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Open Letter To All Members

In recent days there was a Supreme Court decision handed down that may fundamentally change how Public Employee Unions operate in America.

The Supreme Court in the Janus vs. AFSME case decided that reduced dues or sometimes called “agency fees” or “fair share” fees are unconstitutional. Agency fees were dues that were paid to maintain the local union for bargaining and representation and were significantly less than full dues.

Local 8599 did not have this feature. All of our members paid full share dues. A few diverted their dues to charities to better reflect their personal beliefs. This was allowed in our contract.

We believe that the Supreme Court case is clear in its intention. Any member may stop paying dues to this Union, **and** simply keep their money.

You may be solicited or emailed by groups or organizations that might encourage you to stop paying dues to your Union. Please think carefully before leaving your Union.

Consider the benefits of having a strong Union to negotiate for you and represent you....

Contractually, **we have never been better** than we are right now. Since 2013 we have negotiated **15.5%** in permanent raises, and **9%** in bonuses. Next year’s negotiations will begin in the next month....

We are still **100% covered** for medical benefits, resisting the School Districts effort to install a “hard cap” and pass on \$3000 per year in ongoing costs to you.

Last year we attended more individual and group meetings between members and administrators than ever before.

We negotiated strongly when the School District attempted to terminate School Site Aides (Noon Aides) just before the new law made them all Classified Employees, and we made the School District agree to use only Hire Date Seniority to determine permanency eligibility.

We negotiated the Early Retirement Notification Bonus for this past year UP from the initial offer of \$750 to **\$2000**.

All of this is in addition to our participation in our community, which includes charity work for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life each year at Summit High School, the annual Ronald McDonald House walk, and the Special Education Prom hosted each year by our Women of Steel Committee, for our special students in the school district, and many other worthy causes.

We will bring you more information as it becomes available.

Remember, we are a Strong Union because of You.

In Solidarity,

Jim Williams, Dawn Dooley and the Executive Board of Local 8599