



THE FIGHT FOR OUR FUTURE

.....

the **Truth**
About Tenure

.....



Illinois Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals

**Myth
#1**

“Tenure is a lifetime job guarantee for teachers.”

**Myth
#2**

“Tenure keeps bad teachers in the classrooms.”

**Myth
#3**

“Good teachers shouldn’t need tenure to protect their jobs. Quality performance is their job protection.”

**Here’s why these statements
are simply NOT reality.**

Understanding Its Origins

In Illinois, contractual continued service for K-12 teachers (commonly called “tenure”) went into effect during the 1930s during the era of the Great Depression. At that time, teachers were often dismissed because of their gender, race, religion, political affiliation and a host of other reasons unrelated to performance. A principal could send an experienced, highly qualified teacher to the unemployment lines on a whim or replace her or him with an often unqualified friend or relative who needed a job during a time when employment was scarce.

To prevent such unjust and unwarranted firings, the Illinois legislature granted teachers the ability to obtain tenure: the protection from dismissal without due process and just cause.

In 1980, the Illinois General Assembly reaffirmed the need for and effectiveness of tenure by passing the Illinois Community College Tenure Act, giving community college faculty the same due process rights as K-12 teachers.

