

MTA Today

*A publication of the Massachusetts Teachers Association
Volume 43, No. 4/Spring 2013*



ORGANIZING DRIVE SUCCEEDS IN BROCKTON



SEASON OPENS FOR MTA RED SOX READING GAME





A special election will be held on Tuesday, June 25, to fill the U.S. Senate seat formerly held by Secretary of State John F. Kerry.

It is critical for every MTA member to register to vote by June 5 and then cast a ballot for the candidate who will support students and public education.

MTA recommendations and other information will be posted soon at:

www.massteacher.org/election

Please inform yourself about the candidates — and be sure to cast your ballot on June 25.

Make your vote count for our public schools, colleges and universities!

MTA Today

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This issue of MTA Today also features the spring edition of the MTA Advantage and the MTA Summer Conference Guide



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MTA's Mission Statement

The Massachusetts Teachers Association is a member-driven organization, governed by democratic principles, that accepts and supports the interdependence of professionalism and unionism. The MTA promotes the use of its members' collective power to advance their professional and economic interests. The MTA is committed to human and civil rights and advocates for quality public education in an environment in which lifelong learning and innovation flourish.

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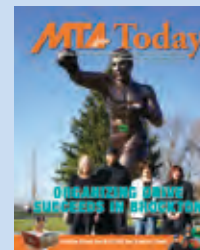
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On the cover

Four Monitor Teacher Assistants on the bargaining team that is seeking the MTAs' first contract pose in front of a statue of Brockton's own Rocky Marciano, symbolizing their willingness to fight for fairness. They are, from left to right, Tracy Kenney, Arthur Dias, Cheryl Donahue and Beth Sullivan. The Brockton MTAs recently organized and formed a bargaining unit. A story on the successful campaign appears on Page 7.



Meanwhile, this year's edition of the MTA Red Sox Reading Game is getting underway. Catcher David Ross has joined the literacy team and is serving as the spokesperson for the contest. A story appears on Page 32.

Photos by Bob Duffy, Rick Friedman and Keiko Hiram
Cover design by Alison Donato

Quote-Unquote

"On this day of sadness and anxiety for everyone in Massachusetts, Tim Sullivan and I want to reach out to MTA members and say we hope that you and any of your family and friends who were in Boston yesterday are safe. Our thoughts are with the victims — the precious, innocent children and everyone else directly touched by this outrageous act."

— Statement by MTA President Paul Toner on the day after two bombs exploded near the finish line of the Boston Marathon

New secretary hits the ground running

Former Brockton School Superintendent Matt Malone was sworn in as the state's new secretary of education in January. Since Governor Deval Patrick has announced he won't be running for re-election, Malone believes he has less than two years to make his mark on education in his new role.

Malone has followed an untraditional path to the state's top education post. He struggled with dyslexia while enrolled in the Newton Public Schools, studied drafting in a vocational program at Newton North High School and was not expected to go to college. Defying the predictions, he graduated from college and became a paraprofessional, a teacher, an assistant principal, a principal and a superintendent. "I've held every single job you can hold in education, including sweeping floors," Malone told *MTA Today*.

During an interview with MTA communications specialist Laura Barrett in his office in downtown Boston in March, Malone talked about how his experiences have shaped his approach to solving problems. He also discussed the new educator evaluation system, the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners initiative, the role of unions, charter schools, teacher morale and other issues, including the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers instrument, which will be used to measure the success of the Common Core curriculum and is expected to replace the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System in the future.

His remarks have been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q: What is your background in education?

A: I've had a bumpy road to get where I am now. Folks who grew up with me who find out what I am now shake their head and say, "There's no way." I grew up struggling with dyslexia. I spent a lot of my educational upbringing in rooms outside the mainstream, sometimes in rooms in the basement or the back hallway of the building. I know what it feels like to be a young student when they say, "OK everyone, we're going to pull out your reading books. Matt you can go with Miss ---- ." And I'd have to leave. I've kind of carried that as a chip on my shoulder my entire career. Sometimes I felt that I could never measure up to everyone else who got to stay in the classroom. So for me, I've always fought for the underdog in education. I made my choice to work with kids whom maybe no one else was advocating for. So for me it's very personal. Dyslexia made me have to work a lot harder, but I feel it's also made me stronger. I think I'm a better leader and a better father and a better person because of that.

Q: When you spoke at the MTA's All Presidents' Meeting in January, you talked about your plan to focus on initiatives already underway rather than proposing a lot of new ones. What is your reasoning on that issue?



Photo by Bob Duffy

Secretary of Education Matt Malone

A: No state has moved as fast as Massachusetts in the last five years. It's been a lot of work and it's paid off. But I get how people feel. I think I've described it as drinking water out of a fire hose. I kind of like the big bang theory — we do it all at once and move forward. But I'm also cognizant of folks really wanting to focus on what's on the plate right now. And we know what's on the plate right now. Ed eval. RETELL. Common Core. PARCC assessment. We've got to get those things right. I don't want to see us add more things to the plate.

Q: What role should unions have at the district and state levels in implementing these and other initiatives?

A: At the district level, collaboration makes the difference between victory and defeat. What I mean by that is you can ram home reform, you can be a real tough guy and ram it down people's throats, and I've done that before and I've been successful doing it. It's just a fight that takes too much time. So I've also learned that if you collaborate and include the unions as partners in all the initiatives and ideas from the beginning, you might not agree on everything, but that open dialogue is an easier path to implementation. So I would suggest that we really focus on more collaboration between the superintendent and the union president and principals. Sometimes these relationships — let's just be honest — they aren't healthy. We've got to break through that, find some common ground and work together. If we're fighting with each other, the kids are getting hurt. At the state level, there's some great collaboration already. The MTA leadership and I speak all the time — a couple of times a week. When there's conversation happening in the policy world, the MTA is at the table from the beginning. At the state level, the roles should be similar to those in a good, effective and strong superintendent/union president relationship.

Q: How do you think implementation of the evaluation system is going?

A: I think that the new evaluation system is a good one. We've changed it for everybody, even superintendents. I like the fact that we're establishing goals that are going to be measurable and then we use those goals as the agreed-upon standards for how someone's going to be held accountable. On the teacher's side, I think the new process gives much more rich feedback across a multitude of areas, not just an observation of a classroom with a checklist.

Q: What advice do you have for people about implementing measures of student growth?

A: I know there's a lot of feeling of the unknown with the use of student assessment results. We know we're going to have some assessments like the MCAS and the PARCC, but also the district-determined ones. I don't know what that looks like yet, but philosophically I don't disagree with it. Hopefully there are multiple measures we can use. I think it has been a slow process. This is hard work. I would stress that it can't just be one thing. "My kids didn't do well on the MCAS, so I won't get a good evaluation." At the end of the day I just tell people, "Let's just go through the process and be human about it." I'd like to see emphasis on actual products of student work. That's very intensive but I think it's very important. I sit in classrooms every day. Ninety-eight percent of the teachers in the state perform at really effective levels. For the small percentage that aren't, this isn't a "gotcha" tool to be used to get rid of folks, but it's going to be used to give some honest feedback. We've got to be professional enough to take the feedback and grow from it.

Q: We are getting some questions about RETELL, the state's 45-hour course that many teachers of English language learners are required to take. We're hearing it's a very heavy workload. Any pearls of wisdom?

A: I struggled through getting this set up in Brockton. If you're working with the union from the first day you have a better chance of implementing successfully than if you invite the union in after you've made a bunch of decisions. We had the union with us from day one around how we were going to do this. Nothing's ever smooth, but it was smoother than it could have been. The course is going to make everyone a better teacher, so this isn't something that's a waste of time. In Brockton we were able to find times that made sense to do it, offer it, and then treat people with respect for going through it. This is basically a three-credit course, and they are getting in-service credit for it.

Q: What do you think of "merit pay" or pay for performance?

Please turn to **Malone**/Page 12

Exploring our new digital landscape

In our constantly changing world, digital technology and the Internet are rapidly modifying the way we think, communicate, share information and socialize in our personal lives. It is no surprise, therefore, that they are also changing the educational landscape and the way we teach in our public schools and colleges.

Today, nearly one-third of all college students have enrolled in at least one online course. Hundreds of thousands of people of all ages have taken part in MOOCs — Massive Open Online Courses — and the number continues to increase exponentially.

Digital technology and online classes are also deeply embedded in our K-12 system. More than half of the state's high schools now offer courses through



Paul Toner
MTA President

Virtual High School, a global collaborative based in Maynard. One advantage of VHS is that it gives students access to courses that only a small number want to take in any given school — such as Advanced Placement Physics or Mandarin Chinese — but that are desirable to a critical mass across the collaborative.

Within schools, technology is changing how students learn. My own daughter, Grace, an eighth-grader in the Cambridge Public Schools, collaborates with classmates online using Google Docs and producing films and presentations. Even in her choral group, she receives electronic links to music and performances to study.

My son, Jack, who is in second grade, used YouTube to research birds of prey for a school report. And his teachers use digital tools to engage him in reading and writing and reinforce math lessons.

All schools take advantage of technology in one way or another, whether having students edit videos on iPads, posting assignments online, organizing study groups using dedicated Facebook pages or installing Smartboards in their classrooms. Many of us are holding more computing power in our pockets than existed in entire institutions just a generation ago.

In order to take full advantage of these new technologies, educators need to address a number of issues, both instructional and professional. The following are just a few among many.

Demanding equity

The digital divide is real. Funding and Internet access must be available to make sure that all students have access to the technology they need to fully participate in the digital revolution.

Schools in lower-income neighborhoods or geographically remote areas must have access to the

There are many questions and issues that we have to address, but I believe that as educators we need to embrace the changes that are taking place all around us.

same updated technology and broadband resources as those in wealthier communities.

Ensuring quality

We need to ensure that online educators are qualified and capable of providing our students with rigorous instruction and individual attention.

There are many instructional resources online — so many that it would take an individual teacher a very long time to scope out and vet those that are appropriate for his or her grade and subject. Educators and their associations must be involved in setting standards and must work with districts, the state and trusted external partners to identify quality products and providers.

Even more challenging is figuring out how to assess the quality of schools and colleges that are offering 100 percent online courses for credit.

The Massachusetts Legislature has passed a law designed to ensure better oversight over virtual schools for elementary and secondary school students. We will all need to be vigilant to make sure that high standards are being met.

Access and training

All educators — in preK-12 schools and our colleges and universities — must have access to relevant, high-quality professional development in the integration of digital learning into their practice.

At the very basic level, teachers often need training in how to use the technology that is available. Beyond that, however, they need to know how to use it effectively, and they must be provided with the time to integrate it into their teaching.

How many teachers know how to effectively “flip” their classes so that factual information is absorbed by students online at home while they are also applying the learning that takes place in the classroom?

How do you verify whether your students are completing their own work if they are taking tests online at home? Are teaching assistants well trained in how to help their students receive additional assistance through computer-based programs?

In short, systems need to be set up to support educators and provide the professional development that is needed.

Rights and benefits

Some educators have legitimate concerns about the impact of these changes on their professional lives. We need to address those concerns to make

sure that the end result is both good for students and fair to educators.

Questions that need to be addressed include:

- Who holds the copyright to creative new online instructional units that educators develop on their own time?

- How much should teachers or higher ed faculty members be paid for taking on additional duties related to technology? The Chronicle of Higher Education recently reported on a survey that found college professors who taught MOOCs were generally impressed with the results, but often spent more than 100 hours preparing and producing such courses for no additional compensation.

- Should online teachers of Massachusetts students be licensed in the state? Should they belong to the union? What kind of job guarantees should they have? How will they be evaluated?

- How do we ensure that technology does not supplant quality instruction as a cost-cutting measure?

There are many questions and issues that we have to address, but I believe that as educators we need to embrace the changes that are taking place all around us.

The new technologies that occupy an ever more significant place in our public and personal lives can be used to enrich students' educational experiences, and they can create opportunities to improve the quality of instruction and learning. They have increased the effectiveness of education employees, and they can provide opportunities to reduce educational inequities.

Combined with traditional instruction provided by qualified educators, they offer a chance for accelerated and individualized learning and competency-based education to be made available at any time, anywhere and at each student's personal pace.

As educators, we need to understand and help shape these changes. The NEA and the MTA will be developing recommendations in some of these areas and will be working to provide guidance and support to local associations and educators as we explore this new landscape together.

Letters policy

MTA Today welcomes letters to the editor from MTA members. Letters should be no longer than 200 words. Each letter submitted for publication must address a topic covered in *MTA Today*, must be signed and must include the writer's telephone number for confirmation purposes. Opinions must be clearly identified as belonging to the letter-writer. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity and style. To submit a letter, mail it to *MTA Today*, 20 Ashburton Place, 8th floor, Boston, MA 02108 or e-mail it to mtatodayletters@massteacher.org. For additional information, please refer to the guidelines posted on www.massteacher.org.

A ‘missed opportunity’ for students

Transportation-only legislation falls short of revenue needs, but MTA will continue to push for resources

By Laura Barrett

The MTA called the Legislature’s failure to significantly increase revenues targeted to education “a missed opportunity for Massachusetts students.”

Despite that assessment, MTA leaders remain optimistic that the fiscal 2014 budget will include some increases for public higher education and likely modest increases for state Chapter 70 funds for public schools.

The budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 still has to go through the Legislature and be signed by the governor before municipalities and public higher education campuses know how much funding they will receive. MTA members will be asked to contact their legislators about supporting or opposing provisions that could have a direct impact on the quality of education provided in the state.

In separate but related actions in April, the House approved a transportation bill that includes \$500 million in new tax revenues, mainly by raising taxes on gasoline, tobacco and certain businesses.

The Senate passed a similar bill that would raise additional revenues over time by assessing a new fee on utility companies. The Senate bill also mandates efficiencies and directs certain existing revenues to transportation projects over the next five years.

The MTA and other members of the Campaign for Our Communities had supported a \$1.9 billion revenue bill that would have increased the income tax but also increased the personal exemption to reduce the impact on low- and middle-income taxpayers. The governor filed a similar tax bill worth nearly \$2 billion, with roughly half of the funds allocated to public education, from preschool through college.

Despite public opinion polls showing that voters were more open to an increase in income taxes than rising gas taxes, first the House and then the Senate chose to increase the gas tax by 3 cents a gallon, as well as raise tobacco and business taxes.

Educators and others had supported the approach favored by the governor and the Campaign for Our Communities in large numbers.

“We thank the thousands of MTA members who contacted their legislators in favor of new revenues,” said MTA President Paul Toner. “Although the Legislature’s transportation-only revenue package is an extreme disappointment, the phone calls, e-mails and in-person meetings held with our members have put the legislators on notice that we expect them to provide more funding for public education moving forward.

“With the support and activism of members, the MTA will continue to work hard for the rest of the legislative session for a favorable outcome on our legislative package and other bills that impact MTA members,” Toner added.



Photo by Laura Barrett

MTA Retired member Richard Liston of Everett applauded as State Representative Jim O’Day, right, a key supporter of the Campaign for Our Communities and the lead House sponsor of a bill seeking to raise \$1.9 billion in revenues, reached out to shake Governor Deval Patrick’s hand during a lobby day on March 12. Instead of enacting the revenue measure backed by the MTA and other coalition members, the House and Senate have both adopted transportation-only funding packages. Liston, O’Day and Patrick all spoke during the State House event, which filled Gardner Auditorium and overflowed into other parts of the building.

Once the transportation measures were approved, attention turned to the budget. The House proposed a \$33.8 billion spending plan that — if passed — would boost funding for higher education, slightly increase overall spending on public schools and cut spending on early childhood education by about 3 percent compared to the fiscal year 2013 budget that was approved.

The House budget was being considered as *MTA Today* went to press.

Toner described the early education proposal as “a big disappointment that shortchanges low-income children and that will cost us all more down the road.” The governor had sought a \$148 million increase in spending on early education to guarantee affordable care for low-income 3- and 4-year-olds.

One bright spot in the proposed House budget was a significant increase in funding for public higher education. The House plan was 8 percent higher than the amount originally approved in that area last year and nearly 10 percent higher than what the colleges and universities ended up with after mid-year cuts were made.

If approved by the House and Senate, this increase will enable public campuses to freeze

tuition and fees for students and fulfill contractual obligations to employees.

The House plan included an increase in public school funding overall, though districts would be affected in different ways based on their Chapter 70 allocations. Funds for some education grant programs were increased, while resources for others were decreased.

House approval of the budget was expected in late April. Following House action, the Senate will release, debate and vote on its version of the budget. Any differences between the House and Senate versions will be reconciled in a conference committee before a final spending proposal is sent to the governor.

“All groups that have a stake in the budget will be seeking to influence the outcome by mobilizing their members,” Toner said. “The voices of those of us who care about public schools and public higher education have to be heard during this process or legislators may mistakenly believe that the status quo is good enough. It isn’t. As taxpayers and educators, we need to let our legislators know what our students need to thrive in today’s economy.”

For updates and details on the budget, please visit the MTA website, www.massteacher.org.

Nonprofit adds right note to learning

By Jean Conley

For Jess Baron, using music to embed learning into students' minds is more than just a matter of instinct.

Baron is the founder and executive director of Guitars in the Classroom, a California-based nonprofit that adds just the right note to learning, no matter what the subject. The program helps integrate lessons into the portions of the brain where rhythm, memory and repetition reside.

Baron started Guitars in the Classroom almost 14 years ago. She was convinced that music — a basic, instinctual form of human expression that aids memorization and draws people in — would help students learn in diverse ways.

As she was teaching music classes in a public elementary school in Santa Cruz, she recalled, subject teachers “started noticing that students would come back to class and sing incessantly after the music class had ended.”

“Several teachers came back to me and said, ‘I wish I could do that,’” she said, meaning they wanted to engage students in math and history lessons as deeply as they were engaged in music learning. “You can,” Baron replied.

Today, guitar-toting teachers in 31 states are using GITC to help teach the basics of math, history and geography, keeping their students engaged and helping them retain what they have learned. In Massachusetts, the program is continuing to win raves as more teachers learn the basics from GITC teacher-trainers.

Guitars in the Classroom forms groups of up to 24 educators and,



Photo by Jean Conley

Worcester teacher Jon Short holds a Guitars in the Classroom session for Sujata Bhatia of Harvard University and Jill Potsaid, right, a special education teacher at Boston's Elihu Greenwood Leadership Academy.

using guitars donated by some of the biggest makers in the industry, gives them basic instrument and songwriting training for free, along with musical accessories and supplies. No previous musical training or innate ability is assumed. GITC has reached, conservatively, about 800,000 students, Baron estimated.

Baron, who is trained as a music specialist, has a background in educating students with behavioral disabilities. Before launching GITC, she provided music instruction to public school students, wrote books and taught human development classes.

One of GITC's East Coast ambassadors is Judy Roberts, a

classically trained musician who lives in Quincy. Roberts is on the board of the worldwide United Nations arts initiative known as Music as a Global Resource. Her ear for music and cost-effective ideas, plus a meeting of the minds when Roberts and Baron both worked on an event for the initiative, launched their friendship. Roberts learned about Baron's fast-spreading organization; Baron learned about Roberts' work producing special events to help charities such as hospitals in Boston.

Roberts pointed to the “incredible success rate of GITC” and its low cost due to a nationwide network of dedicated teacher-trainers and

donations of guitars and supplies from instrument manufacturers. As a result of its track record, GITC is now one of the 105 programs included in a United Nations initiative called Creative Arts as a Global Resource. Roberts said GITC's effectiveness has put it in the “exemplar” category and has won the program worldwide acclaim.

Worcester music teacher Jon Short met Baron at a summer festival in Nashville. During the event, he attended a GITC presentation she gave and watched her personality fill the room.

Short had already been using guitar in his sixth-grade classroom at Canterbury Street Community School, where his students learned catchy songs to help embed math concepts and get ready for standardized tests. Baron asked Short to begin the first GITC chapter in the state, and in February 2011 he arrived home to find 15 Martin guitars on his porch.

Short has led half a dozen GITC programs and continues to use GITC methods with his students at Chandler Elementary Community School and the Francis J. McGrath Elementary School, both of which he serves as a general music teacher. He also uses them at City View Discovery School, where he is an extended-learning enrichment instructor.

Sujata Bhatia, a medical doctor, chemical engineer and assistant director of undergraduate studies at the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, is another die-hard fan of Guitars in the Classroom. When she's not advising undergraduate biomedical engineers or working on medical device innovations for the

Please turn to **Music**/Page 16

MASSCreative says the arts aren't just nice — they're necessary

Governor Deval Patrick's proposed fiscal 2014 budget allocates almost \$10 million for the Massachusetts Cultural Council to invest in the state's creative community — but that amount, which is far from guaranteed in the state's final spending plan, is less than half of what Massachusetts invested in arts and culture 10 years ago.

This does not sit well with Matthew Wilson, a veteran of outside-the-box activism.

Wilson was hired last year as the executive director of a new statewide

arts advocacy organization called MASSCreative. Meetings galvanized cultural organizations statewide, and so far about 75 are participating.

Wilson appears to be just the man for the challenge. He is a former field staff director for MoveOn.org and he founded the Toxics Action Center, which helped 300 grassroots organizations address toxic pollution.

MASSCreative wants people to realize that the arts are not just nice, but necessary — and that access to the arts is a matter of social justice. One of the group's projects is ARTS for

All, an initiative aimed at getting the Board of Higher Education to require a year of arts education as an admission requirement for public colleges and universities.

Under the Education Reform Act of 1993, arts education became a recommendation, but not a requirement, for high school graduation. Five years ago, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's recommended program of studies known as MassCore began including four years of English and math, three years of a lab-based

science and history, two years of foreign language and one year of arts.

The Board of Higher Education's standards have evolved in step with MassCore's recommendations, except for the arts.

MTA Vice President Tim Sullivan, a church soloist, says the arts deserve a strong push and vocal advocacy.

“Music instruction, the visual and performing arts and dance do more than build skills,” he adds. “They help children develop their natural gifts.”

For more information, please visit www.mass-creative.org.

Members of new MTA unit ‘fired up’

By Laura Barrett

Two experienced teacher assistants in Brockton had long felt that they and their colleagues deserved more benefits and a union contract, but a district decision that showed no compassion or fairness finally propelled them to action.

Beth Sullivan, who has worked with emotionally impaired students at the Kennedy Elementary School for 14 years, told *MTA Today* about the final straw for her and Cheryl Donahue, a 16-year teacher assistant.

“Both of us lost a parent and we got no bereavement leave after being so dedicated and working in the system so long,” Sullivan said. “And we’re both taxpayers in Brockton, too. That decision by the district prompted our crusade.”

Sullivan and Donahue turned for help to Lorraine Niccoli, president of the paraprofessional unit in Brockton and the Massachusetts Teachers Association’s 2012 Education Support Professional of the Year.

“I knew that organizing would be an enormous task, but I thought we could give it our best shot,” Niccoli said.

There are about 100 Monitor Teacher Assistants — called MTAs — in Brockton serving in functions similar to paraprofessionals and other ESPs, but they’ve worked without union benefits or protections. Until now, that is.

Brockton’s MTAs have been at-will employees who must have bachelor’s degrees, while paraprofessionals need two years of college or to pass the ParaPro Assessment. The MTAs have no specific job descriptions and are deployed as needed, with duties including assisting special needs students, monitoring in the cafeteria, helping out in the office or working as substitute teachers.

“I really love my job,” said Donahue, who works in a Davis School Title I intervention program for students in grades one and two. “I help students with reading. I help with the MCAS. I do the Iowa testing. I do all the DIBELS testing. I also substitute for no extra pay. But I love the first- and second-graders and I love doing the intervention groups. We just feel like having a college degree, spending all this money for school and then getting very few benefits and recognition — we wanted to be recognized as a group.

“It’s easier to tell you what benefits we do have rather than what we don’t have because it’s just a handful,” Donahue continued. “We get one sick day a month, and if you don’t take it you lose it. We are in the retirement system and we do get health insurance. And we get an hourly stipend. I think that pretty much sums it up. We have no vacation time, no personal days, no bereavement time, no job protection.”

For the past two years, the MTAs have received no raises, while other employees in the district have gotten increases. And the pay is low for employees who are required to have a bachelor’s degree: \$15.29 an hour — the same for those who have just been



Photo by Laura Barrett

Monitor Teacher Assistants — MTAs — are standing together for fairness and seeking a contract.

hired as for those who have worked in the district for decades.

Arthur Dias, a two-year MTA at Brockton High School who is hoping to land a full-time teaching position soon, became involved in the organizing effort not for himself but because he saw the injustice for others.

“It’s ridiculous to think that with 16 and 14 years, respectively, they only get paid as much as I do,” Dias said.

Since the MTAs are among the only employees in the district who didn’t have union representation, Niccoli said, the initial strategy was to put together a “mini package” and ask the district for voluntary recognition. The district said no, so an organizing campaign was launched.

The first challenge was finding, identifying and reaching all of the MTAs, since they often didn’t know one another and are scattered across the district in different buildings. They were trained in the Massachusetts Teachers Association charting system, which includes identifying contact people in every building. Those contacts remain responsible for keeping their fellow MTAs informed and engaged in the union.

Once the MTAs were identified, they didn’t need a lot of persuading to sign “green sheets” expressing interest in having union representation. They were all invited to a meeting last spring to learn what signing up for the union would mean. The response was overwhelming.

“We only needed 51 percent to sign up,” said Dias, “but we got nearly 100 percent.”

Once the forms were turned in to the state Department of Labor Relations, the district had no choice but to recognize the union and engage in collective bargaining to reach the first contract.

Niccoli said that the paraprofessionals she represents have been very supportive of the organizing effort. “The paras were very receptive,” she said. “They encouraged us to keep going with it because they felt so bad that the teacher assistants were not given any of the benefits that employees in the rest of the school system were given.”

As of mid-April, the two sides had met for bargaining four times and had not yet reached a tentative agreement. The MTAs know it will be difficult to win all of the rights and benefits they deserve, but they have no regrets.

“When the district told us it wasn’t going to voluntarily recognize us as a union, it was a slap in the face,” said Sullivan. “It made us feel as if we’re not as important as the other employees, even though we do the same job as others and sometimes even more.

“But we’re not giving up,” she continued. “It’s a great feeling to be part of a union. We’re used to seeing everyone else here in a union and getting benefits, like getting paid for the half-day we were closed on Good Friday. We were the only people who didn’t get paid for that time. We want what everyone else is getting. We want a contract. And we’re fired up!”

Advocates call for higher ed funding increase

By Sarah Nathan

Public higher education faculty, staff, students and administrators from all over Massachusetts stressed the need for more funding for the Commonwealth’s community colleges, state universities and UMass during an advocacy day at the State House on March 5.

“It’s important to remind everyone that we are citizens of the Commonwealth and that we have a responsibility to future citizens,” said Anne Wiley, a Greenfield Community College professor and strategic action coordinator for the GCC chapter of the Massachusetts Community College Council. “That’s what public higher education and K-12 are all about.”

Wiley, who traveled to Boston with three Greenfield Community College students, joined hundreds of fellow public higher education advocates at a rally in Gardner Deval Auditorium, where Governor Deval Patrick urged them to tell their legislators to do the right thing and support a revenue package that allows for deeper investment in education.

“I’m here to tell you that we are not going to be able to reform our way to a better higher ed system — we have to invest in it,” Patrick said. “If we are going to keep the public in public higher ed, then the public has to step up, too.”

The Massachusetts public higher education system lost \$669 million in state funding in inflation-adjusted dollars between fiscal 2001 and fiscal 2013, according to the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center.

“At this point, we are operating on a 2001 budget given to us by the state,” Wiley noted. “Who can run a household on a 2001 budget in 2013? You can’t run a college on it — especially at a time when enrollment is so high.”

UMass Boston senior and Student Trustee Alexis Marvel implored the audience to “stand together and say we deserve better.”

After the rally, participants visited the offices of their state representatives and senators and told their personal stories. Many students spoke about the challenges they face to stay in school and explained how difficult it is to deal with mounting debt. Others spoke of how chronic underfunding has undermined efforts to deliver the highest-quality education to students.

“Our students are our best advocates,” said retired MTA member David Morwick, a former president of the Association of Professional Administrators. “The stories they tell about why they are in higher ed and the difficulties they face are very powerful.”

To view a video of the advocacy day, visit youtube.com/massteacher. To see more photographs, go to flickr.com/mtacommunications.



Higher education faculty, students and staff turned out in force to rally for the resources needed to help public colleges and universities thrive. Before visiting individual legislators, they gathered in Gardner Auditorium at the State House to hear from Governor Deval Patrick and other speakers.

Photo by Laura Barrett

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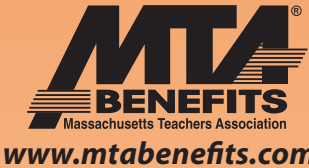
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MTA ESPs gather to learn and network

By Jean Conley

Workshops on everything from bullying, autism and on-the-job stress to retirement planning and serving healthful meals were featured at this year's ESP Conference in Falmouth. The conference, which took place at the Sea Crest Beach Hotel, attracted about 300 participants. Held April 5 and 6, the event provided ESPs with their own stage on which to discuss some of the most important issues in education. There was also time to dine, laugh and connect with colleagues in the beautiful oceanfront location.

Diane Barnum, an assistant teacher in Framingham, was honored with the MTA ESP of the Year Award. Barnum, who teaches in an inclusion classroom at the Building Learning Opportunities for Children's Kindergarten Success Pre-School, was singled out for her "supportive, kind, caring manner" by the MTA ESP Committee, which reviews the submissions for the award.



Photos by Jean Conley

A session called "Reporting Live from the ESP Conference" gave participants a chance to hone their social media skills. From left to right are Jean Fay of the Amherst-Pelham Education Association, Cindy Nowak of Union 38, and Leslie Marsland and Pat Hardnett, both members of the University Staff Association at UMass Amherst.

Millie Ficarra, co-chair of the MTA ESP Committee, said all of the nominees were "creative, innovative thinkers who make a difference to their schools and communities."

Barnum, she said, exemplifies the qualities of the ideal education support professional — "leading by example, advocating for others, promoting public education and modeling for others the importance of continued professional



ESP of the Year Diane Barnum got some help from her granddaughter, Olivia Woods, during a raffle drawing at the conference. Millie Ficarra, left, co-chair of the MTA ESP Committee, held out the box of tickets.

growth." Ficarra said that Barnum is often "sought out by students, parents and colleagues for the so-called 'soft' leadership skills of nurturing, listening and approachability."

She noted that according to Samuel Miskin, president of the Framingham Teachers Association, Barnum is one of the first to arrive at union meetings and one of the last to leave. She is also described as a "leader with excellent communication and organizational skills."

Barnum said she was thrilled to receive the award. She started her path to becoming an ESP as an involved parent, then a fundraiser for her children's school. Then she became secretary of the PTO, which, she said, provided "a great chance for me to get involved." Eventually, she began helping out in special education

classes, which led to her job as an aide. She became a building representative 15 years ago and then part of the negotiating team.

Barnum, who is now negotiating her local's fourth contract, said she was grateful that she had "learned so much in the process." She said she was thrilled to work as a phone bank volunteer for Elizabeth Warren's U.S. Senate campaign and recently lobbied at the State House to support An Act to Invest in Our Communities, a bill aimed at increasing revenue to invest in public education, transportation and other important public services.

She lauded the ESPs in the audience, saying, "Thank you for the job you do to make every day better for the children in your care. I know you are all caring and compassionate ESPs

Please turn to ESPs/Page 29

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Report to focus on anti-worker groups

In December 2012, something that had seemed unthinkable even a year earlier happened: Michigan, long considered a union stronghold, became the nation's 24th state to enact a right-to-work law. The dramatic reversal of fortune was a shock to the system.

While it seemed sudden, passage of Michigan's law actually resulted from a persistent campaign designed to wear down the nation's labor movement one state at a time. Defund and dismantle the unions, labor foes have maintained, and there will be no impediment to a philosophy that embraces privatizing schools and services, reducing compensation and job protections and curtailing government revenues to the point where traditional levels of public services become unsustainable.

Michigan's union critics seized on a small window to move on their agenda, and it was a group effort. Language distributed by the Right-leaning American Legislative Exchange Council, echoing anti-labor bills offered for dozens of states, provided the vehicle. Donors and advocacy groups, using political contributions and grassroots-style campaigning, urged on legislators and eventually the governor. A think tank hostile to public schools pushed policy arguments that provided cover for elected officials. Overtures by an association that hopes to lure member educators away from the NEA

and the AFT appear to be the likely next step.

A review by an MTA task force appointed as a result of a new business item at the 2012 Annual Meeting of Delegates shows that the coordinated dance in Michigan did not occur in isolation. The task force, which has been examining the activities of anti-educator and anti-worker groups, has found that in Massachusetts and nationwide, similar efforts are occurring at various degrees of intensity. They are backed by wealthy labor critics who have spent hundreds of millions of dollars in the last 15 years fortifying an infrastructure of operatives, activists, media experts and elected officials.

The idea that allied groups on the Right are working together to challenge labor and achieve a shared vision of smaller government and private and for-profit schools is not new. What's different now is how critics are trying to silence front-line educators at the same time they are mounting an unprecedented assault on resources.

That leaves advocates and defenders of public education fighting on two fronts: trying to maintain a strong voice to advocate for students while fending off attempts to raid government spending, lay off teachers and cut benefits and pensions while also diverting funds to for-profit and private education.

It's no coincidence that the 2013 proposal to expand vouchers in Wisconsin came on the heels of a

drawn-out campaign to end collective bargaining for public employees.

"We fight these battles on taxes and regulations," the Michigan leader of Americans for Prosperity, an advocacy group at the heart of recent labor assaults, said in remarks captured by Think Progress and played on NPR in 2011. "But really what we would like to see is to take the unions out at the knees, so they don't have the resources to fight these battles."

Massachusetts has not been immune. Since 2010, Beacon Hill has taken up and passed laws to curtail health insurance and retirement benefits for public employees, though the cuts have been far short of what some labor critics would like to see. The state continues to contemplate a bigger presence for charter schools. And policymakers have repeatedly considered whether to build for the future with additional revenue — or, as some prefer, cut taxes still further.

Boston is home to the Pioneer Institute and the Beacon Hill Institute, both free-market think tanks that promote "competition" and limited government. They have made a considerable impact on charter schools and testing policies while generating countless reports as fodder for opinion pieces and talking points, targeting everything from collectively bargained benefits and Project Labor Agreements to health care reform and renewable energy. Here

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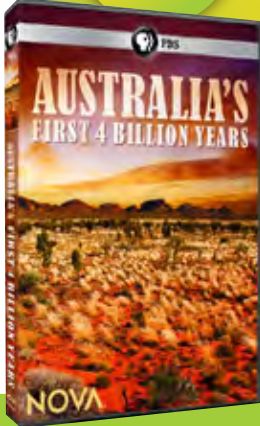
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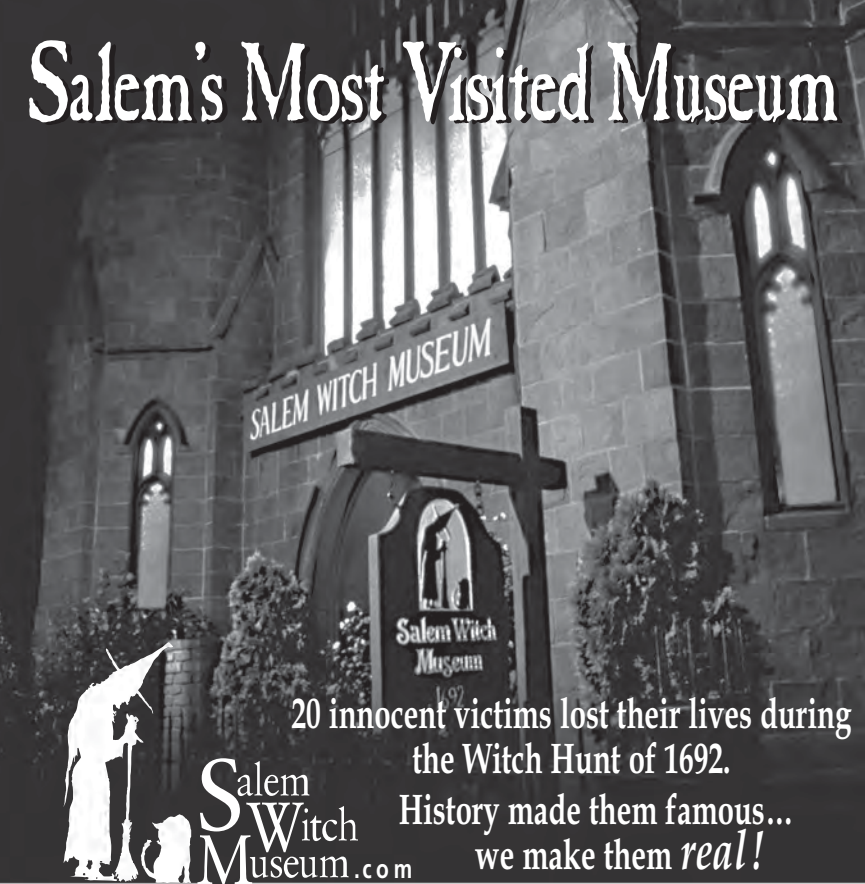
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Educators step forward for good causes

By Bob Duffy

MTA educators prove every day that they are as committed to their communities as they are to their students.

For many, that means the warmer months of the year are a time for hitting the streets to help others.

Dozens of T-shirt-wearing educators have been gearing up in recent weeks to take part in the 20-mile Project Bread Walk for Hunger.

Several MTA members were cheered on recently in Hartford by the 15,000 people who turned out for the 5K Sandy Hook Run for the Families.

And the Malden Education Association's inaugural 5K Race/Fun Walk, which was being held as *MTA Today* went to press, was expected to attract more than 100 educators, businesspeople and residents.

Those charitable events are just three of many that help underscore the fact that public school educators are at the very center of community life. Involvement in such efforts does more



Photo by Bob Duffy

MTA members Krystle LaChance, Sherri Russell, Jennifer Maio, Laura Vago and Miriam Kranz, from left to right, participated in the recent 5K Sandy Hook Run for the Families, which was held in Hartford.

than raise funds for good causes; it gives members of the public a chance to interact with educators outside of traditional school settings.

"These types of events are really fun ways to give back to the community," said Nicole Prevost, a member of the Quincy Education Association and the organizer of the MTA team in the Walk for Hunger,

scheduled for May 5. This year's walk, the 45th edition, funds a variety of anti-hunger programs throughout Massachusetts.

The event, always on the first Sunday in May, starts on Boston Common and snakes its way through Brookline, Newton, Watertown and Cambridge before ending back at the Common.

Although the overall walk is 20 miles long, participants can travel one mile, the entire course or something in between. Along the route there will be music, refreshments and shuttle buses for anyone looking for a ride back to the starting line. Last year's walk attracted 43,000 participants and raised \$3.6 million.

MTA Vice President Tim Sullivan will join the MTA team for the walk. The MTA's goal is to get 100 members to participate or sponsor someone who is walking.

In March, at the start of the 5K Sandy Hook Run for the Families, the announcer asked the crowd to recognize all educators in attendance. Thunderous applause erupted.

"It was awesome to see all the enthusiasm for teachers," said Maryann Ziemba, a history teacher at Millis High School. "I have always been proud to be a teacher because giving back is part of who we are."

She noted that raising funds for the families at Sandy Hook bore special significance because the tragedy in Newtown, Conn., which took the lives of both students and educators, "had such a direct effect on our profession."

The group from the MTA New Member Committee, running in T-shirts emblazoned with the words "Massachusetts Teachers with Compassion," was personally thanked by a Newtown educator who saw the educators in the crowd and made sure to come over to talk with them.

"This is just an awesome outpouring of love and camaraderie," said Susan Connelly, a counselor at Newtown Middle School, who got her start teaching in Massachusetts before moving to Connecticut.

The Malden race, meanwhile, was designed as a family-friendly festival. It was set to start on April 27 at MacDonald Stadium. Registration for the run was \$25, while walkers could sign up for \$15. All proceeds are being donated to a local anti-hunger organization called Bread of Life.

"We have gotten the OK to have a festival at the finish line, which will include a bounce house, basketball hoops and go-karts," noted Matthew Gillis, the MEA member organizing the event.

Gillis said reaction to the event has been "beyond positive."

Please turn to **MTA members**/Page 29

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Malone welcomes arrival of Common Core

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A: It's a hot-button issue. I'm always interested in finding a new pay system that is different from steps and lanes. I'm thinking about a way that essentially there would still be some step-and-lane piece. But I'm looking at something where folks who want to lead a small learning community go into a different scale so there are more coaching and leadership opportunities. But that's not pay based on a test score. The one people talk about is that we pay people for AP scores. That seems to be successful in some places. But if we're going to pay folks for getting higher scores on a test, I'd rather see that as a building initiative. If we're working as a team, then let the building get the dollars. Then they can pay for additional training or buy additional equipment.

Q: What are your views on Common Core, the national curriculum standards being incorporated into the state's curriculum frameworks?

A: I love the Common Core. I'll tell you why. It's focused on nonfiction.

It's focused on interdisciplinary connections. It's focused on deeper levels of understanding. I am a big believer in the idea: "Let's measure ourselves truly against the rest of the country." I've never been one of those elitists who say our curriculum is better than everyone else's so just leave us alone because everyone else is dumb compared to us. That's not true. We've had a very strong curriculum. But this Common Core is equally strong. Massachusetts is the tip of the spear in terms of achievement on certain assessments. But we still have too many kids who aren't doing well. Sixty-six percent of our students are Proficient or above in reading and math in the third grade, but that holds true for only 37 percent of African-American kids and 36 percent of Latino kids. I think the Common Core is going to allow us to get more of those kids into Proficient.

Q: What about PARCC? Do schools have reliable enough Internet access and enough computers to implement it?

A: This is a huge issue. Brockton High School has 4,200 kids, so if you had to assess 1,100 kids at once, we don't have 1,100 units. I don't have an answer yet. I know smart people are working on this right now. But you're absolutely right that most places are struggling with how we're going to do this. I do like the fact that it's going to be electronic, so I'm hoping the results come back in time for teachers to actually use the data.

Q: The governor has proposed raising substantial new revenue and investing \$900 million in education. Why do you think those investments are needed?

A: I've been traveling the state talking about the governor's proposal. We haven't had a major investment in public education since 1993, 20 years ago. We've underfunded early childhood and higher ed. Chapter 70 investments have always been high, but we've also had eight consecutive years of cuts. So this will allow some systems to build back what's been cut. Now is the time to invest in public education.

There are five pieces in the governor's proposal. It's about universal access to early-childhood seats — about 35,000 kids. It's about growing programs — what we call K-1 — in regular systems so we can put 4-year-olds in full-day kindergarten. It's about extending the learning time in our middle schools, particularly in our Gateway Cities. It's about making connections between community colleges and high schools and our vocational schools with industry-based manufacturing and health care jobs. And it's about college affordability so our high school graduates can go on to higher ed and graduate school without too much debt. Some people are saying, "Well, I don't want to pay for it." My response is that you and I were able to benefit from the schools and systems and roads that our grandparents built for us. It's now our opportunity to do the same for the next generation. I think that this investment will allow us to continue to grow, to continue to close achievement gaps and continue to create opportunities for young people.

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'I think the union should be in favor of Innovation Schools'

Continued from previous page

Q: What is your view on charter schools? You were a vocal opponent of the charter school that was proposed for Brockton.

A: I was against the Sabis charter school in Brockton because I thought the proposal wasn't strong. It's not the concept I was against. It's really that they weren't going to do anything different than what we were already doing. And what they said they would do better they couldn't, because they couldn't articulate it. If it's a phony proposal, I'm against it. But I've voted for charters and against a couple in my 10 weeks on this job. I look at each one on the merits of the specific proposal. I think there's room for charter schools in our whole theory of action, in our whole strategy around student achievement results. There have been some very successful charter schools that we should replicate. However, I also don't think that charter schools are the one answer to how we fix public education. I think there are a host of options through

collaboration that I'd like to see more of. I'll give you an example of the Huntington Elementary School in Brockton. It was a turnaround school, a low-performing Level 3 school that we turned around through collaboration. It looks like a charter school. The kids all wear uniforms. It's extended day. They've given them a lot of site control and autonomy over curriculum and instruction. But it's a public school where the teachers are working very differently. You do have to listen to the people in the field. If the people in the field are not against the charter proposal, then no one's against it. But if the people in the local community don't want it, then we need to listen to that. Local control makes a lot of sense to me.

Q: What do you think of Innovation Schools — in-district public schools that have more site-based autonomy?

A: I think we have 48 of them now. I like the idea of allowing site-level redesign and control where they want to focus on something unique. I think

'You, the MTA, you need to know that you make a difference in the lives of kids. If the kids don't tell you that they love you every day, I'm telling you for them.'

— Matt Malone
Secretary of Education

Innovation Schools are a tool that both the district and the local union can use to create conditions that are charter-like: freedoms and flexibilities from both collective bargaining agreements and district bureaucracies to be able to be nimble and make decisions on the ground and get results. I would hope there'd be 100-and-some Innovation Schools. I think the union should be in favor of Innovation Schools. They don't lose members. It's part of the union.

Q: A recent national survey found that teacher morale is low. Do you think it is?

A: Local context is important. I think if people feel that they're listened to and respected and their work is valuable — that people come in and spend time supporting them in that work — those are places I have found that morale is high. It's less high where that doesn't happen. The leadership side needs to make people feel important. On the classroom side, teachers need to build themselves up every day. I served in the Marine Corps. Being a Marine was the greatest thing in my life. But no one had to motivate me. I wore it. Teachers need to think about themselves in the same way. They need to get up out of bed every day and say, "I'm a teacher." That's important. We've got to do a little self-motivation in terms of morale sometimes. I'm out there every day high-fiving teachers. I'm feeling that people are excited. The other day I was at Worcester Tech High School. The motivation of the teachers I saw — the welding teachers and the drafting teachers. Then later that day I went over to Doherty High School and met with a bunch of teachers who were teaching the STEM pathway in the school. They were excited and fired up and the kids loved them. They felt that, how important they were in the lives of the kids and that the work they were doing was so relevant. Those folks we don't have to worry about. Their morale was there. I think we have some work to do to keep the conversation on the table about how important the work is but then also instead of beating people up give them a hug, fire them up, get them going more. I'm the proudest guy in the world. I get to go into classrooms and see awesome things every day. Like really good work. And meet and engage with teachers and watch them teach. They make the sun rise. The kids get that. You, the MTA, you need to know that you make a difference in the lives of kids. If the kids don't tell you that they love you every day, I'm telling you for them. They love you and they need you. They need you pushing them hard. And they need you to be a constant support in their lives.

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MTA task force to release report

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as everywhere, Tea Party-infused groups are challenging the Republican establishment to move right. One local result: the Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance, a new “hidden money” group that mounted a meaningful independent expenditure campaign on behalf of conservative legislative candidates in the 2012 election cycle, the first such effort in recent memory.

So-called “education reform” entities that bring the values and methods of the private investment industry into the realm of school policy have a major Massachusetts presence, as well. Organizations such as the New Schools Venture Fund and New Profit, Inc., cannot be neatly typecast. Yet the practical effect is at times to reinforce the Right Wing critique of public schools.

In this environment, Massachusetts public education and worker advocates must seek support amid a complicated set of shifting alliances in which allies on one issue may be adversaries on another. For example, potentially disastrous tax-rollback initiative petitions in 2008 and 2010 were

defeated with the help of the state’s business community. Yet much of the business lobby is deeply invested in the notion that teachers and other public employees enjoy unfair and fiscally unaffordable benefits.

Likewise, public school advocates and labor have worked cooperatively with a group called Stand for Children to preserve school funding. Yet Stand threatened last year to unilaterally undo a consensus program of educator evaluation reforms by means of a ballot campaign before agreeing to accept a legislative solution that averted the most damaging aspects of its initiative.

For the MTA and others concerned about public education and workers’ rights, this has been a very challenging period, with mixed outcomes. As the task force has found and is prepared to detail, the pressure is far from likely to let up in the months and years ahead.

The task force report, which will dig deeply into the activities of anti-worker and anti-public-education groups, will be posted on the MTA website in May.

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The MTA conducts retirement consultations throughout the state to assist members. Proof of membership must be submitted when requesting retirement services. This schedule is in effect from September to June, except in the Boston office, which is staffed during the summer and school vacations.

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BOSTON — Harold Crowley: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (by appointment only), 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., MTA, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston; 617.878.8240 or 800.392.6175, ext. 8240.

BRAINTREE — Mary Hanna: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Metropolitan Office, 100 Grandview Road, Braintree; 781.380.1410, or at home, 781.545.2069.

CAPE COD — Lawrence Abbruzzi: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 4 to 8 p.m., Barnstable Teachers Association (BTA), 100 West Main St., Suite #7, Hyannis; 508.775.8625, or at home, 508.824.9194.

FITCHBURG — Robert Zbikowski: second Thursday of each month (walk in), 4 to 8 p.m., Fitchburg Teachers Association office, 21 Culley St., Fitchburg; 978.790.8864, or at home, 978.297.0123; e-mail: zbikstar702@verizon.net.

HOLYOKE — Ron Lech: third Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Western

Office, 55 Bobala Road, Suite 3, Holyoke; 413.535.2415, or at home, 413.566.3039.

LYNNFIELD — Mary Parry: third and fourth Saturdays of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Northeast Office, 50 Salem St., Building B, Lynnfield; 781.246.9779, or at home, 978.372.2031; fax, 978.372.2035.

PITTSFIELD — Ward F. Johnson: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Berkshire Office, 188 East St., Pittsfield; 413.499.0257, or at home, 413.443.1722; e-mail: wardman33@aol.com.

RAYNHAM — Sandra Stephenson: third Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Southeast Office, 90 New State Highway (Rte. 44), Raynham; 508.822.5371, or at home, 508.747.2234; e-mail: rockowl@aol.com. Edward Nelson: fourth Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Southeast Office, 90 New State Highway (Rte. 44), Raynham; 508.822.5371, or at home, 508.853.5769.

HIGHER EDUCATION AT-LARGE — Edward McCourt, Massachusetts Bay Community College, Wellesley; 781.239.2207; e-mail: emccourt.mccc@gmail.com.

Note: If you or your association would like to have a retirement workshop at your school, your local president should call Harold Crowley at 800.392.6175, ext. 8240. Please be aware that the MTA does not have a record of your service, so members are advised to bring that information along to meetings.

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Gordon Korman

Ungifted (2012)

Hideout (2013)

Island series

Dive series

Page McBrier

Beatrice’s Goat
(2002 Christopher Award)

The Treehouse Times series

Adventure in the Haunted House

Confessions of a Reluctant Elf

Chris Raschka

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Yo! Yes? (Caldecott Honor Book)

The Hello, Goodbye Window (Illustrator)
(2006 Caldecott Medal)

Location: Ghosh Science and Technology Center, Room 102

Cost: \$685 (includes lunch)

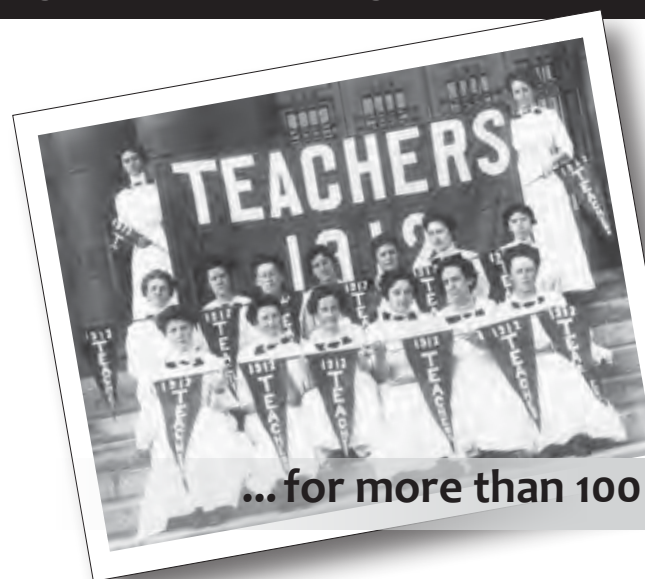
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GRADUATE AND
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New group promotes labor-management collaboration

By Laura Barrett

The Massachusetts Education Partnership has a simple slogan: Improving student achievement through labor-management collaboration. The concept is simple, but achieving that end takes shared values, a willingness to work together and — in some cases — training.

Supported by the MTA and others, the MEP is a new organization that can provide that training free of charge.

As such, it is a tremendous resource for local associations and districts looking for new ways to “get to yes.”

The MEP was launched at a conference in December that brought together union leaders, school administration officials and state education policymakers to discuss an array of subjects related to labor-management collaboration and student achievement. Two major initiatives were announced: Interest-Based

Bargaining training and the District Capacity Project.

For the IBB project, the MEP will provide up to 16 hours of free training to union and district leaders. The union president, school superintendent and chair of the school committee must apply jointly. To date, 18 districts have been trained or are in the process. A new round of training will begin in the fall.

In a recent interview, MEP Executive Director Nancy Peace explained the difference between traditional bargaining and IBB.

“In traditional bargaining, each party comes to the table with a position on whatever issue is being discussed,” she said. “Bargaining then proceeds as a march toward compromise.”

In IBB, by contrast, both sides lay on the table what they need and why — their interests — and then jointly explore the many options for addressing the issues.

Peace cited a parent-teenager discussion about the teen’s curfew as an example of how things might proceed under IBB. The teenager might ask for a midnight curfew. The parent might then insist on 10 p.m. Under traditional bargaining, they might both settle for 11 p.m. Using IBB, they could have a more nuanced discussion that could result in different curfews on weeknights and weekends or other changes that address the teen’s desire for more autonomy and the parent’s desire that the teen be safe and get homework done.

“The latter discussion opens communication and strengthens the child’s relationship with the parents,” Peace said. “Likewise, interest-based negotiations tend to improve communication between labor and management and foster a more collaborative relationship.”

Facilitator Andrew Bundy explained the District Capacity Project, the other initiative launched at the conference.

“The big idea of the DCP is to bring labor and management leaders

‘In a handful of places the union and management are at each other’s throats, and that’s just not productive ...’

— MTA President Paul Toner

together with others who are playing education roles in the district and have that team of people work to identify a project they want to pursue,” he said.

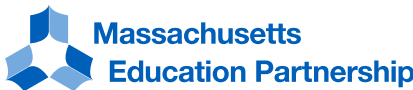
So far, eight districts have begun working on projects with MEP-provided facilitation.

MTA President Paul Toner said the MEP was formed in part to promote better understanding at the local level.

“One of the big reasons for getting involved in this is that Tom Scott of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Glenn Koocher of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and I have very good, collaborative relationships at the state level, but that’s not always the case at the local level,” Toner said. “In a handful of places the union and management are at each other’s throats, and that’s just not productive for our members or the students. We asked ourselves, ‘Where can we send people for marriage counseling when all else has failed?’ Better yet, ‘When we have new leaders either on the labor or management side, how can we help them build successful new working relationships from the start?’”

Partners in the group are the MTA, AFT Massachusetts, MASCC, MASS, Northeastern University’s Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy, the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at UMass Boston and the Institute for Work & Employment Research. The NEA Foundation has provided funding to support the MEP.

For further information, e-mail Peace at nancy.peace@umb.edu.



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Correction

Krystle LaChance is a fourth-grade teacher in Southbridge. The community in which she teaches was incorrectly identified in a story on the Just for New Teachers Conference in the winter edition of *MTA Today*.

Music helps build array of skills

Continued from Page 6

developing world, the physician-scientist is spending time using what she learns at GITC, which she serves as a faculty fellow.

Bhatia got to know Baron last year, when Baron brought her son Elias to visit Harvard on a college tour. When Elias began a summer research project under Bhatia's guidance, Baron invited her to a GITC intensive program. She enrolled, learned basic "Open G" tuning and was given instruction in how to write simple songs and lyrics. She immediately put her new skill to work in her own classroom, full of aspiring bioengineers.

Bhatia wrote a song about the process of laminar blood flow through the kidneys to the tune of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." The method was a hit, she said, and truly embedded the step-by-step biological process into students' minds.

She said that while she often deals with mathematically and scientifically brilliant students, music training broadens their skills.

"If you want to build students' math skills," she added, "have that child get involved in music."

Bhatia said the other advantage of using the guitar in particular is that the instrument "breaks down a barrier" with young people. She said guitar "more than any other instrument allows me to relate to my students, and part of being a good teacher is being accessible."

Furthermore, she said, it helps to be a beginner, showing her students when she plays that she is really working hard. "They are working hard to master engineering, and it makes them relate," she noted.

Baron said another reason guitars work so well with students is that they build instant social credibility for the teacher. "There's an immediate 'cool factor' when a teacher picks one up," she said.

She pointed to music's ability to lower the "affective filter" in the classroom, the anxiety that keeps students from asking questions and truly joining in. Music, she said, provides a calming and unifying environment.

She said GITC is being used more and more by teachers of special needs students, who find that the repetition of the song content makes it predictable. "There's no fear of failure, or making a

mistake, or being shamed," Baron said.

She said special needs teachers report that GITC "promotes the students' highest behaviors and improves their verbal skills." For these reasons, she said, GITC is also ideal for students whose first language isn't English.

The most often-expressed concern of teachers, she said, is how to integrate music as a single-subject teacher.

She used the example of a history class. "Take creative songwriting, where students are telling the story of a historical figure they're writing about," she said. "It wakes up their curiosity. And what happens when they need a rhyming line in their song about a historical figure? Well, they have to go looking for more information to find the next line for the song!"

Educators will have a chance to participate in four Guitars in the Classroom workshops at the MTA Summer Conference. Please see the Summer Conference Guide or visit www.massteacher.org for details. More information on GITC is available at www.guitarsintheclassroom.org.

MTA member named to early ed board

Governor Deval Patrick has named MTA member Joni Block to the board of the Department of Early Education and Care.

Block, who lives in Foxborough, has been an early childhood specialist for the Brockton Public Schools since 2006 and serves as the coordinator of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement of Brockton.

She has a master's degree in early childhood/special needs education from Rhode Island College and a bachelor's degree in special and elementary education from Southern Connecticut State College.

Block began her teaching career in 1978 in Hanover, where she taught early childhood and elementary school children with special needs.

She went on to teach and coordinate preschool and early childhood programs in Merrimack, N.H., and Rockland before becoming an early childhood specialist for the Massachusetts Department of Education in 1990. She has also

worked at Wheelock College's graduate school.

Block said she looks forward to "working with the board, the department and the educational field to continue to improve the lives of children and families in the Commonwealth." She replaces Carol Craig O'Brien as the teacher representative on the board.

With her husband, Cliff Shatz,



Joni Block

Block also runs a nonprofit organization named for her daughter, Rose, who died in an accident in 2006, when she was 10. Block said the organization — named "Rosie's Rafikis" after the Swahili word for "friends" — helps support schools and a medical facility in a rural village in Kenya. "That's what Rose was about — helping and showing how one person can make a difference," Block said.

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Meeting to feature impressive agenda

By Jean Conley

Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and a former governor of West Virginia, will provide the keynote address at MTA's 168th Annual Meeting of Delegates.

The Meeting of Delegates will run from Friday, May 10, to Saturday, May 11, at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Wise will address delegates on Friday. A question-and-answer session will follow.

Under Wise's stewardship, the alliance has built a reputation as a respected authority on high school policy. The alliance advocates for reform in America's secondary education system and works to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared either for college or a career.

In 2010, Wise co-chaired the Digital Learning Council, and he currently chairs the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

As governor of West Virginia from 2001 to 2005, Wise fought for and signed legislation to fund a scholarship program known as PROMISE, which has helped thousands of West Virginia high school graduates continue their education. He also helped establish a character education curriculum in the state's schools.

In 2001, Wise championed salary bonuses for teachers who achieved national board certification. The proposal passed, and the rate of national certification in West Virginia has tripled.

MTA President Paul Toner said Wise's stewardship of the Alliance for Excellent Education and his close attention to issues affecting secondary schools set him apart.

"Governor Wise understands how great schools with motivated staff and



Bob Wise

forward-looking curricula produce the next generation of adults. In fact, he wrote the book on it," Toner said.

Wise is the author of "Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation," which chronicles the costly neglect of secondary education in the United States and the challenges facing students as technology and postsecondary requirements rise dramatically.

Wise "tells real-world stories of high schools, writing eloquently about the nearly six million students at risk of dropping out," said Toner, "but he also tells stories of success and explains ways of getting there."

The 2013 Annual Meeting will also feature numerous other speakers, along with award presentations, contests for elective positions and action on the association budget, dues, proposed bylaws and resolutions, and new business items.

An MTA Friend of Education Award will be given to Paul Reville, who recently completed nearly five years as the Massachusetts secretary of education. As Governor Deval Patrick's top education advisor, Reville established the Executive Office of Education.

His stewardship extended from early education to K-12 and higher education in the state with the nation's highest student achievement. Reville has played a leading role on matters



Paul Reville

ranging from securing billions of dollars for increased investment in local school funding through the Education Reform Act of 1993 to supporting efforts to improve labor-management relationships in education in his practice and as secretary of education.

Since stepping down from his post in January, Reville has returned to the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He has been a faculty member at Harvard since 1997 and served as the director of the Education Policy and Management Program.

The MTA Friend of Labor Award will be given to Massachusetts state Senator Ken Donnelly (D-Arlington). As a senator, Donnelly, a former union firefighter in Lexington, has focused, among other things, on protecting public employee pensions, municipal health care and collective bargaining, as well as improving "middle-skills" training for jobs in expanding sectors of the Massachusetts economy such as advanced manufacturing, clean energy and health care.

Kathleen Turner, the 2013 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, will also address the Annual Meeting on Saturday morning.

Turner decided in eighth grade that she wanted to be a French teacher. "I did not become a teacher — I am a teacher," Turner said when she was named Teacher of the Year.

As a teacher at Sharon High School, she regularly takes students



Ken Donnelly



Kathleen Turner

to Paris during spring break and has established an exchange program with a school in Rouen, France. Chuck Fazzio, president of the Sharon Teachers Association, has called Turner "the very best and brightest of what we all are."

The Annual Meeting will be called to order at 12:30 p.m. on May 10. That day's session will include leadership reports delivered by Toner, MTA Vice President Tim Sullivan and Executive Director-Treasurer Ann Clarke. A report on the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign will be delivered by Sullivan.

Saturday's call to order at 9 a.m. will precede the presentation of awards and other business, including voting to fill vacancies on the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors and the Retired Members Committee.

The MTA's proposed operating budget of \$42,542,090 for fiscal 2013-2014 will be presented and voted on. The Advisory Budget Committee, the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors have proposed annual dues of \$456 for full-time active members, a \$6 increase over last year. Dues for secretaries, clerks and custodians would be \$274, while dues for aides, food service personnel and other education support professionals would be \$137.

In addition, a proposed \$30 dues assessment related to the PR/Organizing budget will be addressed. The amount is unchanged from last year.



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2013 MTA ANNUAL MEETING OF DELEGATES

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, MAY 9

2 – 4 p.m. Hynes Ballroom Pre-Function Area, 3rd Floor
MTAB Sponsors' Registration

2 – 4 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor
MTA Candidate Booth Registration

FRIDAY, MAY 10

8 – 9:30 a.m. Hynes Ballroom Pre-Function Area, 3rd Floor
MTAB Sponsors' Registration

8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Hynes Plaza Level, Main Lobby
Emergency Medical Technician

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Rooms 304-306, 3rd Floor
Delegate and Non-Delegate Registration

10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor
Retirement Consultations

10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hynes Ballroom Pre-Function Area, 3rd Floor
MTAB Sponsors

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor
MTA Candidates' Booths

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor
Boston Concierge Service Desk

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Rooms 301, 302, 303, 305, 3rd Floor
Caucus Rooms

10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor
Information Booth/Message Center

11 a.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor
Business Session Doors Open

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Bylaws and Rules Committee Table)
Final Deadline: Submit Proposed Amendments to the Standing Rules

Noon – 12:30 p.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor
MTA Chorus

12:30 p.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor
Business Session Convenes

4 p.m. on Sheraton Boston Hotel
Hotel Registration for Delegates

Prior to Recess Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Podium)
Friday Deadline: New Business Items without Budgetary Implications

Prior to Recess Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Podium)
Final Deadline: New Business Items with Budgetary Implications

Prior to Recess Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Resolutions Committee Table)
Final Deadline: Proposed Resolutions

6 p.m. (approximately) Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor
Business Session Recesses

6 – 7 p.m. Hynes Room 301, 3rd Floor
Resolutions Committee Meeting

6:15 – 7 p.m. Hynes Room 305, 3rd Floor
Candidate Speeches for Contested Seat: Executive Committee – Region E

6:15 – 7 p.m. Hynes Room 303, 3rd Floor
Candidate Speeches for Contested Seat: District Director – 36C

6:15 – 7 p.m. Hynes Room 302, 3rd Floor
Candidate Speeches for Contested Seats: Retired Members Committee

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor

Dismantling of MTA Candidates' Booths

SATURDAY, MAY 11

8 a.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor

Business Session Doors Open

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Rooms 304-306, 3rd Floor

Delegate and Non-Delegate Registration

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Election: Polls Open

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Ballroom Pre-Function Area, 3rd Floor

MTAB Sponsors' Booths

8 a.m. – Noon Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor

Information Booth/Message Center

8 a.m. – Noon Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor

Boston Concierge Service Desk

8 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Rooms 301, 302, 303, 305, 3rd Floor

Caucus Rooms

8 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Plaza Level, Main Lobby

Emergency Medical Technician

9 a.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor

Business Session Reconvenes

9 – 9:30 a.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor

Presentation of Awards

10 a.m. (Approximately) Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Podium)

Saturday Final Deadline: New Business Items without Budgetary Implications

10:55 a.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Admittance/Briefing of Observers

11 a.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Election: Polls Close

11 a.m. Sheraton Boston Hotel

Hotel Checkout

11 a.m. – Noon Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Election Tabulation

11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hynes Ballroom Pre-Function Area, 3rd Floor

Dismantling of MTAB Sponsors' Booths

11:15 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor

Non-Delegate Registration

11:15 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Boylston Street Hallway, 3rd Floor

Late Delegate Seating

12:15 p.m. (Approximately) Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Podium)

Election Results Announced

1 – 1:30 p.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Runoff Election: Polls Reopen (if Necessary)

1:25 p.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Admittance of Observers (if Necessary)

1:30 – 2 p.m. Hynes Room 311, 3rd Floor (Voting Area)

Runoff Election Tabulation (if Necessary)

2 p.m. Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor (Podium)

Runoff Election Results Announced (if Necessary)

3 p.m. (Approximately) Hynes Ballroom, 3rd Floor

Business Session Adjourns

2013 MTA ANNUAL MEETING OF DELEGATES

BUSINESS SESSION AGENDA

FRIDAY, MAY 10

1. **Call to Order (12:30 p.m.)**
Paul Toner, President, Presiding
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President
3. **“The Star-Spangled Banner”**
MTA Annual Meeting Chorus
4. **Moment of Remembrance**
5. **Announcements**
Paul Toner, President
6. **Adopt the Preliminary Credentials Report (Quorum)**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
7. **Adopt the Order of Business**
8. **Act on Proposed Amendments to the MTA Standing Rules**
Gerry Ruane, Chair, Bylaws and Rules Committee
9. **Act on Proposed Amendments to the MTA Bylaws**
Gerry Ruane, Chair, Bylaws and Rules Committee
10. **Report on Certified Candidates**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
11. **Act on Proposed Resolutions**
Diana Marcus, Chair, Resolutions Committee
12. **Act on the Recommendations of the Electoral Review Committee for the Adoption of the MTA Revised Electoral Region and District Plan**
Joyce Desjardins, Chair, Electoral Review Committee
13. **Greetings**
Tom Gosnell, President, AFT Massachusetts
14. **Presentation of the Grant for the MTA Red Sox Reading Game**
15. **Video — Year in Review**
16. **MTA Leadership Reports**
 - a. *Paul Toner, President, and Tim Sullivan, Vice President*
 - b. *Ann Clarke, Executive Director-Treasurer*
17. **Keynote Address**
Bob Wise, President, Alliance for Excellent Education
18. **Act on Proposed New Business Items**
19. **Report on the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President and Co-Chair of the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Committee
20. **Adopt the Supplemental Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
21. **Recess**

SATURDAY, MAY 11

- The Saturday Session Lasts through Adjournment with No Lunch Break*
22. **Call to Order (9 a.m.)**
 23. **Announcements**
Paul Toner, President
 24. **Adopt the Supplemental Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
 25. **Recognition and Presentation of Awards**
 - a. MTA Special Recognition for the Recipient of the 2013 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Award
Kathleen Turner, Sharon Teachers Association
 - b. MTA Friend of Education Award
Paul Reville, Former Massachusetts Secretary of Education
 - c. MTA Friend of Labor Award
Ken Donnelly, Massachusetts Senate
 26. **Act on Proposed New Business Items with Budgetary Implications**
 27. **Act on the Recommendations of the MTA Board of Directors on the Annual Budget in Two Parts from Which the Annual Dues Will Be Determined for FY 2013-2014**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President and Chair of the Advisory Budget Committee
 - a. Presentation and Discussion of the Recommended Operating Budget
 - b. Act on the Annual Operating Budget
 - c. Presentation and Discussion of the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Budget
 - d. Act on the Proposed Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Budget
*Article IV, Section 1C of the MTA Bylaws:
“... The adoption of the budget will automatically determine the annual dues for active members rounded to the next higher dollar amount.”*
 28. **Adopt the Results of the Election**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
 29. **Act on Additional Proposed Resolutions (if Necessary)**
Diana Marcus, Chair, Resolutions Committee
 30. **Adopt the Results of Any Runoff Election (if Necessary)**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
 31. **Adopt the Final Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
 32. **Act on Proposed New Business Items *without* Budgetary Implications**
 33. **Announcements and Points of Personal Privilege**
 34. **VOTE Giveaway**
 35. **Adjournment**

Candidates vie for seats on Board and Executive Committee

The Annual Meeting of Delegates will feature contests for seats on the MTA Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Sheila Hanley of Randolph and Christopher Saulnier of Acushnet are running for the Region E seat on the Executive Committee. Sue Doherty and Lorraine Niccoli, both of Brockton, are vying for the District 36C seat on the Board.

All other candidates for the Executive Committee and the Board have been declared elected under the election waiver in the MTA Bylaws. The provision states that if there is only one candidate for an open position, the election will be waived and the candidate is declared elected. Terms on the Board and Executive Committee begin July 1 and last for three years.

The candidates declared elected because of the election waiver are:

Executive Committee

- **Region B:** John DeCicco, Ashburnham-Westminster.
- **Region D:** Christopher Zellner, Bedford.
- **Region H:** Ronald Colbert, Massachusetts State College Association.

Board of Directors

- **District 33C:** Gene Reiber, Hanover.
- **District 41C:** Dale Forest, Barnstable.
- **District 39E:** Rebecca Cusick, Fall River.
- **District 40E:** Renee Vieira, Dartmouth.
- **District 12F:** Ruth Allen, Dracut.
- **District 16G:** Sheryl Norris, Winchester.
- **District 17G:** Alba DeFazio-Binney, Waltham.
- **District 20G:** Michael Shannon, Everett.
- **District 48H:** Leslie Marsland, University Staff Association.
- **District 49H:** Timothy Scott, Professional Staff Union.
- **Statewide Retired District:** Richard L. Liston, Retired.
- **Statewide Retired District:** Gerard P. Ruane, Retired.

There are no candidates in Districts 6A, 13F and 24F. Candidates who supplied photos are pictured with this article. The biographical statements of the Executive Committee and Board candidates in contested races appear below and on page 21.



Ruth Allen



Ronald Colbert



Rebecca Cusick



John DeCicco



Alba DeFazio-Binney



Sue Doherty



Sheila Hanley



Richard L. Liston



Leslie Marsland



Lorraine Niccoli



Sheryl Norris



Gerard P. Ruane



Christopher Saulnier



Timothy Scott



Renee Vieira

Biographical statements of Executive Committee candidates

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REGION E

Sheila Hanley, Randolph

I am a reading teacher in the Randolph Public Schools. Currently, I serve on the Executive Committee representing Region E and am now seeking re-election. Because the position is an important one, I prepare thoroughly for meetings and actively participate in Executive Committee and Board discussions. As a strong advocate for making MTA more democratic and transparent, I believe important votes need to be recorded and documented. Increasing and improving communications between members and MTA is an ongoing goal to reach our stated mission of being member-driven. I respectfully ask for your vote at the Annual Meeting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REGION E

Christopher Saulnier, Acushnet

I have been an effective association leader at all levels. Locally, I have served as president, vice president and grievance and negotiations chair for all five units. Statewide, I participate in the MTA as a member of the Board of Directors, New Presidents Academy and FCLA Committee, and I am a former chair of the New Member Committee. Nationally, I have attended the past four NEA RAs. I believe in a unified association that promotes a positive image of public education and protects the best interests of its members. Please vote for me for Region E Executive Committee. Thanks.

Amendments to resolutions are recommended

MTA Resolutions are the association's statements of principle on issues relating to members, public education, the welfare of students and human and civil rights.

Resolutions may be submitted by any member to the Resolutions Committee by the second Friday in January. They also may be submitted by the end of business on Friday at the Annual Meeting of Delegates. In addition, the committee may propose resolutions.

All resolutions submitted are considered by the committee, and those submitted by the January deadline are also brought before the Board of Directors. To become an official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the delegates at the Annual Meeting.

The resolutions printed here have been approved by the Resolutions Committee and recommended for adoption by the Board of Directors.

In instances where the proposal is to amend an existing resolution, the current version is shown first and the proposed modifications are shown below it. A section that has a line through it is proposed for elimination; a section that is underlined is a proposed addition.

For a copy of all current resolutions, go to the MTA website, www.massteacher.org, and search for "Resolutions."

Current D-3 Teacher Preparation Programs

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes teacher preparation programs are necessary and should be supported.

The MTA believes student teaching programs do an excellent job of preparing future teachers when the programs include strong, positive interactions and partnerships between preK-12 schools and higher education institutions, and when cooperating teachers are equal partners with college and university supervisors from teacher training programs.

Furthermore, MTA, recognizing that teachers have a responsibility for assisting in the preparation of those entering the profession, believes that teachers who supervise students should be adequately and directly prepared and compensated.

The MTA also believes that all parties have rights and responsibilities within their respective roles and therefore urges its affiliates to obtain contractual language which includes all aspects of student-teacher involvement in the schools. (75, 79, 85, 86, 00)

Proposed New D-3 Teacher Preparation Programs

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes teacher preparation programs are necessary and should be supported.

The MTA believes student teaching programs do an excellent job of preparing future teachers when the programs include strong, positive interactions and partnerships between preK-12 schools and

higher education institutions and when cooperating teachers are equal partners with college and university supervisors from teacher-training programs.

Furthermore, the MTA, recognizing that teachers have a responsibility for assisting in the preparation of those entering the profession, believes that teachers who supervise students should be adequately and directly prepared and compensated. Acceptance of student teachers, interns or residents by preK through adult-education classroom practitioners should be voluntary.

The MTA also believes that all parties have rights and responsibilities within their respective roles and, therefore, urges its affiliates to obtain contractual language that includes all aspects of student-teacher involvement in the schools. (75, 79, 85, 86, 00, 13)

Current B-30 Technology in Education

The Massachusetts Teachers Association recognizes that access to new technology is essential to the expansion of knowledge and the development of new skills. Therefore the MTA supports the appropriate use of technology in education and urges school committees and governing boards of higher education to develop policies regarding the use of such technology.

The MTA believes that educators and students should be given the opportunity to explore and use the potential of emerging technologies under conditions that ensure their health and safety.

The MTA also believes every student should have the opportunity to experience technology education

and that all educational professionals should have the opportunity for training in their schools in utilizing educational technology in their classrooms. Furthermore, the MTA believes that instructional technology should be used to support, but not to supplant, the classroom teacher. (93, 94, 96, 99)

Proposed New B-30 Technology in Education

The Massachusetts Teachers Association recognizes that access to new technology is essential to the expansion of knowledge and the development of new skills. Therefore, the MTA supports the appropriate use of technology in education and urges school committees and governing boards of higher education to bargain with local associations and chapters to develop policies regarding the use of such technology.

The MTA believes that educators and students should be given the opportunity to explore and use the potential of emerging technologies under conditions that ensure their health and safety. Filtering of websites must maintain a balance between the protection of students and the open flow of information.

The MTA also believes that every student should have the opportunity to experience technology education and that all educational professionals should have the opportunity for training in their schools in utilizing educational technology in their classrooms. Furthermore, the MTA believes that instructional technology should be used to support, but not to supplant, the classroom teacher. (93, 94, 96, 99, 13)

Biographical statements of candidates for Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 36C

Sue Doherty, Brockton

I'm running for district director because I'm deeply concerned about the direction of education reform in Massachusetts and the nation. I believe that my understanding of the issues and excellent communications skills will help me to effectively represent Brockton educators during these challenging times for our profession.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 36C

Lorraine Niccoli, Brockton

Twenty years Brockton paraprofessional; 10 years president, Brockton paraprofessionals; negotiations chair; organized teacher assistants into union; MTA/ESP of the year 2012; MTA/ESP Committee co-chair; MTA Resolutions Committee; MTA/NEA professional development trainer; graduate, 2010 MTA/ESP Leadership Action Program; bargaining member, Brockton Public Employees Committee Health Insurance; political activist local/state levels.

2013 MTA ANNUAL MEETING OF DELEGATES

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MTA BYLAWS

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS *Bold and Italic Portions Only*

1. Proposal to Permit Charter School Employees to Join MTA as Active Members

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 2. Individual Membership — Active

A. Eligibility

Active membership is available to:

(1) Persons who are:

- a. employed in work of a professional nature in the field of education, including employment in public schools, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.
- who, as new applicants for membership after August 31, 1965, hold a baccalaureate degree or higher; and who hold a certificate, or are eligible to hold same, from a proper certifying authority where such is required, or
- who are appropriately licensed, or
- who are qualified and approved as teachers by the Division of Occupational Education in the Department of Education, or
- who are school nurses.
- b. education support employees employed in public schools, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.

Section 3. Individual Membership — Additional Categories

A. Categories

- (1) Associate members are those persons interested in the advancement of the cause of education who are not eligible for active membership.

Individual employees of charter schools and private schools other than employees of private employers providing early childhood education shall be eligible only for associate membership unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 2. Individual Membership — Active

A. Eligibility

Active membership is available to:

(1) Persons who are:

- a. employed in work of a professional nature in the field of education, including employment in public schools, ***in public charter schools***, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.
- NO CHANGE
- NO CHANGE
- NO CHANGE
- NO CHANGE
- b. education support employees employed in public schools, ***in public charter schools***, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.

Section 3. Individual Membership — Additional Categories

A. Categories

- (1) NO CHANGE

Individual employees of ***charter schools and*** private schools other than employees of private employers providing early childhood education shall be eligible only for associate membership unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

DELETE: charter schools and

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS *Bold and Italic Portions Only*

1. Proposal to Permit Charter School Employees to Join MTA as Active Members

ARTICLE III Membership

ARTICLE III Membership

Continued

Application for said membership shall be made to the Executive Committee in writing.

NO CHANGE

SUBMITTED BY:

Paul Toner, MTA President
Max Page, MSP UMass Amherst
Dennis Naughton, MTA Retired
Kerry Costello, Andover

MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE:

Recommends Adoption (7-0)

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Recommends Adoption (41-7, 1 abstention)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would eliminate the limitation on the membership status of Commonwealth charter school employees to associate membership only, but instead extend individual active membership to educators and education support professionals who are employed at Commonwealth charter schools. This would allow MTA to organize public charter school employees under Chapter 150E.

Eight candidates seek seats on Retired Members Committee

Four vacancies — two-year terms commencing July 1, 2013; names are in ballot lottery order

Kathleen R. Roberts
Burton Weiner
Kathleen Comer
Eileen Cleary

Paul V. McLaughlin
Francis J. Leary
Louise Russell
Robert A. Lague



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AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**



PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MTA BYLAWS

PRESENT TEXT	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS <i>Bold and Italic Portions Only</i>
2. Proposal to Add a New Membership Category: Reserve Membership	
ARTICLE III Membership Section 3A: Individual Membership Categories	ARTICLE III Membership Section 3A: Individual Membership Categories
(7) NO PRESENT TEXT	(7) <i>Reserve membership shall be open to former active members who are not litigating their termination but have a legal dispute arising out of the facts related to their separation from employment, provided that such members must be a member of the MTA and NEA but are not required to be members of a local association affiliate. Reserve members are not eligible for MTA legal services unrelated to their separation from employment and eligibility for MTA reserve membership shall terminate when such litigation ends.</i>
ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2: Dues	ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2: Dues
G. NO PRESENT TEXT	<i>G. Reserve Members</i> <i>The annual dues of reserve members shall be 50% of the annual dues of full-time active members.</i> SUBMITTED BY: Kim Auger, Everett MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE: Recommends Adoption (7-0) MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Recommends Adoption (51-0) IMPACT STATEMENT: This would establish a new category of membership for terminated members connected to their ongoing receipt of MTA legal services. Reserve Members only would be eligible for legal services related to their separation and would not have governance rights.

3. Proposal to Change the Dues for Higher Education ESPs	
ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2A: Dues	ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2A: Dues
(8) Dues Reduction Based on Employment Date. The annual dues of an active member who presents evidence of employment that starts after November 14, February 1 or April 14 of a school year in a given school system, shall be, respectively, 75%, 50% or 25% of the member’s annual dues for that school year. This section does not apply to part-time active members employed by the University of Massachusetts Trustees or Board of Higher Education.	(8) NO CHANGE

PRESENT TEXT	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS <i>Bold and Italic Portions Only</i>
3. Proposal to Change the Dues for Higher Education ESPs	
ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2A: Dues	ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2A: Dues
<i>Continued</i> (9) NO PRESENT TEXT	(9) <i>Non-teaching employees of the University of Massachusetts Trustees or Board of Higher Education shall pay annual dues, as provided in the sections above, on a monthly basis who present evidence of employment that starts or ends during any month of a calendar year.</i>
SUBMITTED BY: Frank Olbris, University Staff Association, UMass Amherst Shauna Manning, Classified Staff Union, UMass Boston MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE: Recommends Rejection (6-0, 1 abstention) MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Recommends Rejection (41-9, 1 abstention) IMPACT STATEMENT: This would mean that an active non-teaching employee of the University of Massachusetts Trustees or the Board of Higher Education who starts after July 1 would pay pro-rated dues calculated on a monthly basis during the months of the member’s actual employment.	

4. Proposal to Change the Annual Dues Structure for Retired Members	
ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2C. Retired Members	ARTICLE IV Finance Section 2C. Retired Members
(1) Effective July 1, 2007, and thereafter, the annual dues for retired members shall be \$30. At the age of 80, a person who has been paying active/retired membership dues annually to the Association, will be considered paid up and membership will continue in the Association provided the NEA dues requirement is maintained. The dues of NEA-R and NEA-R life will be determined by the NEA Board of Directors.	(1) <i>The annual dues for retired members shall be 10% of the operating dues rate of an active teacher, rounded to the next highest dollar amount.</i> At the age of 80, a person who has been paying active/retired membership dues annually to the Association, will be considered paid up and membership will continue in the Association provided the NEA dues requirement is maintained. The dues of NEA-R and NEA-R life will be determined by the NEA Board of Directors.

SUBMITTED BY: Tim Sullivan, Chair, MTA Task Force on Retired Member Dues, on Behalf of the MTA Board of Directors MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE: Recommends Adoption (7-0) MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Recommends Adoption (47-2) IMPACT STATEMENT: This would establish the annual retired dues rate as a percentage of active teacher dues, thereby eliminating the need for constant bylaw changes to re-set retiree dues.
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THE TEXT OF BYLAW
PROPOSAL NUMBER 5
APPEARS ON PAGE 25

A pivotal moment for our organization

The past year has been exhilarating, challenging and satisfying — a time in which we have dealt with constant obstacles but also taken significant strides in organizing and building our political power.

Last fall, the MTA played an important role in ensuring the election of U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren. The outcome of that vote was crucial not only for students and educators, but also for everyone else in our Commonwealth. The same holds true of other electoral contests, including those for the State House, in which the great majority of MTA-recommended candidates carried the day, and for the White House, which President Barack Obama will occupy through another term.

What happened on Election Day, however, is just part of a larger picture. It stands as one highlight of a year in which we have been active on many fronts and have continued to position our organization — both internally and externally — to meet the needs of our students and the goals of the MTA Strategic Action Plan.

In looking back over the months since the last Annual Meeting, I feel good about the progress our union has made. Yet I also have an urgent sense that we need to redouble our efforts in the months ahead if we are to achieve what we must for the strength of our schools, our colleges, our communities and our state as a whole.

Working together, our members, leaders and staff have accomplished great things:

- We have continued to develop vibrant political structures, expanding our contact with elected officials and campaigns through our Legislative and Political Action Teams and our Political Action Leaders.
- We have made our presence felt through an effective lobbying program and creative forms of outreach to members and voters.
- We have remained eternally vigilant about the state's new educator evaluation system, taking the lead in pushing for effective data collection and other measures required for proper implementation.
- We have carefully monitored the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners initiative and the steps being taken toward use of the Common Core curriculum in our schools.
- We have worked with organizations such as the NAACP, the Union of Minority Neighborhoods,

the Campaign for Our Communities and Jobs with Justice to build alliances with vital constituencies and create broad awareness about the principled positions that MTA members take on behalf of their students.

- We have advocated forcefully on critical issues in the media, trumpeting the need for revenues for public education, expanded learning time and employment practices that attract and retain first-rate teachers, higher education faculty and staff, and education support professionals.

- We have improved our website and advanced our social media presence while putting in place a foundation for a bright future in all areas of digital communications.

- We have launched the Education Ambassador program so that a larger number of members can spread the word about what is going right in public education even as they build a case for the improvements needed to help all students succeed.

- We have put together a compelling case for legislation enabling early childhood educators to negotiate for sustainable jobs and adequate professional development.

- We have reorganized internally to create a Training and Professional Learning Division in order to give greater strategic focus to member training at leadership meetings across the state, at the Summer Conference in Williamstown and in numerous other venues.

- We have moved ahead with efforts to expand the number of full capacity local associations.

- We have continued to engage children and families in efforts to promote literacy and learning, including the MTA Red Sox Reading Game.

- We have proudly helped hundreds of students in need through The Massachusetts Child, our association's charity.

- We have helped negotiate numerous forward-thinking contracts for educators in both our public schools and our higher education system.

- We have ably and forthrightly sought justice for our members in court cases and in proceedings before the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations and the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board.

- We have put together meaningful reports about matters ranging from innovation in the state's Gateway Cities to the best ways to address student outcomes at Massachusetts community colleges.

- We have provided Internet toolkits on numerous issues to help members play an active part in deciding questions that affect their students and their work lives.

That is a fair sample, though it is far from all the MTA has done in 2012-2013. Moreover, its range and depth point to a well-defined strategic vision. Each component of the list is a facet of empowering our union, pushing us ahead in our

In looking back over the months since the last Annual Meeting, I feel good about the progress our union has made. Yet I also have an urgent sense that we need to redouble our efforts in the months ahead if we are to achieve what we must for the strength of our schools, our colleges, our communities and our state as a whole.

transformation to an organizing model, and making certain that we are recognized as the voice of public education in Massachusetts.

At the same time, this is a pivotal moment for the MTA — a period in which we need to take stock of all we are doing, prepare to drive even harder, and be certain to capitalize on what is going right while filtering out areas of effort that are less than essential.

I believe we have set the stage for success. The key now is to increase our momentum while ensuring that every decision contributes to it.

Along with many others in the MTA, I am dedicated to making sure we carry through with our commitments and help Massachusetts remain at the forefront of public education, a place we have occupied with honor for many years.

Strategy, assessment and strict adherence to intent are the keys to our future — and there is a lot going on in those areas at MTA headquarters and in our regional offices throughout the state.

For one thing, we have enacted a streamlined legislative strategy. Rather than focusing our energies on a large number of priorities, we have honed our first-line agenda to include raising adequate revenues for public education and our communities, reviving a commission to review the foundation budget for our schools, creating a legislative task force to study the needs of public higher education, increasing the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty while also providing health insurance and pension benefits to adjunct faculty members, working to enact the early childhood educator bill, and establishing safeguards to improve the statewide ballot petition process.

Even with a limited agenda, we have our work cut out for us in the State House. As such, we are keeping a close eye on every step in the process to see how we can generate support and win allies for our priorities.

Continued on next page

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR-TREASURER

We'll be making our case clearly and strongly as the coming year unfolds ...

Continued from previous page

In a related area, we remain strongly committed to our grassroots political program. Hearing from members helps our representatives and senators understand what is really happening in their districts. Such storytelling helps create the climate for good decision-making, and we encourage all members to take part in it, whether on Beacon Hill or at community meetings.

It is vital to remember, however, that the Legislature is but one battleground for the MTA. The education world is moving fast, and we need to constantly grapple with emerging trends, disruptive technologies, fierce opponents and proposals that can affect our profession in myriad ways.

That is why we are always focused on teaching and learning — and on students. It is why we convened a task force on distance and online learning. It is why we view every policy considered by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Higher Education as a special area of

The connection seems complex, but it can be stated in simple terms: “Our members’ working conditions are students’ learning conditions.”

concern. It is why we expect to continually have to engage on matters that are critical to professional conditions for those who dedicate their lives to our schools and colleges. It is why we are now participating in the special election for the U.S. Senate seat formerly held by Secretary of State John Kerry, and it is why we will be active in other political contests at every level in the months and years ahead.

Perhaps most important, it is why we must continue to organize our members and provide

training about the nexus between legislation, policy and funding and what happens in the classroom. The connection seems complex, but it can be stated in simple terms: “Our members’ working conditions are students’ learning conditions.”

MTA members convey that message in their work each and every day. Our imperative as an organization is to make it the guiding equation for the discussions and debates that will help determine the future of public education in Massachusetts — and therefore of the state itself.

We’ll be making our case clearly and strongly as the coming year unfolds, and we will count on every member to help meet that challenge.

A longer version of the Annual Report of the Executive Director-Treasurer, including sections on the work of each MTA division and department, is included in the 2013 Delegate Handbook. The full report is also posted in the members’ area of the MTA website.



2013

Human and Civil Rights Awards Banquet

June 14 – Sheraton Framingham Hotel



Since 1983, MTA’s Human Relations Committee has reviewed and selected nominees for the Annual Human and Civil Rights Awards. The Human and Civil Rights Awards Banquet, attended by educators from across the state, honors MTA members and others who have put their lives, employment or professional careers on the line in defense of human and civil rights. Honoring those who dedicate themselves to equality for all has become a proud organizational tradition for MTA.

Online Registration:

www.massteacher.org/hcr

Deadline for event registration is Friday, June 7.

Telephone reservations will NOT be accepted.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MTA BYLAWS

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

Bold and Italic Portions Only

5. Proposal to Phase Out Retired Life Membership by FY 2014-15

ARTICLE IV Finance

ARTICLE IV Finance

Section 2C. Retired Members

Section 2C. Retired Members

- (2) There shall be an MTA-R Life Membership. The right to pre-pay MTA-R Life Membership is open to any active member who is at least 40 years of age. The dues structure for this will be determined by the Board of Directors.

DELETE

- (3) All MTA-R Lifetime dues shall be deposited in a special purpose fund and the income generated from the fund shall be used to offset the operating expenses of MTA-R activities and programs.

DELETE

(Effective July 1, 2014)

SUBMITTED BY:

Tim Sullivan, Chair, Task Force on Retired Member Dues, on Behalf of the MTA Board of Directors

MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE:

Recommends Adoption (7-0)

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Recommends Adoption (45-3)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This would eliminate MTA-R Life Membership, effective July 1, 2014.

Obituaries

Elinor Baker, 92, of Lenox. Taught at the former Dawes School and at Herberg Middle School for 23 years. Feb. 5.

Richard Batchelder, 87, of Chatham. Served as NEA president and was instrumental in merging the American Teachers Association with the NEA in 1966 to form one racially integrated union. Feb. 26.

James Braga, 61, of Middleborough. Taught marketing and business classes and coached at Middleborough High School. March 9.

Cynthia Calvin, 80, of Lexington. Was a special education teacher at Lexington High School for 30 years. Feb. 27.

Anne Campbell, 49, of Portsmouth, N.H. Was an MTA field representative for 12 years in the Lynnfield Regional Service Center. Among many other activities, she assisted locals in negotiating contracts, handling grievances and strengthening union relationships. March 23.

Robert A. Enman, Jr., 74, of Holden. Was an administrator and a professor at Quinsigamond Community College for 40 years. Feb. 1.

Robert L. Gauvin, 76, of Marlborough. Taught at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School in Marlborough before retiring in 1995. Jan. 15.

Leon L. Gould, 92, of Sharon. Served as principal of the Montclair, Gridley Bryant and Beechwood Knoll elementary schools in Quincy and the Hunt School in Bridgewater. Jan. 26.

Estelle V. Griffin, 93, of Burlington. Taught fifth grade at the Memorial School in Burlington for 22 years. Feb. 6.

Lois P. Jenner, 76, of Duxbury. Taught English and foreign languages in the Needham Public Schools. March 4.

Mary F. Knapp, 87, of Norwell. Taught physical education; coached field hockey, softball and girls' basketball; and was instrumental in starting the first formal physical education program in Norwell. Feb. 21.

Evrett Masters, 72, of West Brattleboro, Vt. Was a social studies teacher and served as assistant principal and principal at Pioneer Valley Regional High School. Dec. 18.

Bernard E. Lawson, 87, of Hingham. Was a science teacher for 24 years for the Braintree school system. March 1.

Marjorie J. McCaul, 90, of Waltham. Was an art teacher in the

Lexington Public Schools for many years. March 2.

Dr. Eileen B. Neville, 71, of Easthampton. Was a professor and dean of nursing at Springfield Technical Community College for more than 20 years before retiring in 2003.

Jeffrey V. Pavao, 55, of Dighton. Was the landscape foreman at Bristol County Agricultural High School for more than 12 years. Jan. 20.

Ernest P. Pike, 92, of Buckland. Taught in various school systems,

including Attleboro, Waltham, Pioneer Valley and Turners Falls. Feb. 10.

Jacqueline J. Pressey, 80, of Westfield. Was a high school teacher in the Agawam school system for more than 20 years, retiring in 2000. Feb. 15.

Jere A. Sheehan, 77, of Springfield. Was a teacher at the Buckingham and Marcus Kiley schools in Springfield for 34 years before retiring in 1998. Jan. 26.

Janet M. Smith, 78, of South Hadley. Was an elementary special

education teacher in South Hadley until her retirement in 1992. Jan. 31.

Martha V. Strachan, 70, of Wareham. Taught in Oxford for 30 years. March 4.

Paulina J. Veronick, 93, of Worcester. Was a secretary at North High School and the North High Annex for 14 years, retiring in 1981. Jan. 10.

Richard A. "Dick" Xenos, 87, of Holden. Was a teacher at South High School in Worcester for many years. Feb. 4.



2013

Disability Insurance Enrollment

Every day is a breeze when you have valuable benefits.

Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Insurance pay a percentage of your salary to ensure you a continuous income if you become disabled and cannot work. MTA members can obtain both short-term and long-term disability coverage without having to answer medical questions.

Critical Illness Coverage pays a lump-sum benefit for heart attacks, strokes and other covered serious illnesses.

The MTA disability open-enrollment period allows you to obtain a new policy or change your current coverage.

- Learn how premiums can be paid by payroll deduction.
- Payments are tax-free.

Insurance products underwritten and services offered by the subsidiaries of Unum Group. Website: unum.com.

Meet with a benefits counselor to learn how voluntary benefits can help support your financial forecast. Call 877.401.4083 or visit mtabenefits.com to find out when we'll be visiting your school.

Spring into action with an insurance review

Warm sunshine, blooming flowers, gentle breezes — spring has returned to New England. Many of us feel revitalized, renewed — and even ready for spring cleaning. What better time to reorganize your personal files and review documents that you haven't looked at for a while?

High on the list should be your auto and home insurance policies. They may seem complicated and hard to understand. As a result, many MTA members and their families turn to EIA, MTA's preferred partner for auto and home insurance, for advice on their personal insurance needs.

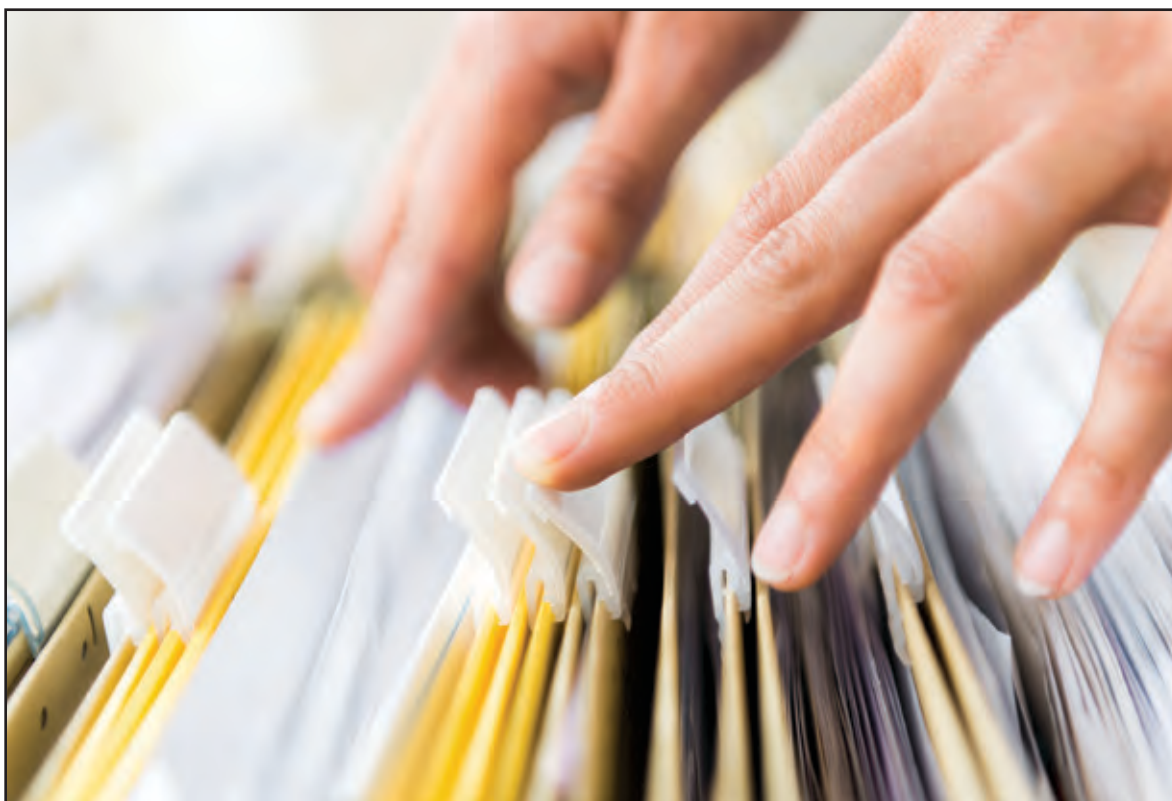
To help ensure that they maximize savings on their insurance, MTA members can review their policies with an EIA auto and home insurance expert. Some of the ways EIA can help you save include:

- **Multi-Policy Discount** — Combine your personal insurance policies with EIA, including auto, homeowners, condo, tenants and umbrella.

- **Anti-Theft Discount** — Most vehicles feature a factory-installed alarm system, which may be eligible for an anti-theft discount.

- **Increasing Your Deductible** — Raising the deductible amount on your auto or home policy can lower the overall cost.

- **Student Deferrals** — If you have a driver in the household who is away at school, you may be able to defer his or her coverage from the policy for additional savings.



More importantly, EIA will help to ensure that your coverages best reflect your personal insurance needs. To contact an EIA representative, call 877.284.7646 toll-free from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday

through Friday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

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Saving a bundle with the MTA Discount Directory

I've been a member of MTA for more than 40 years and have used the MTA Discount Directory ever since it came out almost 25 years ago," said MTA Retired member Dick Tellier. "Savings have averaged about \$375 a year — adding up to thousands of dollars over the years."

Tellier pointed out that the Discount Directory is also a "great motivator."

"MTA members can be inspired by exciting things they discover — and the savings they enjoy," he said.

Tellier looks through the directory when it comes out and then monthly during the year. "I find fascinating places to visit, endless places to shop for almost everything, and great things to do," he said.

MTA discounts at great places

A resident of Sandwich on Cape Cod and a former music educator in the Easton school system, Tellier enjoys MTA discounts for the Cape Cod Symphony, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Pops. He said he has used his MTA card for reduced admission costs



John Groo for the Mark Twain House & Museum

The Mark Twain House in Hartford is one of Dick Tellier's favorite places.

at the "magnificent" Mark Twain House in Hartford, the Coffin House in Newbury, Castle Hill in Ipswich, the Paul Revere House in Boston and Watson Farm in Jamestown, R.I., which he called "a terrific spot."

He has also watched the Pawtucket Red Sox and the Providence Bruins play — all at an MTA discount.

A big museum fan, Tellier has received free or discounted admission to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the New England Aquarium and Old Sturbridge Village.

When traveling, Tellier and his wife have taken advantage of MTA discounted prices at the Wyndham, Red Roof Inn and Choice Hotel groups. Renting a car from Alamo has saved him even more money. An avid skier and a member of the Cape Cod Ski Club, Tellier has received the MTA discount at several New England ski areas.

He suggested that fellow MTA members look regularly at the Discount Directory.

"Make it a point to check off things you want to see, do or buy — and find out how much you save," he said. "You'll be motivated to go out and take advantage of directory opportunities."

MTA Retired member Dick Tellier stays active as a professional string bass player, tour guide and participant in the many activities offered on Cape Cod.



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MTA members step up to boost good causes

Continued from Page 11

"Teachers are getting teams from each school. Coaches and physical education teachers are getting their student athletes to participate, and the business community is also putting together teams. Now we just need a dry day and everything will be good," he told *MTA Today* in late March.

Spring isn't the only time that teams of educators put their effort into such events.

In September, Natick High School Vice Principal Zach Galvin once again plans to take part in The Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk, which follows the course of the Boston Marathon.

Since 1989, the walk has contributed nearly \$87 million to support cancer research and care at the Dana-Farber Cancer Center. Galvin, a cancer survivor, has helped raise nearly \$500,000 through the event over the last 16 years. He has a goal of \$50,000 this year.

"Reaction from everyone is extremely positive, and part of that is because so many knew me when I was a new teacher and fighting stage-four cancer," Galvin said.

He added that he shares credit for his fundraising with many others. "I succeed because of those around me," Galvin said.

ESPs urged to support funding and 'avoid the blame game'

Continued from Page 9

who really care about your job. That's why so many of you are here today."

Matt Malone, Massachusetts secretary of education, and Roxanne Dove, director of the ESP Quality Department at the National Education Association, were honored guests at the conference.

Malone brought conferees to their feet during a heartfelt address on the first day in which he praised the work of ESPs. Their impact on children, he said, "doesn't go away" as those children get older.

Malone, who grew up with dyslexia, said he is proud to be the first secretary of education in Massachusetts to be a combat veteran and a graduate of a vocational high school. But what drives him "every day, every single day," he said, "is the fact that I'm the first secretary of education to be educated in a classroom in the back of the building with a specialist and a paraprofessional, because of a learning disability."

"That is me," Malone said.

He urged the ESPs in the audience to "not give up on that kid" who might seem to be struggling in the classroom. "He might just be the next secretary of education," Malone said.

Malone exhorted the crowd to voice support for education funding. He acknowledged his frustration

with a proposed 2014 House transportation and tax plan released just before the conference, which included "not one added dollar for education."

The NEA's Dove started by asking her audience how many in the room were educators. Hands went up, some tentatively. Dove urged the ESPs to show their pride in their work and remember how crucial they are to the educational process.

"Get curious, not furious," she told the group.

She advised the ESPs to take action when they encounter unfairness in the workplace and to advocate for themselves to be included in all decisions that affect children.

"Lead with a question, and avoid the blame game," she said. She said her intention at NEA is to raise the profile of ESPs around the country, partly by teaching them to discover "the



Roxanne Dove

art of powerful questions" and partly by persuading them to learn the process of initiating change.

"For far too long, ESPs have been an invisible workforce," she said. "But we're going to change that."

To see more photos of the conference, visit flickr.com/mtacommunications.



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Season opens for MTA Red Sox Reading Game

By Bob Duffy

Catcher David Ross is new to the Red Sox this year — but he is also joining another important team.

Ross is serving as the spokesperson for the MTA Red Sox Reading Game and the Most Valuable Educator program, which work in tandem to promote summer reading and recognize individuals who promote student achievement.

The reading game and the MVE program are two of the MTA's key partnerships, and both are sponsored by The Hanover Insurance Group Foundation.

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade are eligible to participate in the game, which encourages reading during the summer, when literacy skills often take a slide. They can enter by pledging to read nine books — one for each position on the baseball field — and sending in an entry form that is signed by a parent or guardian.

The MTA draws 100 of the entry forms from among the thousands submitted and invites the students and their teachers to a game at Fenway Park in September. Each giveaway winner receives two tickets. Five grand prize winners get to go onto the field for a special ceremony.

The MVE winners are selected by the Red Sox based on nominations from the public, each of which must include an essay explaining the reason recognition is deserved. They are lauded at Red Sox home games.

Ross will join the team's mascot, Wally the Green Monster, and thousands of educators around the state in promoting the MTA's efforts.

The early development of reading habits provides the foundation for lifelong success, and reading during summer months leads to better academic performance when children return to school in the fall, according to educational researchers.

The reading contest is a hit in schools around the state.

"When the students come back in September, I make a big deal about the MTA winners, letting all the kids know that winning Red Sox tickets is really



Photos by Rick Friedman and Keiko Hiram; composite by Alison Donato

Catcher David Ross, Wally and Massachusetts students are key players in the MTA reading contest.

possible," said Sharon Lavallee, a librarian at the Freeman-Kennedy School in Norfolk. "We discuss what their favorite summer reading book was, and they have plenty to talk about.

"By providing innovative, enjoyable summer reading programs that involve the entire family, we can provide young people and their parents with the tools necessary to ensure year-long learning and cultivate a lifelong love of reading," Lavallee added.

Julie Nally, a reading specialist at Thomson Elementary School in North Andover, agreed.

"Any time we can motivate children to read, write and discuss their thinking more, it's extremely beneficial for their growth and development as engaged readers, writers and learners," Nally said. "The summer is a wonderful time to encourage reading for pleasure — and when students enjoy reading, they always choose to read more!"

Nally has a special insight into the game's influence — because her son, Colin, won tickets to Fenway last season.

To publicize the programs, 15,000 posters and 500,000 entry forms and bookmarks will be distributed in schools around the state. This year's materials feature Ross and Wally reading the award-winning children's book "Mudball."

The book, written and illustrated by Matt Tavares, tells the tale of a diminutive baseball player who hits the shortest home run in history. Tavares called the contest "an awesome program

that promotes literacy at every school in Massachusetts."

Where the MVE program is concerned, anyone can nominate an outstanding teacher, education support professional, school staff member, coach or volunteer by writing about his or her contribution to student achievement.

Jennifer Luisa, assistant vice president of community relations at The Hanover Insurance Group, said the company's foundation is thrilled to sponsor the two programs for another year.

"It is our mission to help youth to reach their full potential. Quality educators are a critical component to making our vision a reality," Luisa said. "We are excited to be a part of these programs to encourage summer reading and help honor people who work in our schools, making a difference in the lives of children."

For further information on the MTA Red Sox Reading Game, visit www.readingmatters.org. Information will be posted by early May, and visitors to the site can download entry forms and other materials. To nominate someone to be an MTA Red Sox Most Valuable Educator, send an essay of up to 400 words to Most Valuable Educator, c/o Red Sox Community Relations, 4 Yawkey Way, Boston MA 02215. MVE nominations must be postmarked by July 1. To find out more about visits from Wally, go to http://boston.redsox.mlb.com/bos/fan_forum/wally.jsp.

The MTA Advantage is a publication of MTA Benefits, a subsidiary of the Massachusetts Teachers Association

One ESP who is making a difference

The challenging multi-issue agenda at the April ESP conference on Cape Cod reflected the growing role of ESPs in the educational workplace. Among the highly visible delegates was At-Large ESP Executive Committee member Millie Ficarra, who has spent more than a decade championing ESPs.

“We’re seeing a lot of respect today for ESPs,” said Ficarra. “There is growing recognition of how indispensable ESPs are in supporting teachers, students and the educational workplace. Respect has been a huge issue with us.”

Starting with participation in a program for emerging leaders in 2002, Ficarra has taken on roles and responsibilities to promote Massachusetts ESPs. She went to her first MTA and NEA ESP conferences that year. Since then, she has attended both

conferences every year and has taken part in regional workshops exploring critically important ESP issues. More recently, she was elected to the ESP seat on the MTA Executive Committee.

Ficarra was invited last year to run for president of the Weymouth Teachers Association and lost by only eight votes in a membership of almost 1,000. “I consider it a victory for ESPs,” said Ficarra.

Ficarra also finds satisfaction in her day-to-day at-large responsibilities in the Weymouth school system, from administrative work to assisting in the classroom.

“It is especially rewarding when you help students with a lesson or project and you see that moment of recognition when they light up and you know they ‘get it,’” she said.



“We’re seeing a lot of respect today for ESPs. There is growing recognition of how indispensable ESPs are in supporting teachers, students and the educational workplace.”

Millie Ficarra, at-large ESP Executive Committee member, pictured at the recent ESP Conference.

ESPs at their conference on Cape Cod



A STOLEN IDENTITY EVERY THREE SECONDS: Time to get LifeLock



Almost 10 million people in 2012 – an increase of 22 percent from the previous year – were victims of identity theft. The cost is estimated at a staggering \$48 billion.

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Identity theft can be a simple case of one-time fraudulent credit card use, costing the victim minimal financial loss and stress, or it can be a nightmare. In one notorious case, the thief ran up more than \$100,000 in credit card debt, including the purchase of handguns and motorcycles, and even secured a home loan in the victim's name. The victim spent four years and more than \$15,000 to restore his credit and reputation. No one is safe, but protection is available.

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*The special offer is only for new LifeLock members.

BIG giveaways – and more



Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6-10. Be sure to enter our online giveaway for an \$800 American Express gift card! Visit www.mtabenefits.com to register and receive e-mail reminders of giveaways.

For information on giveaways and other member discounts, savings and special deals, register on www.mtabenefits.com to receive our Quick Takes e-news. Be the first to know!

The Annual Meeting of Delegates is May 10-11. There's a lot in store for you, with raffles by MTAB and other sponsors, along with a first-time on-site optical shop and photo booth kiosk.

Disability enrollment is on now. A \$500 TNT Vacations travel voucher will be given away to one lucky member during the open-enrollment period. Now through May 10, all members who meet with a benefit counselor during an on-site school enrollment session are automatically entered into the giveaway. Other prizes include \$100 Costco gift cards, \$100 BJ's gift cards, \$25 Staples gift cards and Red Sox tickets.



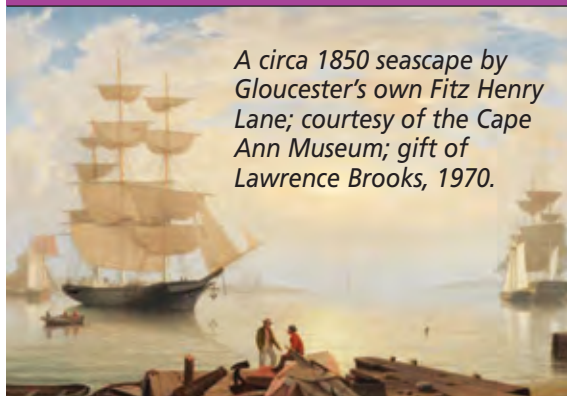
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The Tip Sheet

ENTICING IDEAS
for spring and summer travel – and gift-giving



A circa 1850 seascape by Gloucester's own Fitz Henry Lane; courtesy of the Cape Ann Museum; gift of Lawrence Brooks, 1970.

SEE BOSTON'S NORTH SHORE

Visit historic places along the Massachusetts shoreline for a summer of lasting memories. Take your MTA card along and save at historic homes, museums and places to stay.

Gloucester. The novel and movie titled "The Perfect Storm" brought Gloucester and its fishing industry international recognition. The saga of the sea is also reflected in the Fitz Henry Lane (also known as Fitz Hugh Lane) paintings at the Cape Ann Museum. The Beauport, Sleeper-McCann House displays artifacts from around the world. (Admission to both places is free for MTA members.) Take time as well for a Cape Ann Whale Watch, departing from Gloucester. MTA members are entitled to an \$18 discount.

Marblehead. Known as a yachting destination, historic Marblehead is the quintessential coastal village, with its narrow 18th-century streets and majestic harbor. Among the sites is the Georgian-style Jeremiah Lee Mansion built in 1768, an example of how well the wealthy lived. Admission is free with your MTA card.

Salem. Two of its famous attractions include the Witch House, the home of the trial judge for the infamous 1692 witch trials, and the world-class Peabody-Essex Museum (admission to both is free with your MTA card). Also include in your visit Chestnut Street, with its splendid sea captains' homes, and the wharf area, which includes the Salem Maritime National Historic Site and the House of the Seven Gables.

If you want to make an overnight trip to the coastal areas, check out the ACCESS online program for hundreds of hotel discounts.

SHOP SMART FOR GIFTS WITH THE DISCOUNT DIRECTORY

You can find everything you need for gift-giving – at MTA discounts – in the Discount Directory at www.mtabenefits.com. In addition to more than 1,000 listings, you can also take advantage of the 300,000-plus ways to save with ACCESS. Here are a few exciting gift suggestions:

Say it with Chanel's Coco Mademoiselle – the perfect gift for Mother's Day

Introduced by Chanel in 2001, this elegant, modern perfume combines jasmine, bergamot, orange and musk. Make it her new signature perfume for



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Send a gourmet feast for Father's Day

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You're healthy.

You don't need a life insurance policy — or do you?



You've probably never thought about life insurance until now. And why should you? You're young, you're healthy and you have plenty of time to think about it later.

Here's why you should consider it NOW: to protect your loved ones against the unexpected.

Did you know that if you have debt and you pass away, that debt could fall on the shoulders of your parents or spouse? This includes school, auto or personal loans, credit card debt, even a mortgage.

On average, an educator in Massachusetts who receives 50 percent financial assistance toward his or her education would still need between \$30,000 and \$150,000 in life insurance just to cover student loans. Buying life insurance ensures that a time of tremendous personal loss will not also become one of financial stress.

One of the best reasons to purchase a life insurance policy when you're young is that it's less expensive. The cost of life insurance is based on your health, so if you get sick, you may not be able to buy it at a reasonable cost, or at all, later in life. Term life insurance is a cost-effective option because you choose how much coverage you want, and premiums remain level each year.

MTA Benefits offers a program with Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company that allows all new members who enroll within three years of joining the MTA to purchase the Guaranteed Issue Amount of Life Insurance with no medical questions. New members under age 35 can purchase a \$50,000 policy for just \$3 per month, or \$100,000 of coverage for \$6 per month. Educators who have been members for more than three years are still eligible for life insurance and should contact MTA Benefits at 800.336.0990 or visit www.mtabenefits.com for more information.

Introducing the MTA Prescription Drug Card

The new free MTA prescription drug card gives you a discount on drugs that aren't covered – or are only partially covered – by your insurance. Average savings are roughly 30 percent but can be as high as 75 percent. The card is accepted at more than 56,000 pharmacies nationwide.

Benefits that make this card different from other prescription drug cards include:

- No enrollment or claim forms, no eligibility or income requirements, no waiting periods, no age restrictions.
- Covers all medications, name-brand and generic, and includes many pet prescriptions.
- Includes drugs for pre-existing conditions.
- Confidentiality – no personal information will be sought, so personal information can't be shared.



**It's easy to sign up.
Visit www.mtabenefits.com
and click on the
MTA Prescription Drug Card image.**

All program and pricing information was current at the time of publication (April 2013) and is subject to change without notice.
To find out what may have changed, please call MTA Benefits at 800.336.0990.