

THE ALLIANCE TO RECLAIM OUR SCHOOLS

Janus v AFSCME – What You Need to Know June 6, 2018

What is the Janus Case and what are the potential implications of the Supreme Court's ruling?

The same billionaires that are attacking our public schools (and consequently our youth, parents, and communities), are funding attacks on the rights of educators and public sector workers. A key aspect of the Janus case is the elimination of “fair share” requirements in public employee contracts. This means that though employees in sectors organized by unions can receive benefits, they would not be required to pay union fees. The goal is to decimate union membership, and consequently weaken the unions’ ability to protect workers rights and fight for decent wages.

Who does the Janus Case impact?

The Janus vs. AFSCME case, which will be decided by the Supreme Court soon, is the latest in a long line of attacks from the corporate elite aimed at destroying the union movement. Their success will have implications for progressive fights such as support for the Fight for 15 campaign and LGBTQ rights.

The Janus Case targets unions that represent all public sector employees, including: teachers, school staff, custodians, cafeteria employees, daycare workers, and any public sector worker that currently has union membership.

However, the outcome of the Janus case has broad implications for low-income and working families; as the loss of public sector unions could ultimately lead to lower wages, poor working conditions, and a lower quality of service provided to the most vulnerable communities. Efforts to eliminate union protections are being driven by those that place profits over people. Ultimately, they view unions as an obstacle to paying poverty level wages, and keeping politicians in office that protect the interests of the ultra-rich. Unions have often been a source of support for movements that have fought for racial, economic and social justice.

Also, Weaker unions mean a weaker progressive movement. That is ultimately the goal of folks funding the Janus Case.

What must we do?

As a community-labor alliance, we should continue to fight against those who attack our communities through privatization schemes while they attack public sector unions. You can fight back against this attack on the rights of working people by doing one or more of the following:

- Circulate fact sheets to your coalition’s networks to educate them about the Janus case;
- Write an op-ed to speak out against the potential outcome of the Janus Case; and
- Participate in local rallies that may happen after the decision.