The Gauge

Local 891 AFL - CIO

February 2026

Principal Rating

Members are reminded they only have 30 days to grieve a Principal's Rating. Any member wanting to grieve a rating should contact the Grievance Chairperson.

General Membership Meeting

The Next Local 891 General Membership Meeting will be February 5th in Queens at Q566 Queens High School of Teaching, Liberal Arts and the Sciences
74-20 Commonwealth Boulevard
Queens, NY 11426

Renewals

Please be aware of your license and permit renewal date. Apply and renew on time to avoid fees and disciplinary action.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ALL RENEWALS MUST BE DONE ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Variable Rate

Variable Rate Unit Value
for January 2026: $188.066

Business Manager's Report

Local 891's 97th Annual Reception was a huge success. 421 Local 891 members and their family members attended the event at Russo's on the Bay for an evening of delicious food, a variety of music, and most importantly great company. The dinner dance has always been one of my favorite Local 891 events. It is a night to catch up with Brother and Sister Custodian Engineers in a non-work setting and forget the stresses of work and just have a good time. I encourage members who have never attended an 891 Dinner Dance to talk to Brother and Sister Custodian Engineers about the event who attend and after receiving a rave review of the events, we hope to see you at next year's dinner dance. I promise you won't be disappointed! I would like to take this opportunity to thank Vice President and Entertainment Committee Chairperson Kieran McKivergan for outdoing himself again this year, and for all his hard work put into this event. I would also like to thank everyone else that contributed to the events of the evening. Thank you!!

I would also like to thank all the members of Local 891 who continually go above and beyond to keep New York City's Public Schools clear of snow and heated to prevent freeze ups. You have certainly had your work cut out for you during the last snowstorm and these last couple of weeks of continued below freezing temperatures. City Government and the Division of School Facilities both know that you are the boots on the ground and can always be relied upon to ensure that students and staff of your assignments will always have a safe and heated space for education despite the obstacles faced daily. Keep up the great work!!

Electronic Communications

January 6th - Passing of Sara Ann "Sally" McGreal
January 7th - Results of Secret Ballot Vote
January 8th - Seniority Lists
January 12th - Local 891 2026 Calendar
January 13th - Final Supply Allocation for Fiscal Year
January 14th - Vacancy Lists Applications
January 22nd - Problem with Gas Card
January 23rd - Fix Tier 6!
January 26th- DSF seeking provisional
January 26th - Extended Use Contact Information
January 28th - Snow Removal
January 30th - BPAs for Custodial Supplies
January 30th - Check Your Paystubs
February 3rd - Repairing/Ordering Gas Powered Equipment

EDITORIAL

Daniel Danvers, Editor

Labor Unions in 2026 — A Movement in Motion

Unions have seen strategic victories and renewed leverage

In recent years, several unions have secured meaningful wins that signal a resurgence in worker power.

Oil refinery negotiations have produced critical wins such as the members of Teamsters Local 283 at Marathon Petroleum's Detroit refinery have ratified a new contract to secure 24.5 percent increase and ending a 101-day strike. with union leaders leveraging rising energy-sector pressures to secure stronger terms.

- Unionization continues to spread into new workplaces, including service-sector shops like Breads Bakery in New York City, where workers joined the UAW seeking higher pay, safer conditions, and clearer promotion pathways.
- Public-sector and education workers are mobilizing at scale, with researchers and professors rallying in major cities as they prepare for contract expirations in 2026. Their organizing signals a renewed willingness to strike in sectors once considered strike-averse.

These wins show that unions can still shape national conversations about wages, safety, and dignity at work—especially when they coordinate across industries.

There have also been some losses that garnered prolonged strikes and fragmented power.

- Nurses in New York City have been on strike for nearly three weeks, with more than 15,000 workers walking out as contract talks drag on. The length of the strike underscores both the unions' resolve and the difficulty of securing agreements in healthcare, where staffing shortages and cost pressures are critical.
- Some unions face stalled or uncertain negotiations, such as Verizon workers whose contract extensions have ended without a new agreement. Retiree healthcare remains a major sticking point, reflecting broader tensions over long-term benefits in an era of rising costs.
- The bargaining calendar is scattered, with major contracts expiring across 2026 rather than aligning into a unified national push. Analysts warn that this fragmentation could dilute unions' collective leverage.

Experts view the losses today as less about outright defeats and more about the structural challenges unions face in sustaining long strikes and negotiating in industries under financial strain and the extra weight of political input. We see the struggles of workers from Amazon and Starbucks after winning the right to form a union. Corporations can now litigate anti-union sentiments and bad faith bargaining to no ends with the erosion of protective guardrails such as the National Labor Board.

At the most recent NYS Public Employees Conference event, Rich Mulvany, PEC's legal counsel stated that political organizers and labor strategists should be mapping the year month-by-month, anticipating major fights and preparing for coordinated action where possible. Labor's position in 2026 is best described as mobilized but not consolidated. 2026 seems to be shaping up to be a year of rolling contract battles, spanning manufacturing, education, entertainment, government, and healthcare. These fights may not match the scale of 2023's headline strikes, but they carry the potential for pivotal, sector-specific wins. Based on current data, today's labor unions are at an inflection point where they are neither in decline nor in full resurgence—they are in transition.

SUPPLIES

Harry Cender, Supplies Committee Chairperson

Dear Brother & Sisters,

The Borough procurement analysts will reach out to some CE's regarding the certification of orders. DSF's new custodial supply catalog is automatically emailed monthly to all CEs from Cognos_noreply@FRDM.nycenet.edu and is the most up-to-date list of available items.

Just a reminder, just because it's on FAMIS doesn't mean you can purchase it. You are only allowed to order items from the five approved vendors and from the supply catalog emailed to you. If you require an item that is not in the catalog, you must obtain a quote. If the quote is under $250.00 you can request it from any of the five vendors, if it's over $250.00 you must get it from your BPA.

Under no circumstances are you to use a micro bid (under $250.00) twice for the same item(s), even if you're told to do so by your DDF. By doing this, you are circumventing the three-bid process, which will put yourself in harm's way.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at Supplies@Local891.com.

Remember always to spend their funds wisely and with good judgment.

Fraternally,
Harry W. Cender
Supplies Committee Chairman

NYC CENTRAL COUNCIL DELEGATE

Delegates, Judith Koonce/Richard Gorgoglione

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The February Delegate in-person meeting Street, NY, was called to order at 6:05 PM by Secretary-Treasurer Janella Hinds, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed for Brian Dunn who succumbed to a medical emergency at work. This was followed by the swearing-in of 2 new Delegate. Janella then extended a warm welcome to President Griffith and introduced the first guest speaker.

First Guest Speaker was NYS Comptroller, Tom DiNapoli who addressed the Delegates, expressing gratitude for their continued commitment to representing and protecting working families. Key highlights from his remarks include:

Background:

- Comes from a strong union family:
- Father: Telephone company worker and CWA Shop Steward
- Mother: Employee of CSCA, Nassau County

Fiscal Overview

- State and City tax revenues are performing better than projected.
- Despite a strong fiscal picture, the State faces a $13 billion Medicare cut expected over the next year, posing significant threats to safety-net hospitals.
- The arrival of a new Congress, led by Hakeem Jeffries, would bring new opportunities for policy alignment.
- The City's budget is also exceeding projections.
- Several budget gaps had been underestimated by the previous administration.
- Public pension funds remain stable and strong.
- The Comptroller's office is actively reviewing potential Tier 6 reforms.

Union Matters

- Recognized ongoing union support efforts, including the Mt. Sinai NYCERS picket line.
- Encouraged Delegates to participate in the upcoming Comptroller election.

Second Guest Speaker: Executive Director, Esther Rosario of Climate Jobs NY.
The Executive Director of Climate Jobs NY shared updates on New York's progress in renewable energy:

Renewable Energy Projects

- Major developments in offshore wind:
- Empire Wind One
- "The Empire Strikes Back"
- "Sunrise in the Wind"

Statewide Actions

- Over 500 workers recently joined a Long Island picket with the Governor.
- Emphasis on developing diversified energy grids.
- Updates from the State of the State address.
- Expansion of solar installations on public school buildings.
- Introduction of climate-focused public art initiatives.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Key updates included:

- Progress on Future in Focus initiatives.
- FixTier6.org event scheduled for Sunday, March 8.
- Continued partnership with the religious coalition strengthening ties between faith and labor.
- Monthly memorial mass at St. Francis for workers who have passed.
- Rapid-response updates on immigration rights.
- CUNY continues to offer free immigration legal services.
- Ongoing collaboration with the Latin American Consulate and AFL-CIO.
- Additional updates regarding FIFA-related activities.

President's Report

President Griffith provided updates on union activities and labor campaigns:
Organizing & Advocacy

- Reports on efforts involving:
- Nurse's contractors
- Starbucks Workers
- Local 1500
- Bank Street Coffee Shop

Legislative Initiatives

- Advocacy for the Protection of Workers Act.
- Push toward restoring key federal worker protections.

Workplace Issues

- Concerns over CAMBA's outsourcing of its IT Department.
- Updates from Columbia Presbyterian, noting the CEO's $27 million salary, raising issues related to equity and worker valuation.

President Griffith extended special thanks to all Delegates who assisted in setting up the meeting room, including Local 891's Richard Gorgoglione.

Closing
A raffle was held at the meeting's conclusion, and neither of us won this month.
The meeting adjourned following a motion to close.
The next delegates meeting will be via Zoom on Thursday, February 19 at 6pm.
Thank you for reading this article.

In Solidarity,
Sister Judith

EDUCATION

Frank Byrne, Education Committee Chairperson

Local 891 Member,

The schedule for the A2L class required for Q01/Q99 renewal is Tuesday and Wednesday, February 10 & 11 from 8:00am to 12:00pm both days.

Tuesday and Wednesday March 3rd & 4th from 8:00am to 12:00pm both days.

For those needing to renew their CPO certification the refresher class is Monday and Tuesday, March 9th and 10th.

A2L classes will continue frequently until all those renewing over the next few years have completed the class. We are asking that if you do not need to renew any time soon to hold off registering to allow room for those renewing soon.

Regards,
Frank Byrne

FIX TIER 6 Rally!

There is an upcoming rally to raise awareness and show support for the movement to address the inequity of Tier 6. Information below:

Statewide Rally to Fix Tier 6: On Sunday, March 8 from 12PM to 2PM, union members and supporters are invited to a statewide rally in Albany to call for reforming Tier 6 and restoring a secure retirement for all public employees in New York. The rally will take place at MVP Arena, 51 Pearl Street, Albany, NY. Buses will be going up from NYC – learn more and register at FixTier6.org

If you have any questions please reach out to Judith Koonce, Delegate to the NYC Central Labor Council, at 718-455-9731 x275.

FMLA

William Carroll, FMLA Committee Chairperson

Brothers and Sisters,

Correction from last month's January 2025 Gauge, the Absolve solution insurance number is # 800-401-2691

Thirty days (30) notice is critical.

Thirty-day notice is recommended but not required when applying for a leave. The paperwork that a member completes for Paid Family Leave or FMLA may not be fully processed in a timely manner if shorter notice is given. For paid family leave this may result in a delay with receiving compensation checks for the time off from the insurance company.

If at all possible, submit the request documentation earlier so as to avoid any unnecessary pitfalls.

Take your time as you see fit.

After a member is approved for PFL or FMLA the member is entitled to take their time as they see fit. Name an appropriate alternate(s) for the assignment(s). When a member is out on leave responding to calls or any other situation falls to the alternate provided for the time off. DSF cannot influence in any way the time that the member takes off. Book out appropriately for each day or block of time off.

If there are any questions about this, please do not hesitate to reach out directly.
Cell phone #: 917-903-0335

As always, in solidarity,
William P Carroll

PENSION

Frank Sirabella, Pension Committee Chairperson

As the new year has begun, I hope members have increased their contribution rates to the BERS TDA in an effort to maximize the power of compounding for a secure retirement. I know it's not easy, but the thought having to work additional years beyond your plan because you did not contribute more earlier to your career will be much harder. In addition to the BERS TDA, members may be interested in other opportunities to save for retirement.

The Deferred Compensation Plan (457 plan) is a benefit offered to NYC employees which provides another option to save additional monies for retirement. Like the BERS TDA, contributions can be made via Pre-tax, Roth or a combination of both with the same limits. The link below is to the site to peruse which also includes instructions and videos on how to open account and start saving.

https://www.nyc.gov/site/olr/deferred/dcphome.page

If you are seeking an opportunity to save for your child's future college expenses, contributing to a 529 plan may be an option for you. Please be aware, you should consult your tax professional regarding this option to determine if this would be advantageous to you in order to maximize its tax benefits. Here is the link below that contains
frequently asked questions as well as instructions on how to open an account:

https://www.nysaves.org/

Start saving today!

Sincerely,
Frank Sirabella

JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The January general membership meeting was held at K650, Whitney Vocational High School in Brooklyn where a packed house was in attendance to participate in the **Summons Meeting where a secret ballot vote on a proposed change to the bylaws was held and voted down. Former 891's Business Manager/President, Robert J. Troeller was in attendance to give a personal farewell.**

SCHOOL SAFETY DIVISION

SAFETY DIVISION

97TH ANNUAL RECEPTION

Local 891's annual reception was held on January 30th, at Russo's on the Bay. Thank you to all members and loved ones who braved the cold to attend and enjoyed this awesome event of food fun and family.

891 Welcomes!

Logan Delaney Cope

Born January 14th, 2026.
Weighing in at 5lbs, 15oz.
Parents: Olivia & Austin Cope

Granddaughter of Genine &
Active CE Stephen Marinaro (M477)

The Gauge

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Nicholas Souto
Treasurer

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Legal Services (516) 466-6030

Daniel H. Cook Associates
Welfare forms – eye care vouchers - claims information
212-505-5050

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Borough Chairpersons

Bronx	Susan Werner	ext. 220
Brooklyn	Andrew Foti	ext. 221
Manhattan	John Brennan	ext. 222
Queens	Joe Sanfilippo	ext. 223
Staten Island	Harry Cender	ext. 224

Committee Chairpersons

Children's Party	Darren Bell	ext. 249
Blood Bank	Evan Manca	ext. 250
Compensation Ins.	Stephen Hourihan	ext. 251
E.P.E.C.	Gregory Sutton	ext. 252
Editor "The Gauge"	Daniel Danvers	ext. 253
Education	Francis J. Byrne	ext. 119
Engineers' Protective	Frank Felix	ext. 255
Entertainment	Kieran McKivergan	ext. 256
FMLA	Will Carroll	ext. 278
Good & Welfare	Theresa DiCristi	ext. 258
Custodial Helpers	Marvin Rodriquez	ext. 259
Grievances	John Maderich	ext. 260
Hospitalization	Kevin Troy	ext. 261
Indoctrination	Dwight Woodley	ext. 262
Legislative Chair	Daniel Danvers	ext. 263
Membership	Nicholas Souto	ext. 264
Membership Assistance	Theresa DiCristi	ext. 258
Occupational Health & Safety	Lionel Santiago	ext. 266
Payroll & Permits	Philip Navetta	ext. 267
Pension	Frank Sirabella	ext. 268
Rating & Transfer	Robert Calamia	ext. 269
Store Keeper	Stevo Pepdjonovic	ext. 270
Supplies	Harry Cender	ext. 271
Temp Care Assign	Joseph Sanfilippo	ext. 272
Webmaster	Dan Morgan	ext. 274
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