific requirements set forth in PERA and if adequate and sustainable federal, state, or other funds are not provided to ISBE and school districts to meet their responsibilities, the applicable PERA implementation date shall be postponed by the number of calendar days equal to those needed by ISBE to fulfill such requirements and for adequate and sustainable funds to be provided to ISBE and school districts; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) has worked with ISBE and education stakeholders through the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) and has provided training, resources, and supports to IFT affiliated unions and other education stakeholders to support PERA implementation; and

WHEREAS, although many teacher evaluation instruments speak to teachers' contributions to meeting the needs of diverse learners, few evaluation plans address the unique challenges associated with evaluating teachers who work with special student populations, including students with disabilities and English language learners, particularly the challenges in accurately measuring student growth for their students and connecting that growth to teacher effects; and

WHEREAS, research on validated practices to evaluate teachers of special student populations is limited, preliminary, and/or nonexistent on many critical aspects of performance evaluation, which includes equitably attributing student learning to teachers in co-teaching or consultant roles, accurately assessing students' growth to alternative learning standards and/or assessments, fairly determining a teacher's contribution to student learning using alternative standards and/or assessments, determining appropriate use of performance evaluation frameworks as they apply to teachers of special student populations, and providing specialized training for evaluators of these teachers (Holdheide, 2013; Holdheide et al 2010); and

WHEREAS, most current district evaluation systems lack the capacity to differentiate among teachers based on specialized roles and to consider the challenges of working with at-risk students and specific contexts (Chait, 2009; Toch & Rothman, 2008); and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois passed in 2011 an act concerning education, generally referred to as Senate Bill 7, which attached employment decisions and consequences to teachers' performance evaluation ratings, including filling of new and vacant positions, reductions in force, acquisition of tenure, dismissal of tenured teachers, and potential revocation of licensure; and

WHEREAS, both through the PEAC and through their own experiences working with their school district as they develop new local evaluation plans, IFT members have quickly recognized it takes more time than anticipated to plan for and implement with fidelity valid and reliable PERA-compliant evaluation plans that incorporate multiple observations within a research-based framework, as well as multiple student assessments and growth measures in such a way as to ensure fairness and consistency for teachers of all student populations; and

WHEREAS, in June 2013 the United States Department of Education acknowledged the need to provide school districts and states with more time to implement teacher evaluation systems tied to personnel consequences as part of the federal waiver process to No Child Left Behind by moving the implementation date from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017; and

WHEREAS, the goal of any evaluation system should be to provide constructive feedback and support to all teachers to encourage the development of their professional knowledge and skills in order to promote student learning, not to sort teachers based on a rating; and

WHEREAS, given the serious and significant consequences tied to teachers' evaluation ratings, it is most important to get teacher evaluation right, rather than meet timelines established in law in 2010; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) continues to advocate for and collaborate with education stakeholders and the State Board of Education to develop statewide resources, training, and supports for members around teacher evaluation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT recognizes and promotes the work of locals and councils as they implement Performance Evaluation Reform Act of 2010 (PERA), to provide further resources and examples for other union leaders; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT advocates on behalf of all members to address the unintended consequences of PERA and Public Act 97-0008, formerly known as Senate Bill 7, arising due to the linkage of personnel decisions tied to teacher evaluation outcomes; and be further

RESOLVED, that the IFT calls for appropriate adjustments to PERA implementation timelines in order to get teacher evaluation right; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT works with education stakeholders, the State Board of Education and the Illinois P-20 Council to bring about any necessary adjustments.

RESOLUTION NO. 30

SUPPORT FOR A FAIR INCOME TAX FOR ILLINOIS

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers Legislative Platform seeks comprehensive improvements to fair collection of revenue to sufficiently fund public education; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois currently faces a budget deficit that has grown to \$43.6 billion, while legislators struggle to find adequate funding for vital and necessary state programs, among them higher education; and

WHEREAS, Illinois ranks among the lowest spending states (42nd in 2004 according to U.S. Census Data), and therefore the budget deficit is primarily due to revenue appropriation rather than allocation and cannot be solved by cutting spending alone; and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois ranks among the 10 least equitable states in terms of adjusted gross income, according to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy; and

WHEREAS, a graduated tax system would actually lower tax rates for 94 percent of residents of the state of Illinois, raise taxes on the remaining 6 percent by minimal amounts (the highest increase being 2.6 percent), and would increase revenues by at least \$2.4 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, a more balanced budget will lessen political pressure to defund the earned benefit of public employee pensions; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a graduated tax system in Illinois has been proposed and is gaining attention across the state; and

WHEREAS, campaigns against the proposed graduated tax system have already begun, including use of misinformation and distortions; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) enthusiastically endorses the efforts to place a constitutional amendment on the 2014 ballot that will remove the prohibition against a graduated income tax; and be it further

RESOLVED, that IFT's Legislative and Political agenda gives this cause high priority, including appropriate educational support; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that IFT's leaders work with the Illinois Education Association, the League of Women Voters, and the various labor, social, and civic organizations that are coordinating this effort.

RESOLUTION NO. 31

SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, the economic and fiscal constraints confronting school districts, local and state governments, and public colleges and universities create pressure to maintain public services with fewer resources, erode public confidence in the quality and effectiveness of public services, and accelerate the trend toward privatization and contracting out of public services as a quick-fix solution; and

WHEREAS, non-privatized jobs pay fair wages and benefits allowing employees to earn a living wage, health insurance, and pension benefits for themselves and their families; and

WHEREAS, these services, are, in fact, so absolutely fundamental to the operation of our institutions that they could be termed vital services; and

WHEREAS, the nature of the work and responsibilities that fall under the category of public services continually evolves and expands due to the dynamic forces that shape our institutions and characterize the services these institutions must provide to meet the ever-changing needs of students, taxpayers, and our society; and

WHEREAS, the people who provide these services and are on the front lines to address these changing needs and priorities have long been expected to perform work that has evolved out of their original job descriptions, either because the work is a new requirement, an expanded service due to advancing technology and/or changes in the workplace or student population, or is work that was performed by staff whose jobs have been eliminated; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Federation of Teachers and our locals are strongly committed to providing the highest quality and most effective services to students and the public, and our experience has demonstrated that the route to high quality is not through privatization and contracting out; and

WHEREAS, advocates of privatization argue the profit motive provides an incentive for efficiency, but all too often it is actually an incentive to cut corners by skimping on quality of the work performed; and

WHEREAS, privatization creates opportunities for corruption, such as bid rigging, bribery, and kickbacks; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) works with locals to better prepare members to educate the public and policymakers about the true nature of their work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT works with locals to identify best practices they should establish to ensure changing roles and responsibilities are accurately reflected; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT works with other organizations to draw attention to this problem and identify opportunities to foster cooperation and mutual support for strategies and activities to address this issue that affects all IFT members either on their job, as parents, or as taxpayers; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT strongly opposes privatization of school support staff and local and state government employees in all Illinois school districts, local and state governments, and public colleges and universities; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT opposes any legislation designed to privatize public services at all levels of government.

RESOLUTION NO. 32

SUPPORT FOR A SINGLE PAYER HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR ILLINOIS

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the United States spends more money per capita on healthcare than any other industrialized nation¹; and

WHEREAS, healthcare outcomes in the U.S. are no better than outcomes in any other industrialized nation, and by some measures significantly worse²; and

WHEREAS, the healthcare system created by the 2009 Affordable Care Act will benefit the entire nation by lowering insurance premiums and improving access to healthcare; and

WHEREAS, one weakness of the federal act is that it does not incorporate incentives for keeping healthcare costs down; and

WHEREAS, healthcare spending is the major contributor to the budget deficit and debt in the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, healthcare spending as a percent of Illinois' gross state product has increased from 12.2 percent in 2004 and is expected to continue to increase at an accelerated rate; and

WHEREAS, the higher state spending on healthcare, the greater the pressure to reduce benefits for state employees; and

WHEREAS, the State of Vermont is exploring several different plans for state healthcare reform, and their investigations show that covering citizens more effectively significantly reduces healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, even systems which, mirroring Japan and Germany, create a state agency to handle all claims result in significant cost savings by reducing the funds insurance companies and healthcare providers spend on administering claims; and

WHEREAS, single payer systems, which create a common pool of money to fund claims, increase these savings by eliminating the necessity for marketing, further reducing costs for administering claims, and reducing "defensive medicine"; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) explores ways that a similar plan might be developed for the State of Illinois; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that IFT supports the implementation of a single payer healthcare plan for the State of Illinois.

¹Human Development Report, United Nations, 2007 <http://www.hdr.undp.org>

² Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2010 www.oecd.org/health/healthdata

RESOLUTION NO. 33

SUPPORT FOR STATE RATED LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, students who attend low-performing schools face many pressures and needs arising from the challenges created by poverty, unstable community factors, and social pressures that must be accounted for when addressing the needs of low-performing schools; and

WHEREAS, dedicated educators in states with school improvement grants (SIG) schools struggle to meet their students' needs while overcoming significant challenges arising from safety and school climate concerns, ineffective and/or constantly changing school leadership, unstable and unpredictable family/community involvement, and lack of adequate resources and supports; and

WHEREAS, the federal government provides states with SIG to support comprehensive school-wide improvement in the lowest achieving Title I schools, which states must distribute to eligible school districts; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) created a competitive grant process and required each grant recipient to work with a state-approved vendor called a Lead Partner to implement the school's selected federal intervention model, with state approval given based on each vendor's past performance in supporting school improvement, which may or may not include the implementation of federal SIG requirements; and

WHEREAS, since FY2011, Illinois has awarded over \$300 million in federal SIG funds to recipient schools and their school districts spread over a three-year grant period; and

WHEREAS, Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) members have reported that Lead Partner contracts for their SIG funds comprise one-third to one-half of the budget for each year of the three-year grant period, which in some cases has diminished a school's ability to implement all SIG requirements effectively, particularly the requirement to extend learning time for students; and

WHEREAS, IFT affiliate leaders, through their experiences working in and/or representing members in SIG schools, have found state-approved Lead Partners competence, skills, and interest in including educator voices varies widely; and

WHEREAS, all employees who work in low-performing schools need a comprehensive, coordinated system of supports from the ISBE, the Regional Office of Education/Intermediate Service Centers, and their school district; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) supports legislation to improve low-performing schools and provides state resources to the Illinois State Board of Education, local school districts, and staff who work in low-performing schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT works with legislators, state agencies, and local school district policymakers to ensure that affiliate unions and their members working in low-performing schools have fair opportunities to participate in the decision-making and implementation processes at both the state and local level; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT advocates at the state level for a statewide research analysis of the effectiveness of state-approved Lead Partners in their work with school improvement grants schools.

RESOLUTION NO. 34

TRANSPARENCY IN ILLINOIS STATE GOVERNMENT

Submitted by: IFT Executive Board

WHEREAS, participation of all citizens in their government is essential to democracy; and

WHEREAS, citizens must have full knowledge and complete information on the issues facing government; and

WHEREAS, the current process of the Illinois state legislature is such that citizens of the state have little input or understanding of the budgeting processes of government generally; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois legislature is known for its corruption by attending to the special interests of a few while failing to address the problems facing the many people of the state of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget of the State of Illinois is not available to the citizens which provides for ample time for review and comment on the complete and itemized breakdown of the proposed budget of the State of Illinois before it is enacted; and

WHEREAS, state officials make little or no effort to truly inform the citizens on the allocation of the common financial resources belonging to the people of Illinois and often fail or refuse to faithfully comply with Freedom of Information Act requests; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) shall support legislation to require broad public access to all facets of government, including the budgeting process, which provides for ample time for review and comment on the complete and itemized breakdown of the proposed budget of the State of Illinois via internet posting or newspaper publication; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT urges policymakers to address the lack of transparency in Illinois government and its workings by providing full compliance with Freedom of Information

Act requests by citizens, real-time broadcast on the internet of every legislative committee meeting and full session of the Illinois General Assembly; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT will work with its voting membership to bring real consequences for any public official or unit of government that fails to fully and timely comply with all the requirements for public access to all governmental processes.

RESOLUTION NO. 35

UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONALS OF ILLINOIS SUPPORT OF CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Submitted by: University Professionals of Illinois, Local 4100

WHEREAS, the United States Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission overturned the ban on political spending by corporations in candidate elections; and

WHEREAS, this ruling overturned previous decisions ([Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce](#) and [McConnell v. Federal Election Commission](#)) that upheld restrictions on corporations and unions in campaigns; and

WHEREAS, the ruling permits corporations to spend millions of dollars in direct candidate advertising; and

WHEREAS, the ruling gives lobbyists a new tool to force elected officials to support preferred legislation through the threat of putting millions of dollars in campaign commercials and ground forces against the elected official; and

WHEREAS, in the 2010 general election over \$150 million were spent from organizations and corporations outside of the state of Illinois in state of Illinois elections; and

WHEREAS, the amount of money spent in state elections continues to put "politics" outside of the reach of the average citizen; and

WHEREAS, the University Professionals of Illinois Local 4100 House of Delegates and the Illinois Federation of Teachers passed a similar resolution last year; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) urges the American Federation of Teachers AFT to continue to work with members of Congress to develop rules to establish a public finance election system for Congressional elections and repair the presidential system while requiring shareholders of publicly traded corporations to give their approval before spending on political campaigns; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT works to create campaign finance reform protections in the state of Illinois.

RESOLUTION NO. 36

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Submitted by: American Federation of Teachers Local 604

WHEREAS, while members of the Illinois Federation of Teachers have a variety of views about marriage, according to their personal or religious beliefs, it is a fundamental, uniting principle of our organization that all people are entitled to equal rights; and

WHEREAS, many of our members have participated over the years – both as union members and in their communities – in movements for equal rights for all people; and

WHEREAS, in doing so, we have often embraced movements for equal rights that were controversial at the time and that opponents of working people's interests tried to use as wedge issues to divide our strength; and

WHEREAS, as a union, we have a particular responsibility to protect equal rights in connection with collective bargaining, economic benefits, legislation, and any employer or government action that affects IFT members; and

WHEREAS, in that spirit, IFT has a long history of support for equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender workers; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that lack of access to marriage deprives gay and lesbian working families of more than 1,000 rights and benefits afforded heterosexual families, such as spousal Social Security and pension benefits, hospital visitation rights, spousal health insurance, immigration rights, and many other federal, state, and local protections, as well as rights in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, civil union and domestic partnership laws, while well-intended, create an unequal legal status for same-sex couples that extended only a few of the state and local-level protections and benefits afforded "spouses" in heterosexual marriage; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that same-sex couples in Illinois may travel to other states that have marriage equality laws, we recognize that not all can afford to do so; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this convention affirms the Illinois Federation of Teachers' commitment to equal rights for all members, regardless of sexual orientation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT make it a collective bargaining and legislative goal to ensure that all members enjoy equal rights and benefits; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the IFT support the right of same-sex couples to access the full and equal rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the IFT support the passage of marriage equality in Illinois.