

# Your Union Working for You

During this historic and unprecedented time, we are navigating through uncharted territory in our lives, our jobs, and our union. **As we get through this together, please know that your union is a great source of comfort, inspiration, strength, and support.**

Now more than ever, the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), with our national and local unions, are at the forefront of advocacy and safety, of advocating for students, our members and all workers. Our work as a union is focused on eliminating any potentially harmful effects that the coronavirus/COVID-19 health crisis may have on our members' work, families, students, and community.



**DANIEL J. MONTGOMERY**  
President

These are some of the ways that we are working for you:

At the IFT's suggestion, State Supt. Carmen Ayala convened an advisory group of Illinois educators—including teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators—to create guidelines recommending good practices and important considerations for remote learning at all grade levels. Over 20 IFT members participated and helped create this important resource, which can be accessed at [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus).

The IFT, Illinois State Board of Education, Governor's Office, and other state education stakeholders reached an agreement on critical issues related to COVID-19 in Illinois' preK-12 schools. These guidelines ensure that each school district follows the same basic rules during this crisis, including paying educators and school employees during the closure, maintaining policies about leave days, and bargaining what work during the closure looks like. Read the full statement online at [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus).

We've been working with our higher education locals to advocate for the complete closure of community colleges and university campuses. By eliminating student attendance and allowing both faculty and support employees to work remotely, we can best protect students and staff and help flatten the curve.

Our union is staying in close communication with local leaders statewide. We have hosted tele-town

halls discussing how to best advocate for students and members at this unprecedented time, and we're providing regular updates about COVID-19 and online resources.

Our locals have stepped up in creative and inspiring ways. Harlem Federation of Teachers (Local 540) is delivering books and donating food to students in need. Downstate communities are having meals prepared and delivered to students by staff members in the Belleville High School Federation of Teachers and Support Staff (Local 434), the East St. Louis Federation of Education Support Personnel (Local 382), and the Madison Federation of Teachers and Support Staff (Local 763). And groups like the Argo Council (Local 571) in the western suburbs of Chicago are sending messages on social media to support and inspire students and their families who may feel isolated. Visit all our inspirational stories at [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus).

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**In this time of uncertainty, we want you to know that the IFT is doing our part to support your work in your everyday lives.**  
**STAY SAFE AND STAY HEALTHY.**

#IFTSTRONG

Woodland Federation of Teachers and Staff (Local 504) prepare Grab and Go Meals for hundreds of students every day.



Madison Federation of Teachers and Support Personnel (Local 763) pack and deliver lunches to students.

IFT members are using creativity, compassion, and (socially-distanced) collaboration to get through this crisis and be there for their students, colleagues, and communities while maintaining a sense of humor and humanity.

Visit [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus) for more.



Gillespie Councils of the Macoupin County Federation of Teachers (Local 528) developed a "meals on wheels" program to serve their students.

Share your story with us: how are your locals, councils, and chapters stepping up in your schools and community? Tag @iftaft on social media to let us know, or email [info@ift-aft.org](mailto:info@ift-aft.org). Tell us how you're #IFTSTRONG.

Shiloh Education Association (Local 4755) teachers are making sure their students keep learning and continue working on their reading skills.



Illinois Federation of Teachers  
A Union of Professionals  
[ift-aft.org](http://ift-aft.org) [facebook.com/iftaft](https://www.facebook.com/iftaft) @iftaft

#IFTSTRONG

This is a scary time,  
but the answer to that is our  
**SOLIDARITY.**

Please know that we're hard at work,  
and we're going to get through this  
**TOGETHER.**

DAN MONTGOMERY | IFT PRESIDENT



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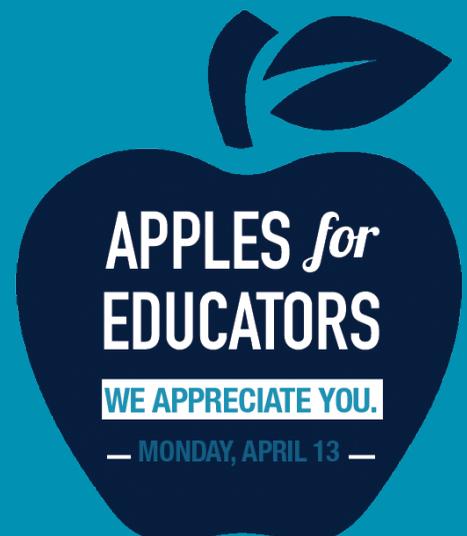
# LEARNING RESOURCES

**Teaching from home or homeschooling your own kids or grandkids? Trying to avoid cabin fever while working remotely?**

Your union wants to help you get through this new day to day we're all living, so we've compiled some great resources about COVID-19 and how to keep students and families engaged during these socially-distanced times.

Visit [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus) for the latest information, including learning resources, COVID-19 safety practices, member news, and more.

On Monday, April 13, join us to show support for our public education colleagues by sharing an apple on your social media feeds. Share the image with words of encouragement and appreciation for all school staff who are going the extra mile to provide support for our students during this challenging time.



DOWNLOAD NOW AT: [ift-aft.org/coronavirus](http://ift-aft.org/coronavirus)