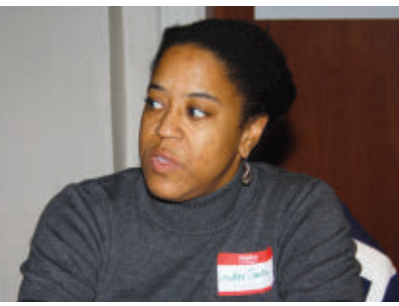


FORUMS BUILD UNION SOLIDARITY



MTA Today

A publication of the Massachusetts Teachers Association
Volume 45, No. 2/Fall 2014



ALL OUT FOR ELECTION





A winning season for all

Celebrating another winning year for the MTA Red Sox Reading Game and Most Valuable Educator program, MTA President Barbara Madeloni joined grand prize winners David Sanchez Maya of Revere, Shane Kendall of Agawam, Anthony Cardoso of Rockland, Nicole Eiroa of Leominster and Emily Grace Kinan of Pembroke at Fenway Park on Sept. 6. Two other MTA partnerships — with the Boston Celtics and the Boston Bruins — also encourage students to excel academically and celebrate their favorite teams. Both are getting underway with the arrival of fall. For more information, e-mail the Celtics' Chrissy Cronin at ccronin@celtics.com or the Bruins' Ashley Hansen at amhansen@bostonbruins.com.

Photo by Bob Duffy

MTA Today

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**This edition of MTA Today also includes
the 2014 MTA Election Guide
and the Fall edition of the MTA Advantage**

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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On the cover

As the election season has heated up, MTA activists have been giving their all in support of pro-public-education candidates such as Martha Coakley for governor and Steve Kerrigan for lieutenant governor, as well as a host of congressional and state legislative candidates. Coverage begins on Page 3 and is supplemented by the Election Guide in this issue of *MTA Today*. Also in recent weeks, hundreds of members have been turning out at Reclaiming Public Education forums around the state to let their voices be heard and move toward developing action plans. Coverage of the forums appears on Pages 6 and 7.



Cover design by Alison Donato

Quote-Unquote

"There are 17,000 children in Massachusetts stuck on a waiting list for early education, but our kids don't get to wait out entering the first grade. Now is their time, and we need to make sure they have the tools to succeed."

— MTA-recommended gubernatorial candidate Martha Coakley



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Much at stake on Election Day

Members go all out to support pro-public-education candidates

By Scott McLennan

With big changes ahead on the state's political landscape, MTA members are going all out for candidates who will support students and educators.

The MTA is recommending Attorney General Martha Coakley in the race for governor and Steve Kerrigan for lieutenant governor.

The MTA is backing the re-election of U.S. Senator Ed Markey and eight members of the U.S. House of Representatives who are on the general election ballot. Seth Moulton, who is running in the 6th Congressional District, has also earned MTA's recommendation.

Others the MTA is supporting include Maura Healey for attorney general, Deb Goldberg for treasurer and Suzanne Bump for auditor, as well as numerous candidates for seats in the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives. All recommended candidates are pictured in the Election Guide provided with this edition of *MTA Today*. The MTA's recommendations on statewide ballot questions appear on Page 11 of the guide.

The race to succeed Governor Deval Patrick has tightened between Coakley and her main opponent, Republican Charlie Baker — and members' votes could play a critical part in the outcome. Three independent candidates are also on the ballot.

Over the summer and into autumn, as the campaigns heated up and policy differences between the major candidates came clearly into view, hundreds of activists throughout the MTA have stepped up — by phone banking, attending rallies, knocking on doors and having one-to-one conversations — to express their support for pro-public-education candidates.

Members of the MTA staff have also been in the thick of the action, participating in phone banks, producing direct mail and engaging in independent expenditures for television and digital ads. MTA's Division of Grassroots Campaigns has worked to facilitate the appearance of Senate district coordinators and Legislative and Political Action Team members — dressed in eye-catching yellow T-shirts — at campaign events from the Berkshires to the Cape.

At the annual Retired Members Gathering in September, Retired Members Committee Co-Chair Kathleen Roberts encouraged more than 200 of her colleagues to get involved in the election, and she used the recent occasion of her 100th birthday to ask attendees for their gift of volunteerism.

As the election season has progressed, members and staff have also been organizing around issues. As part of phone banking, MTA educators are being asked about their views on standardized testing, evaluations and charter schools.

MTA President Barbara Madeloni characterized the Baker campaign as part of a larger movement to



Photos by Scott McLennan

MTA-recommended candidates Deb Goldberg, Maura Healey, Martha Coakley and Steve Kerrigan, from left to right, met with Democratic Party activists at Worcester State University on Sept. 28.



MTA member Donald Pecor, who taught Martha Coakley in high school, admires her courage.

dismantle public-sector unions. She also described Republican Charlie Baker's views on education as falling in line with policies that are draining the joy from teaching and learning in the classroom and fostering bureaucratic entanglements that lead communities to lose control over their own local schools.

Baker has applauded the state takeover of so-called "underperforming" schools. In interviews, he has promoted the idea of "creative non-compliance" by school principals in order to get around contracts negotiated between unions and school committees.

The Coakley recommendation resulted from the MTA's agreement with the attorney general's clearly articulated positions on crucial issues, including her call for universal prekindergarten, her support for public higher education and her respect for the collective bargaining process and public-sector unions.

In debates and interviews, Coakley has expressed views and values in line with those of most MTA members. These include addressing the overemphasis on standardized tests to measure the success of students, educators and schools and speaking up for arts education as part of a well-rounded curriculum.

"Her advocacy for children has been strong, and her perception of education is that it is more than just standardized tests," said Donald Pecor, a history professor at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

Not all educators get to watch what happens to their star students, but Pecor has had something of a front-row seat where Coakley is concerned. Pecor was Coakley's history teacher during her senior year at Drury High School in North Adams, where she grew up.

Between Drury and MCLA, Pecor has been in the classroom for 47 years. He places Coakley among the "top 1 percent" of students he has ever taught.

Pecor lost touch with Coakley after she graduated from high school, but the two reconnected when Coakley called her former teacher — for whom she wrote a memorable paper titled "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Calvin Coolidge but Were Afraid to Ask" — to invite him to speak at her swearing-in ceremony when she became Massachusetts attorney general in 2007.

After that, Pecor said, he watched her stature rise. He especially admires Coakley's willingness to go after powerful Wall Street interests in defense of average citizens, as she did during the economic crisis.

"She really hasn't been afraid to take on banks and big business," he noted.

Along with Pecor's already deep interest in history and politics, the crucial issues facing Massachusetts have focused his attention on this year's race. "Baker is not too far from the far right, and he will do what he needs to do to please his base," Pecor said. "That's scary."

Another educator, a fifth-grade teacher from the Lunenburg Public schools named Susan Reardon,

Please turn to **Coakley**/Page 4

A palpable sense of hope and possibility

As Vice President Janet Anderson and I have been traveling the state attending forums, regional presidents' meetings and the All Presidents' Meeting, we've heard from members who are angry, frustrated and fed up about standardized testing, teacher evaluations, the flood of mandates and the general tone of mistrust and lack of respect in too many workplaces.

But we've also heard from members that they are ready to assert their union strength and solidarity — ready to reclaim a vision of public education that is about the whole child. There is in these forums a palpable sense of hope and possibility.

Our work as educators rests on a foundation of hope, on the belief that we can make a difference and make the world a better place for individual students and for the communities we serve. Teaching is a profound commitment to building a better future.



Barbara Madeloni
MTA President

These are difficult times in which to remain hopeful. As your union president, I am regularly told, directly and indirectly, that my hope is misplaced, that we cannot expect too much of members or of policymakers, that we have

to accommodate a brutal pragmatism. Underlying this message is mistrust: People will let you down.

These cynical messages offend my nature and, I would suggest, the nature of many educators. While we sometimes find ourselves discouraged, we chose this work, and we stay in this work, precisely because we have a sense of what is possible beyond what is given.

As we move further into the fall, the election is ahead of us; union members within the university system are facing demands for more givebacks; it is possible that more schools will be designated Level 5; and we face possible new mandates from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Vote and then agitate.

It is more important than ever that we nurture one another's hope through action. Hope only means something when it manifests itself in our choices.

These actions might be different for each of us, but one important way of expressing hope is by participating in the electoral process: Vote and then agitate.

I know some of you have been discouraged by the electoral process, and I understand why. But our democratic possibilities rely on our active participation in elections and in the legislative process.

We need to help ensure that on Nov. 4, Martha Coakley and Steve Kerrigan are elected to be our Commonwealth's next governor and lieutenant governor — and we must make our votes count in the outcome of ballot initiatives such as the one that would provide earned sick time for approximately 1 million working people in Massachusetts. For a complete list of MTA election recommendations, please see the Election Guide that accompanies this issue of *MTA Today*.

Let's get out the vote — and then let's demand that politicians hold to their promises and work for the schools, colleges and universities our students deserve.

While voting is a solitary action, agitating at the State House or at your local town hall is an act of solidarity. The MTA Government Relations Committee has been gathering ideas for legislation and will be working with our Legislative and Political Action Teams

to tell our stories to legislators so that they will be more responsive to our demands. Let your voices be heard.

Our stories of struggle and success, from the classroom to the union hall, are a central part of reclaiming public education. We need to tell those stories in a range of places. Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper. Post stories and information on Facebook and other social media. Talk with parents, community members and each other.

Educate them and yourselves about what is happening in public education, why it is happening, and what the lessons are from colleagues here and across the country who have struggled and won.

With eight forums already held as I write and 20 more scheduled into the winter, we have an opportunity to build local connections and capacity and then knit that local strength into statewide action. If you have not attended a forum, please do so, or schedule one in your local. Go to massteacher.org/reclaim to find out more.

If you have attended a forum, please extend the conversation into your buildings through one-to-one conversations or into the community through a community forum. Higher education members should contact me about holding forums on the issues you are facing.

The student teachers with whom I worked at UMass Amherst questioned how they could hold on to their idealism under conditions that denied them and their colleagues autonomy, respect and creativity. It is my firm belief that our ability to be our best selves and live our ideals resides in two places.

First, it resides in the connections we make as people, the stories we tell each other, the wisdom we share and the ways we listen. Second, it resides in the actions we take together — educating, agitating and organizing.

Thank you for your work as educators and unionists.

In solidarity, and in anticipation of many great things ahead,

Barbara

Coakley policies 'would be far better for students, educators and communities'

Continued from Page 3

introduced Steve Kerrigan after he finished first for lieutenant governor at the Democratic State Convention. She is Kerrigan's sister.

Reardon and Kerrigan have shared many conversations about the aspirations and realities of public education.

Reardon said that she is not supporting Coakley and Kerrigan just because her brother is running. Rather, she supports them because she believes they will best serve the needs of students and educators.

"Many of our conversations have been about leveling the playing field for all students," Reardon

said. "The reality is that not all students come to us with the same background or same levels of support. Steve understands that this is part of what makes our jobs as teachers so difficult."

As MTA members have had conversations about education issues and how societal pressures affect their work, their divergence with Baker has sharpened.

MTA President Madeloni said that it is important to hold elected leaders accountable for their positions — even those that don't directly affect educators.

"We believe that Martha Coakley's commitment to the public good will translate into support for public schools, public higher education and the rights of working families," Madeloni said. "Her policies

would be far better for students, educators and communities than Charlie Baker's."

For more election information, please visit www.massteacher.org.

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.

UMass workers fight unfair demands

By Scott McLennan

Bargaining units across the University of Massachusetts system are locked in bitter negotiations for successor contracts with the administration of President Robert Caret, which is seeking to reduce benefits and upend professional practices that have been in force for years.

“Campus unions are continuing to negotiate in good faith, but we can no longer stomach punitive, regressive and counterproductive demands,” MTA President Barbara Madeloni told members of the UMass Board of Trustees at a meeting Sept. 17 at UMass Lowell.

Madeloni and leaders of four of the bargaining units representing faculty and staff on campuses in Amherst, Boston and Lowell addressed the board. Even though more than 30 other union activists attended the meeting — many carrying signs reading “UMass Unions United to Protect Our Rights” — the trustees did not allow them to speak.

The coalition also made sure workers’ concerns were aired during Caret’s annual statewide promotional tour, which began Oct. 7 at a celebration of UMass Boston’s 50th anniversary. More than 100 union activists demonstrated at the event, displaying signs with messages calling for fair labor agreements.

The decision to bring the units’ concerns to the Board of Trustees collectively and to take action publicly was made after months of bargaining hit a dead end.

The administration’s proposals include placing caps on sick leave and vacation time, weakening protections for pay equity and career advancement and threatening to withhold retroactive pay raises if agreements are not reached by certain deadlines. Representatives of UMass locals serving on the MTA’s Higher Education Leadership Council, known as HELC, derided the administration’s regressive proposals and said the deadlines imposed are arbitrary.

The coalition includes the MTA-affiliated Professional Staff Union, University Staff Association, Maintenance and Trades Union, Classified Staff Union, Massachusetts Society of



Union members representing staff and faculty at UMass marched down Beacon Street, joining a procession that marked UMass Boston’s 50th anniversary. The marchers were protesting regressive contract proposals.

Photo by Scott McLennan

Professors and Faculty Staff Union. They have joined forces with unions aligned with the American Federation of Teachers on the UMass campus in Dartmouth and AFSCME locals.

At the trustees’ meeting, the labor representatives reflected UMass workers’ frustration and disappointment with the administration’s current proposals.

Donna Johnson, president of the University Staff Association at UMass Amherst and chair of HELC, told the trustees, “I stand before you today to let you know that we are mad as hell and we are not going to take it anymore.

“As some of the lowest-paid workers,” Johnson continued, “we feel that the current regressive proposals are unacceptable and extremely classist.”

Henry Cornu, president of the Maintenance and Trades Union at UMass Lowell, and Janelle Quarles, president of the Classified Staff Union at UMass Boston, delivered 2,500 signatures on petitions in support of UMass employees.

Tom Goodkind, president of the Professional Staff Union at UMass Boston, criticized the administration’s contention that proposals simply mirror the employment packages being offered to nonunion employees.

“The university is standardizing down, not up,” Goodkind said. He said trustees likely have supported U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey when they have criticized the “race to the bottom” that has severely affected the middle class.

“The race to the bottom has come into our own house, our family,” Goodkind said. “How will you respond?”

Marlene Kim, an economics professor and president of the Faculty Staff Union at UMass Boston, told the trustees, “If you treat people well, they do a better job.”

Anais Surkin, co-chair of the Graduate Employee Organization at UMass Amherst, told the trustees, “All UMass workers want to be treated with respect, and we refuse to be pitted against each other.”

Madeloni reminded the trustees how closely workers and the administration cooperated when they lobbied the state Legislature for better public higher education funding. Through joint efforts, students at UMass have benefited from two years of tuition and fee freezes.

“From across the state, campus employees in every position organized to move the funding plan forward,” Madeloni said, “just as they have always been eager allies of the administration in fighting for adequate funding — and for every other step required to ensure that UMass is an institution in which collaboration and inquiry serve as a foundation for students to grow and succeed.

“So it leaves me confused,” she continued, “when I learn that administrators within the university are aggressively demanding givebacks from the very people who build and hold together our university system.”

MSCA coverage agreement ‘a crucial first step’

By Scott McLennan

Adjunct faculty members represented by one of MTA’s higher education locals are on course to qualify for health insurance for the first time.

C.J. O’Donnell, president of the Massachusetts State College Association, told *MTA Today* that while legislative approval is still needed before adjuncts can be offered health insurance, the contract negotiations by MSCA’s Day Unit represented “a crucial first step.” The MSCA represents full- and part-time faculty

‘It’s the first time the state has even offered insurance to adjuncts.’
— MSCA President C.J. O’Donnell

and librarians at the Commonwealth’s nine state universities.

“It’s the first time the state has even offered insurance to adjuncts,” O’Donnell said.

A side agreement for health insurance was the last piece hammered out as the negotiators were

drafting a tentative agreement on the contract.

“There was a lot of back and forth for six weeks and then the negotiating team representing the state Board of Higher Education put this on the table at the last minute,” O’Donnell said. The unit overwhelmingly ratified the contract, 683 to 19.

The MSCA and the BHE agreed to pursue establishment of a trust fund dedicated to paying for health insurance for adjunct faculty. For the purpose of determining eligibility for coverage under provisions of the federal Affordable Care Act, the

Please turn to **Contract**/Page 25

Forums build union solidarity

Hundreds of members turn out for discussions on reclaiming public education

**"Raise your voice and be heard!
Where there is action there is life!"**

— Webster teacher Linda Millet's
written response after a Reclaiming
Public Education forum
in Auburn on September 25

By Laura Barrett

Hundreds of members across the state have attended MTA's Reclaiming Public Education forums to describe their vision of public education, express their views on high-stakes testing and the educator evaluation system, and plan actions.

"We are gathering here today to kick off conversations that are going to grow union solidarity, deepen our understanding of what's happening to us and how we came to be in this place, and, most importantly, to figure out what we can do about it," said MTA President Barbara Madeloni, addressing more than 200 local leaders who attended an All Presidents' Meeting in Natick on Sept. 13. The meeting introduced local presidents to the structure of the forums.

"These forums are designed around both listening and speaking," Madeloni continued. "We are going to disagree with one another as a union. We should have places to disagree. That's what democracy is about. But if we do it with respect and care, that's good."

As *MTA Today* went to press, 28 regional and local forums had either been held or were scheduled. At a forum in Hingham on Sept. 30, organizers were thrilled that 80 participants attended — more than twice the number who had registered — and that 16 different locals were represented.

Deborah McCarthy, former president of the Hull Teachers Association, was one of the participants.

"Those members who joined in the conversation for the first time wanted to know, 'How can I find out more information? What are some good resources?' They were looking for ways to educate themselves," McCarthy said.

"The other reaction was a sense of camaraderie and collegiality," McCarthy added. "The members felt they weren't in isolation experiencing this alone in their community. They found that very helpful."

The forum plan was established by delegates to MTA's Annual Meeting in May, who approved a new business item co-sponsored by Madeloni calling for the MTA to support a three-year moratorium on PARCC testing, the teacher evaluation system and the use of any student test results to evaluate school or teacher performance.

The intent of the NBI, according to Madeloni, was to "take time to speak as educators and decide what we want for our schools and how we can achieve our vision."



An All Presidents' Meeting in Natick on Sept. 13 provided a venue at which local association leaders could become familiar with the format of the MTA's Reclaiming Public Education forums, which are being held across the state. Above, participants shared notes and a few laughs with other members in one of the many breakout groups. At left, Pat Barry of the Quincy Education Association posted sticky notes with participants' comments during a member forum held in Dedham on Sept. 16. "These forums are designed around both listening and speaking," said MTA President Barbara Madeloni.

Photos by Laura Barrett and Jean Conley

The item also called on the MTA to assist members in holding forums to address issues related to high-stakes standardized testing and the educator evaluation system, including the impact both are having on school climate, teacher autonomy and educator workloads.

"The visions, issues and actions that members are speaking to will be central to MTA's positions and action plans in the year ahead," Madeloni said.

At the end of the All Presidents' Meeting, members summed up what their breakout groups had to say, and they didn't mince words.

"These mandated, for-profit, data-driven tests are narrowing curriculum and ignoring the creativity, joy, emotion and individuality of students, teachers and communities," said Kathryn Nickandros, president of the East Bridgewater Education Association.

"Standardized tests reduce a child to a data point," said Nancy Caswell, a Worcester teacher.

"They do not allow for differentiated instruction, even though they keep telling us we have to differentiate instruction. They actually victimize children, especially English language learners and SPED children."

Two of the nine breakout groups also chose to discuss the educator evaluation system.

"The new ed eval system is a stressful, time-consuming, inconsistent process implemented by often unqualified evaluators," said Theresa Fisher, president of the Wilmington Teachers Association. "It is punitive, causing a loss of control to educators. It is not valid and reliable and doesn't match the vision that was originally intended."

"We want an evaluation system that is fair, respects our professional judgment and allows us autonomy in our teaching," she continued. "We want a system that allows meaningful feedback and resources, that helps us improve our practice, that

Continued on next page

Comments collected at MTA forums

"Teachers are articulating their opposition to the privatization, industrialization and nationalization of schooling."

—Elaine Koury, Cambridge

"I became a teacher because I love learning. I want an evaluation system that supports that."

—Jill Sifantus, Brookline

"The forum made me feel safe to tell my story. I was able to listen and understand the stories and perspectives of others. I leave feeling motivated to support!"

—Melissa Morabito, Sudbury

"How can we be expected to be effective educators when we feel pressure to teach to the test? We don't want to lose the fire and passion we have for learning and want to instill in our students."

—Yan Yii, Canton

"Kids are not data points; they are people!"

—Liam Durkan, Dudley-Charlton

"Freedom to teach!"

—Suzanne Miville, EAW

"Teaching is becoming a business. It's no longer about caring and learning. Data over humanity."

—Nicole Byrne, Needham

"It's time we talked with each other in a way that can lead us to collective action."

—Lynn Brown, Cambridge

"The system has become more about teachers dealing with administrators than with students."

—Frank Lenz, Wayland

"Educate the public about charter schools."

—Steve Power, EAW

"School leaders encourage creativity and differentiation, yet are forcing teachers to administer common assessments to students that are not the best way for them to demonstrate what they know."

—Patrick Barry, Quincy

'Within these conversations we develop trust ...'

Continued from previous page

doesn't interfere with student learning and that limits the influence of factors outside our control."

Members have expressed a wide range of views on what actions to take to address the problems that have been identified. Some have suggested policy prescriptions, such as reducing the load of standardized testing, abolishing District-Determined Measures or eliminating the Student Impact Rating section of the educator evaluation system.

Others focused on strategies that MTA members could take to bring about policy changes, such as



circulating petitions, forming coalitions with parents and like-minded school committee members and administrators, lobbying the Legislature and increasing public awareness about how local, state and federal mandates are robbing schools of teaching and learning time.

"Organizing begins with conversations like the ones we are holding across the state," Madeloni said. "Within these conversations we develop trust, shared understanding and the solidarity necessary to act together for the schools every child deserves."

"In the weeks ahead," she continued, "we will be taking what we learn at these forums and growing a campaign. In the meantime, members need to continue the conversations and strengthen our solidarity."

For more information about the forums, please visit www.massteacher.org/reclaim. To see more photos, visit [flickr.com/mtacommunications](https://www.flickr.com/photos/mtacommunications).

JUST FOR NEW TEACHERS

13th ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR EARLY CAREER AND FUTURE EDUCATORS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5 | SHERATON FOUR POINTS | NORWOOD

8 – 9 a.m. Check-In ■ 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Workshops

CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS WILL INCLUDE:

ACADEMIC LANGUAGE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND STRUGGLING STUDENTS

Do you have English language learners in your classroom? Your school? This workshop for non-ESL teachers in grades K-12 will offer information about the new RETELL requirements, including the mandated SEI course, WIDA standards and the ACCESS assessment. Participants will leave with strategies for effectively instructing ELLs and struggling students in their classrooms.

ASSESSING STUDENT PROGRESS

We will examine a wide range of strategies to assess student progress, not only after we've taught a lesson or unit but as we teach. The goal is to use assessment as continuous feedback, to know when and why a student didn't "get it," to intervene appropriately and to do all this fairly and equitably.

CONTEMPORARY IDEAS FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

This interactive workshop will focus on strategies to manage a productive classroom. We will examine how to begin class, manage projects, engage students throughout the period and create classroom systems to aid both the teacher and the students.

DDMs FOR NEW EDUCATORS

District-Determined Measures are one component of your educator evaluation system. This workshop will help you understand the policies behind DDMs, how to work with your colleagues to identify appropriate DDMs and how to interpret the information from DDMs to provide evidence of student learning in your evaluation.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

This workshop will provide information on differentiating instruction, especially to address specific learning styles, academic readiness and common special needs, such as ADHD.

KEEP THEM ENGAGED

Many traditional classroom practices engage one student at a time and risk the inattention of others. We'll share easy-to-use tips and tricks for keeping all your students engaged all the time. Leave with ideas to use in your classroom tomorrow and in the future.

LEGAL BASICS FOR NEW TEACHERS

This workshop will explore how the many informal roles required of teachers, from surrogate parent to counselor, affect our obligations and liabilities.

LICENSURE EXPLAINED

Do you understand how to get to your Professional License? This workshop will demystify the Massachusetts educator licensure requirements and procedures for advancing your license from Preliminary through Initial to Professional, adding a new license and keeping your current license active and valid.

MANAGING TIME, PAPERWORK & PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

There are progress reports, report cards, IEPs, coordinating with your team, working with your mentor, providing evidence, surviving parent conferences, and (oh, right!) teaching. Feeling overwhelmed? This workshop will allow participants to reassess their classroom routines, organize the piles of paperwork and provide strategies for working successfully with parents/guardians and colleagues. This session is packed with tips and tricks for anticipating and managing the many unknowns.

THE PERILS OF THE INTERNET AND E-MAIL

Educators face dangers when using e-mail and the Internet. This workshop explores e-mail form and format, privacy rights in the technological world, Internet use on duty and off duty, acceptable-use policies, social networking activity, and public employees' rights as citizens versus their status as employees and role models.

TEACHER EVALUATION: WHAT DOES EFFECTIVENESS LOOK LIKE?

By now you know that your teaching performance will be formally evaluated at least once this school year for non-PTS teachers, every other year for PTS teachers. In the spring of 2011, Massachusetts created new rules on how teachers should be assessed. Do you know what effectiveness looks like? Are you an effective teacher? In this workshop, we'll use a case study to explore the variables and challenges in answering these questions.

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This free interactive workshop will explore important cultural and linguistic topics such as understanding identity, cross-cultural communication and identifying and addressing unconscious bias.

The workshop is intended to show teachers and association leaders how to develop the behaviors, awareness, skills and knowledge to work with diverse cultures.

This "bridge" session — which will run from the conclusion of the Just for New Teachers Conference to the beginning of MTA's 35th Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Conference — will be presented by Beau Stubblefield-Tave, a principal at the Center for Cultural Fluency, who has consulted and presented on cultural competence from Alaska to Florida.

All MTA members are encouraged to attend this free session, which will be followed by a social hour and hors d'oeuvres.

Do you want to continue your learning? Stay for the 35th annual MTA EMAC conference on Friday night and Saturday. The theme this year is "Standing on a Great Foundation." Registration information is available at massteacher.org/emac.

IMPORTANT NOTES

Just for New Teachers is open to MTA members in their first four years of practice. NEA/MTA student members entering the final year of an educator preparation program or who have completed student teaching are also invited, as well as any other students enrolled in education degree programs. Districts may register individuals or groups by calling 800.392.6175, ext. 8195. This conference partially fulfills school districts' obligation to provide an induction program for all new teachers (603 CMR 7.00). MTA will provide participants with a record of sessions attended.

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HTA president says fight 'not just about me'

By Scott McLennan

Holyoke Teachers Association President Gus Morales has gained wide support from fellow educators and union activists as he fights to return to the classroom.

The state Department of Labor Relations will hold hearings starting in December to determine whether Morales was fired because of his union activism, and a grievance filed by the HTA, now before the Holyoke School Committee, seeks his reinstatement to his position.

But Morales, an English teacher at the Maurice A. Donahue School, says the fight is not his alone. There are also several grievances before the School Committee that seek to overturn punitive actions against other educators based on faulty evaluations.

"If you take a step back and look at the bigger picture, it becomes clear that this is not just about me," Morales said. "This is about a choice that the City of Holyoke has to make, that labor and community leaders need to make: Do we want a system that focuses only on high-stakes tests, that puts students' names up on the wall next to their test scores, that humiliates and shames students and makes them feel useless and stupid?"

When he addressed more than 200 fellow educators at an MTA All Presidents' meeting on Sept. 13, Morales received a standing ovation.

Just days before the MTA meeting, on Sept. 8, he stood surrounded by dozens of supporters at a rally in Holyoke as he announced that the DLR had found probable cause to indicate that he was fired in retaliation for speaking out against the school administration, whose policies created a hostile work environment and shamed students.

The DLR's complaint noted that Morales had received negative comments in his job evaluation only after he became active in the HTA and began vocally opposing policies such as the use of data walls.

For Morales, who did not have Professional Teacher Status in Holyoke at the time of his dismissal, the immediate remedy would be reinstatement. But the



Photo by Scott McLennan

Holyoke Teachers Association President Gus Morales addressed supporters at a rally on Sept. 8 at Dean Technical High School. The state Department of Labor Relations has found probable cause to indicate that Morales was fired in retaliation for his union activism.

fight is also one that is being waged for all educators against restrictive "improvement plans" and other punitive evaluation measures.

Success for Morales would also be a victory for protected speech.

"Gus Morales stands up for students and fellow educators," said MTA President Barbara Madeloni. "If we allow these attacks to go unchecked, they will have a chilling effect on anyone who wants to raise concerns about the best way to educate students and improve working and learning conditions."

Fiore Grassetto, president of the Pioneer Valley AFL-CIO, attended the rally and brought along poster-sized sheets of paper bearing the signatures of area labor union members as a show of support. Grassetto called it "an outrage" that Holyoke

schools Superintendent Sergio Páez would target a leader for speaking out.

Fellow HTA member Dorothy Albrecht, a veteran high school math teacher, joined the crowd at the rally and also spoke out about retaliation.

"By firing our elected president, the administration of Holyoke Public Schools has, in effect, shown that our voices are not valued or respected," she told those present.

Morales himself summed up what he and other educators would like to see.

"My goal, the goal of the teachers in Holyoke and the goal of the Holyoke Teachers Association is to work with students, parents and the community to give our students the best possible education — one that supports students in all their dimensions," Morales said.

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From public good to profitable commodity

By Michelle Corbin and Tim Scott

The Common Core State Standards and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers represent critical advances in the national expansion of corporate education reform's restructuring of public education — from public good to profitable commodity.

Under *Race to the Top*, monetary incentives induced states to adopt the Common Core standards and PARCC assessments. These adoptions were contingent upon pledges by states to align their education systems with “common standards,” “high-quality assessments” and “statewide longitudinal data systems” as well as the institutional collaborations and corporate contracts necessary for implementation.

Designed and imposed by foundations, corporations and private trade organizations in partnership with government, “reforms” such as the Common Core and PARCC also contain mechanisms for extending these market-based policy initiatives into higher education in ways that parallel their devastating implementation in K-12.

Accordingly, a report by the PARCC Higher Education Leadership Team — titled “Connecting the Dots: Postsecondary’s Role in Preparing K–12 Students” — is a call to action to those shaping higher education policy. The report states that “the adoption of the CCSS and the development of the common assessments provide an unprecedented opportunity for the postsecondary community to work with K-12 to demonstrate what being college ready means and to connect the dots between K-12 expectations and first-year, freshman college courses.”

The report outlines the comprehensive state-by-state policy and legislative agendas currently underway that are taking full advantage of this “opportunity.” While linked to corporate-friendly federal reform agendas such as *Race to the Top* and President Barack Obama’s more recent American Graduation Initiative and College Scorecard, the transformation of higher education is occurring largely through state higher education policy bodies.

For example, the PARCC Higher Education Leadership Team has praised the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education’s strategic plan — known as the Vision Project — as a prototype for extending Common Core standards and PARCC into higher education. Like *Race to the Top*, the Vision Project uses competitive grants to implement a “plan for statewide assessment” that ties sorely needed funding to the implementation of institutional structural adjustments.

Leading efforts to create these common and measurable standards for liberal arts education nationwide is Liberal Education and America’s Promise, or LEAP, the signature initiative of the Association of American Colleges & Universities

These interrelated and profitable initiatives do not stop at collecting student artifacts. They aim to standardize, assess and benchmark the entire liberal arts curriculum and the undergraduate degree itself.

(which counts among its donors the Gates Foundation and the Raytheon Company, a weapons manufacturer).

LEAP has developed a set of “essential learning outcomes” that purportedly codify the essential elements of the centuries-old liberal arts tradition. The goal is for all colleges and universities to align their curricula with standardized “outcomes” and to implement institutional assessment systems to ensure curricular “accountability.”

To facilitate measuring these “essential learning outcomes,” the AAC&U has also developed the Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education, known as VALUE. Funded by the Gates Foundation, the VALUE initiative has developed a set of common and scalable rubrics for assessing student work. Thus, with the necessary LEAP standards and the requisite assessment tool — the VALUE rubric — in place, the next step is widespread implementation across higher education.

To that end, the VALUE project is partnering with the Multistate Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment, which is also Gates-funded. This initiative is developing a protocol for the administration of VALUE as an assessment for any form of “authentic student artifact” as a proficiency measure for “essential learning outcomes.”

Because such extensive assessments require massive data collection and management infrastructures, these initiatives become inseparable from the for-profit technology companies that service them.

Following the model of CCSS/PARCC contracts with Pearson PLC, the Multistate Collaborative recently awarded a contract for the development of a system capable of aggregating data across institutions and states to Taskstream, a corporation specializing in higher education assessment products. In a press release, Taskstream boasted that it would pioneer the first large-scale database system collecting widespread student assessment data to be implemented in higher education.

These interrelated and profitable initiatives do not stop at collecting student artifacts. They aim to standardize, assess and benchmark the entire liberal arts curriculum and the undergraduate degree itself.

LEAP is also funding the General Education Maps and Markers initiative, which is designed to synthesize learning outcomes, the VALUE rubric and the corporation-administered pilot testing of the Multistate Collaborative into a complete reorganization of colleges and universities, as LEAP says, “from cornerstone to capstone.”

One of GEMs’ key goals is to award degrees based on demonstrated “proficiencies” as measured by standardized assessments. Backers of the initiative envision degrees earned completely through sequences of standardized proficiency assessments, where classrooms become boutique choices in an otherwise proficiency-based college education.

These interconnected initiatives all rely heavily on *Race to the Top*-like incentives. Funding is offered for workshops and training programs on administering VALUE rubrics and building LEAP-aligned syllabi. Many universities are also now dedicating administrative posts and departments entirely to assessment.

In its increasing adoption of “incentives” such as those noted above, Massachusetts has implemented a new “performance-based funding” model for the state’s community colleges, ultimately making about half of state funding contingent on Vision Project-aligned “performance outcomes.” These moves are not only shaping university policy and faculty teaching; they are also creating a culture in which standardized curricula and assessments become normalized into a culture of assessment.

While corporate education reform originated in K-12, the broader goal has always been the commandeering of the entire P-16 public education system, from prekindergarten to capstone. In both K-12 and higher education, the goal is to reorganize all of public education into a profitable market.

Michelle Corbin is an assistant professor of sociology and affiliate faculty member of women’s studies at Worcester State University. Tim Scott is a member of the professional staff at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a member of the MTA Board of Directors.

ESP grant sows the seeds for bountiful gardens

By Jean Conley

Nancy Burke, an instructional paraprofessional at Haverhill High School, has an eye for challenges. She watches her students meet them every day.

So when the Haverhill Education Association member heard about the NEA's Farm to School grant program, she knew she wanted in.

Burke has worked for 15 years with special needs students — many of whom also have medical issues — in the life skills program. All of the students in her classroom of 14- to 18-year-olds face obstacles.

What Burke wanted was a way to get her students more involved with the outdoors and expand the classroom's curriculum to include growing and then preparing some of their own food.

The Farm to School program's "mini-grants" proved to be the answer. The grants, administered through the NEA's Education Support Professional Quality Department, provide \$1,000 in funding for locals to connect students with locally grown foods.

At an MTA presentation on the NEA grant program last winter, Burke met Neil Wilkins, a science and art teacher at the Haverhill Alternative School. He wanted the same things — the experience of growing, harvesting and preparing food — for his middle and high school students, many of whom face emotional or behavioral challenges.

Burke knew that because many of her students have physical limitations, she would need help preparing the soil and hauling and using gardening equipment. Some of her students are in wheelchairs or use walkers, and many had never before had the opportunity to get their hands dirty.

She had already gotten help during the 2012-2013 school year from two Haverhill High School students working on Eagle Scout projects. The students had helped to clear a previously unsightly area outside the high school, built a raised garden bed at just the right height for walkers and wheelchairs, installed benches and trimmed trees.

Wilkins saw an opportunity for his school's students to expand the reach of their own garden project. Even more important, though, the project would give Wilkins' students an opportunity

to help the students in the life skills program at the high school.

Wilkins said that his students sometimes feel disheartened that they need a large amount of assistance in school and are truly proud when they find opportunities to give back. The project, he said, "would give them the opportunity to take ownership of jobs."

"They shine in those moments," he said.

ESP Robert Farrell had worked with students at the alternative school for more than two years to design and construct an on-site greenhouse, which had already proven successful as a hands-on lesson in construction and design, project planning, math and science. Further, the greenhouse was surrounded by about 1,000 square feet of arable land, and the Hart seed company had donated seeds.

By April, Wilkins' students were hard at work, planting seedling trays and monitoring them every day. The seedlings thrived, eventually becoming large enough to be moved outdoors in late spring.

At that point, Wilkins' students shared dozens of the small plants that were grown with Burke's students, who were thrilled to have their own "salsa garden" featuring tomatoes, cilantro and a variety of peppers.

With help from volunteers and students in both schools' summer programs, both gardens flourished. By August, the one at the high school had too many tomatoes to count, and peppers of all types grew like wildfire. The garden at the alternative school was just as successful, bursting with squash, cucumbers, peppers, beans, eggplant, okra, sweet potatoes, pumpkins and watermelon.

In the first few weeks of school this year, the months of cross-pollination between the two groups paid off with a huge harvest.

Wilkins pointed out that without the hard work of his fellow educators, the project would have been impossible. He gave special thanks to three ESPs: Jill Hoiseth, Cyndi Gieryn and Genia Brindis. He also lauded the work of Oscar Mendosa, who runs the culinary program at the school and has worked with the students to incorporate what they grow into their meals; now-retired teacher Deb Schnappauf, who

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A student at the Haverhill Alternative School who helped transplant seedlings last spring pulls in the harvest. ESPs at the school and at Haverhill High School have been key to the success of the garden projects.

Photo courtesy of Neil Wilkins

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Erosion seen in certain rights for teachers

By Laura Barrett

Teacher tenure has been under attack nationwide in the past six months. In June, a judge in California's *Vergara* case struck down that state's teacher tenure laws. One month later, an advocacy group filed a lawsuit in New York seeking a similar ruling. Meanwhile, Kansas passed a law ending due process rights for teachers facing dismissal.

In Massachusetts, our tenure-like system is called Professional Teacher Status — PTS. While PTS has not yet been subject to a direct attack, due process rights have been eroded.

"Due process rights are important for all workers, but for educators they are absolutely necessary in order to protect our ability to speak from professional knowledge about our practice, our curriculum, and the needs of our students," said MTA President Barbara Madeloni.

"Under the current pressure of mandates and hyperaccountability, teachers are afraid to talk about what is not working in their schools and what our students need," she continued. "We must protect our rights to speak and organize."

How PTS works

Under Massachusetts' system, new teachers can be dismissed at any time for any reason during

'Under the current pressure of mandates and hyperaccountability, teachers are afraid to talk about what is not working in their schools and what our students need. We must protect our rights to speak and organize.'

— MTA President Barbara Madeloni

their first 90 days on the job. They also can be "nonrenewed" at the end of each year for their first three years — again, for any reason or no reason at all.

There is one important protection for non-PTS teachers, which the MTA secured through litigation that ended in 2007. Administrators can't fire such teachers on performance grounds if they haven't properly evaluated them.

A teacher who is renewed at the end of three years has PTS, meaning the teacher can only be dismissed for "inefficiency, incompetency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher, insubordination or failure on the part of the teacher to satisfy teacher performance standards." A superintendent or principal must give notice of intent to dismiss so that the teacher has a chance to respond before any final decision is made.

If the administration decides to dismiss, the teacher has a right to have a neutral arbitrator review the matter. The burden of proving the grounds for dismissal falls on the employer.

Until recently, arbitrators had broad discretion to rule on both facts and sanctions. In a recent case involving a Lexington teacher, however, the state's Supreme Judicial Court narrowed the arbitrator's authority. In that case, the court ruled that the arbitrator couldn't reduce the penalty — the decision to dismiss — if the grounds for dismissal had been proven.

That was held to be true even though the arbitrator believed that dismissal was too harsh a sanction for the infraction committed or in light of other mitigating factors.

In Level 4 and Level 5 schools, all teachers lose the protections of the dismissal statute as well as many contractual rights. For example, even PTS teachers can be required to reapply for their jobs. If they aren't rehired and there isn't another job in the district for which they are qualified, they are out of work despite their status as professional teachers.

Why is PTS important?

■ **It's fair.** No one supports keeping an underperforming teacher in the classroom. But labeling someone a poor performer should not

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EMAC to celebrate 35 years of making a difference

By Jean Conley

The MTA Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee is celebrating its 35th anniversary with a conference bearing the theme: “Standing on a Great Foundation.”

The conference is scheduled for Dec. 5 and 6 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel in Norwood.

Several of MTA’s earliest minority activists will be on hand to tell their stories about becoming involved with

the Minority Affairs Committee — as EMAC was initially known — and how it changed the association and their lives.

This year’s special conference honoree is Louise Gaskins, who was instrumental in writing MTA’s Minority Involvement Plan.

Over the years, Gaskins became a leading spokeswoman for minority affairs at the MTA, and she is still active today. At the 2014 Annual Meeting of Delegates, Gaskins — along



with former MTA Presidents Kathleen Roberts and Mary Gilmore — was honored as a Friend of Education for her decades of service.

EMAC Chair Christine Boseman stressed that all MTA members are invited to the upcoming conference. Those attending the Just for New Teachers conference — which is taking place at the same hotel on Dec. 5 — have been issued a special welcome.

“We believe this year’s EMAC conference will offer the grounding that educators need in order to approach social issues in the 21st century,” Boseman said.

She stressed the importance of bringing together new educators and

those who have been active in the MTA for decades.

“When we join to talk about race and discuss the forces that have formed our society, we build a bridge that helps educators deal with issues that are still very much at the forefront,” she said. “This is why we chose to hold both conferences in the same hotel, one right after the other.”

On Friday, all MTA members are invited to attend a late-afternoon “bridge” workshop that will begin just after the Just for New Teachers conference concludes. The discussion, titled “The Skin that We Speak: Exploring Culture and Language in the Classroom and Beyond,” will be led by Beau Stubblefield-Tave of the Center for Cultural Fluency.

The discussion will be followed by registration for the EMAC conference and a social hour with hors d’oeuvres.

At the dinner on Friday, former MTA President Anne Wass will offer the keynote address. Wass is widely viewed as a champion of students,

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Professional Teacher Status helps both educators and students

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happen without providing professional support and fair, constructive evaluations. Teachers should never be fired for arbitrary and capricious reasons — such as making room for a new hire who is paid less or who has a personal connection to someone in the administration.

■ **It amplifies the teacher’s voice, to the benefit of students.** It is common knowledge that non-PTS teachers are often afraid to speak out at school committee meetings, challenge an administrator’s decision to deny needed services to a special education student, or walk an informational

picket line. If teachers had no PTS protection, the teaching force would be far less effective at advocating for what students and educators need.

■ **It forces administrators to do their jobs.** An estimated 50 percent of all teachers are gone in the first five years. They are either nonrenewed or they leave voluntarily. Those who do survive those difficult early years deserve to have fair and thorough evaluations and quality professional development to help them continue to improve. When those supports are provided, the vast majority of teachers succeed. For the few who do not, dismissal or counseling out is the right course. No one is guaranteed a job for

life, but everyone should receive due process. Madeloni said she understands firsthand the importance of due process rights. Her contract at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst was not renewed after an article appeared in *The New York Times* featuring her support of students who were boycotting a proposed national assessment system for student teachers that UMass was piloting. “I know what it means to be targeted for speaking out. I am passionate about protecting the due process and free speech rights of our members,” Madeloni said. “It mattered more than I can say to have my union defending me.”

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New gun law a 'common-sense' step forward

By Jean Conley

The day that Governor Deval Patrick signed a bill into law that tightened Massachusetts gun laws, self-described “accidental activist” Molly Malloy expressed her profound gratitude.

“With the stroke of Governor Patrick’s pen today, Massachusetts is now a leader for the rest of the nation in passing common-sense gun reform,” Malloy said in a statement after the signing on Aug. 13.

The mother of three from Boston is the leader of the Massachusetts chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

Malloy, a stay-at-home mother with a background as a social worker, got involved in Moms Demand Action right after the 2012 massacre that took the lives of 20 children and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

She said the shootings hit her especially hard because her oldest son was exactly the same age as many of the children killed that day.

Malloy was devastated. “This is not OK. I refuse to accept this,” Malloy remembers telling another mother in the blur after the massacre. “But I don’t know what to do about it.”

When her friend later told her about Moms Demand Action, which formed quickly after the crisis, Malloy immediately set to work with others in Massachusetts who chose to channel their grief by working as a team to push legislation that would close loopholes and otherwise improve the state’s gun laws.

Moms Demand Action now has a chapter in each state, with hundreds of thousands of followers on social media.

The bipartisan legislation that became law in Massachusetts — which already had some of the strictest gun laws in the country — was a milestone for Moms Demand Action and other grassroots groups that have either cropped up or found a stronger voice since the Sandy Hook shootings.

The new law, An Act Relative to the Reduction of Gun Violence, requires real-time background



Photo by Jean Conley

Molly Malloy, left, leader of the Massachusetts chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, chatted with U.S. Representative Katherine Clark before a gun violence prevention panel discussion sponsored by the congresswoman in Medford on Sept. 3.

checks for all private gun sales and streamlines the licensing process.

It also brings Massachusetts into line with the National Instant Criminal Background Check System database, so courts are required to report those involuntarily committed for mental health and substance abuse treatment into the national database. The Commonwealth was one of only a handful of states that didn’t provide this information before the law was passed.

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Obituaries

Doris E. Asci, 84, of Brockton. Was an elementary school teacher for 37 years at Brookfield Elementary School. Aug. 8.

Donna Craig, 76, of Easthampton. Taught math for the Easthampton school system, retiring from Easthampton High School in 1996. Aug. 24.

Mary M. Doherty, 49, of Worcester. Was an instructional aide in the Worcester Public Schools for 20 years. Sept. 15.

John P. Joyce, 88, of Somerville. Was a teacher, vice headmaster and assistant superintendent of Somerville Public Schools. May 12.

Xavier L. Lapolice, 90, of Chicopee. Taught carpentry at Holyoke Trade School in Holyoke, Springfield Trade High School and Putnam Vocational Technical High School in Springfield, retiring in 1985. Sept. 15.

Kathleen E. MacDonald, 71, of Stoneham, formerly of Woburn. Was an elementary physical education instructor for the Melrose Public Schools. Aug. 10.

Janet E. Moffat, 78, of Sagamore Beach, formerly of Grafton. Was a middle school teacher for the Grafton school system for many years. July 12.

George O. Southwick, 86, of Boca Raton, Florida, formerly of Bedford. Taught in the Lexington school system for many years and was a past president of the MTA. July 5.

Ruth E. Sullivan, 84, of Wellesley. Taught for many years in the Ashland school system. July 1.



2015 HCR AWARD NOMINATIONS

The MTA Human Relations Committee is soliciting nominations for the 2015 MTA Human and Civil Rights Awards, which honor those who have shown extraordinary dedication to civil rights and human relations.

The awards will be presented on Friday, June 19, at the 32nd annual Human and Civil Rights Awards celebration at the Westin Waltham-Boston Hotel.

For further information, please e-mail Mary Gilgallon, director of the Division of Governance and Administration, at mgilgallon@massteacher.org.

NOMINATIONS ARE DUE MARCH 27

Forms are available at massteacher.org/hcr

EMAC to celebrate 35 years of making a difference

Continued from Page 13

public education and human and civil rights.

Attendees who have been especially active in EMAC over the years will be asked to offer their memories during the dinner. NEA officers past and present will send videotaped greetings from Washington, D.C.

Saturday workshops will include sessions on the history of EMAC, the classroom community, the school-to-prison pipeline, social media, getting elected to MTA office, and diversity. A wrap-up session will conclude the conference.

Special honoree Gaskins will speak about her decades of MTA activism during the luncheon on Saturday.

Kevin Gilbert, a member of the NEA Executive Committee, will also address the crowd. The veteran educator has been a social studies teacher, coach and administrator in Mississippi.

To register for the conference, please visit www.massteacher.org/emac. For more information, call the Division of Training and Professional Learning at 617.878.8153.

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REGIONAL RETIREMENT CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE

The MTA provides individual 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.

AUBURN — Louise Gaskins: first Saturday (by appointment only) and second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Central Office, 48 Sword St., Auburn; 508.791.2121, or at home, 978.448.5351.

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 (by appointment only), 9 a.m. to 1 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 Saturday of each month (by appointment only), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fitchburg Teachers Association office, 21 Culley St., Fitchburg; 978.790.8864, or at home, 978.297.0123; e-mail: zibstar702@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, 413.893.9173.

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 — Edward Nelson: 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, 774.239.7823.

HIGHER EDUCATION AT-LARGE — Edward McCourt, Wellesley; 781.325.2553; e-mail: emccourt.mccc@gmail.com (by appointment only).

Note: If your association would like to schedule 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 consultants do not have records of your service, so members are advised to bring that information along to meetings.

Life is a journey that requires some funding

Home Equity Line of Credit

It's a good time to apply for a home equity line with low rates and no closing costs.* Plus, the **\$50 annual fee is waived each year for MTA members** for the life of the home equity loan.

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Equity Line of Credit: The annual fee of \$50 will be waived for MTA members for the life of the loan; a minimum advance fee of \$15 is charged for advances less than \$250; stop-payment fee of \$25; return-check charge of \$25. If the line of credit is paid off and closed within 35 months, a prepayment penalty will be charged, not to exceed 2% of the total credit limit, inclusive of fees and costs not exempt by law. For a credit limit of \$15,000-\$24,999, a prepayment penalty of \$300 will be assessed. For a credit limit of \$25,000 or more, a prepayment penalty of \$500 will be assessed and the New York State mortgage tax paid by the Bank will be recaptured (not to exceed 2%). *No closing costs for line amounts of \$250,000 or below. For lines exceeding \$250,000, the customer pays the cost of lender's title insurance, attorney fees over \$250 and the portion of the NYS mortgage tax on the line amounts exceeding \$250,000. The Bank pays the NYS mortgage tax on line amounts up to \$250,000. Loan approval is subject to underwriting criteria and subject to credit approval. Other restrictions may apply. First or second lien on one- to four-family owner-occupied residences and qualified second homes only. Offer does not apply to non-owner-occupied properties, rehabilitation loans, manufactured housing or homes currently offered for sale. Homeowners insurance is required. Flood insurance may be required. Offer subject to change without notice. Interest may be tax deductible; check with your tax advisor.

Consumer Loans: **Consumer loans qualifying for the .25% APR (annual percentage rate) discount are limited to personal and auto loans and require automatic payment from a Berkshire Bank checking account. Other fees may apply.

From NEA grant, school gardens grow

Continued from Page 11

spearheaded the greenhouse project in 2012; and school Principal John Depolo for his enthusiasm and support.

Burke credited classroom teachers Matthew Scanlon and Amanda Huberdeau; nurse Deborah Day-Cummings; and fellow instructional paraprofessionals Seanna Mejia, Lori Porazinski, Gene Fontaine, Alicia Antonelli, Carrie Bergeron, Donna Judge and Doris Levasseur.

This year, Burke will work with her students to plant a "beef stew" garden that includes potatoes, carrots

and onions. Since her students take a cooking class once a week, the vegetables will come in handy.

Wilkins said that because of its success, the garden project is now offered as an environmental science elective at the alternative school.

"The buy-in is huge," he said, "when students see that something they started becomes real."

For further information on ESP Farm to School mini-grants, please call MTA ESP/Retired Member Organizer Steve Day at 617.878.8314.



Honoring Education Support Professionals

Do you know an Education Support Professional who is creative and innovative, a tireless worker who stands up for union rights? If so, consider nominating him or her for the 2015 MTA ESP Award. The award will be presented at the MTA Annual ESP Conference April 10-11 in Falmouth.



NOMINATIONS ARE DUE NOVEMBER 21.

For details, visit massteacher.org/esp and click on:

2015 MTA ESP AWARD INFORMATION

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	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)	70,563	70,098
b. Legitimate Paid	69,554	69,140
1. Outside County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions		
2. In-County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions	N.A.	N.A.
c. and/or Requested Distribution	N.A.	N.A.
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Etc., Outside USPS		
4. Requested Copies Dist. by Other Mail Classes Through USPS	N.A.	N.A.
d. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	69,554	69,140
e. Nonrequested Distribution	663	663
1. Outside County Nonrequested Copies, Including Samples		
2. In-County Nonrequested Copies	N.A.	N.A.
f. By Mail and Outside the Mail	N.A.	N.A.
3. Nonrequested Copies Dist. Through USPS by Other Mail Classes		
4. Nonrequested Copies Distributed Outside the Mail	N.A.	N.A.
g. Total Nonrequested Distribution	663	663
h. Total Distribution	70,217	69,803
i. Copies Not Distributed	346	295
j. Total	70,563	70,098
k. Percent Paid	99.06%	99.05%

16. Electronic Copy Circulation

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Requested and Paid Electronic Copies	44,095	45,065
b. Total Requested and Paid Print Copies (Line 15c)		
+ Requested/Paid Print Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	113,649	114,205
c. Total Requested Copy Distribution (Line 15f)		
+ Requested/Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	114,312	114,868
d. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Both Print & Electronic Copies)	99.42%	99.42%

17. The Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Fall 2014 issue of this publication.

18. James P. Sacks, Editor

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

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Hope for the best. Prepare for the worst.

“**H**ope for the best. Prepare for the worst” is a classic piece of advice we give to children. So why don’t we follow this same advice as adults? Here’s one good example of preparing ourselves for the worst: purchasing an umbrella insurance policy on top of an existing auto or homeowner’s policy. This is a simple and low-cost way of protecting against unforeseen costs if you are ever involved in a large lawsuit.

How umbrella liability policies protect you: Umbrella policies provide liability coverage above and beyond what an auto or homeowner’s policy covers. Typically, liability limits are no more than \$500,000 on auto and home policies. However, if you are sued for any amount above that limit and do not have an umbrella policy, the opposing party can go after your home, retirement account, savings and even future earnings to receive a full settlement. In a case like this, an umbrella policy would help protect your most valuable assets.

Why they are needed: Many customers believe they’ll never need coverage exceeding \$500,000. However, if you’re found by a court to be responsible for an accident, legal fees, medical bills and lost wages for the injured party can quickly exhaust a seemingly generous coverage amount. With an umbrella policy in place, you would have an additional \$1 million to \$5 million in protection.

What they cost: A common misconception is that an additional \$1 million to \$5 million in



coverage would be very expensive. The good news is that this is not true. While prices vary, the first \$1 million in additional coverage will, on average, cost approximately \$15-\$20 per month.

No one ever plans on being sued. But if you are, make sure you’re prepared by calling EIA today at 888.908.6822 to speak with a licensed insurance advisor. EIA’s professionals

can review your current policies, recommend a package to suit your needs and even advise you on ways to fund your additional coverage. Make sure you’re prepared for the worst!

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PayCheck Direct® has thousands of products to choose from, including TVs, computers, furniture, cookware and toys for the kids. Start your holiday shopping with PayCheck Direct® and get interest-free financing and low and convenient payments with no credit checks.



Eligible members are those who are 18 or older, earn at least \$18,000 per year and have been active members of the MTA for six months. Fill up your online cart by visiting www.mypaycheckdirect.com/mta or call in your order to a customer service representative at 866.441.9160. Hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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To learn more about your purchase limits, payments, the return policy and other important program details, go to www.mypaycheckdirect.com/mta and click on Customer Service, or see your installment agreement. PayCheck Direct® is operated by Bluestem Enterprises, Inc.

Nomination papers available

MTA members who intend to seek election to MTA office at the 2015 Annual Meeting of Delegates or to run for NEA Director may now apply for nomination papers.

Annual Meeting elections will take place in May for vacancies on the MTA Board of Directors.

There are also two NEA Director vacancies. The NEA Directors will be elected by direct-mail ballot. Ballots will be sent to the entire membership.

Applications for nomination papers for MTA office must be submitted in writing to the office of the Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. Although there is no deadline for requesting them, nomination papers for MTA office must be filed with the Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 6, regardless of when they are postmarked.

Nomination papers for the NEA Director posts may be requested in the same manner, but must be filed no later than Friday, Jan. 9.

No person may be a candidate for more than one office. Each candidate must specify the office sought, the term of the office, his or her MTA membership individual ID number (which can be found on the MTA membership card), home and school addresses, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and local association.

All candidates must comply with the nomination and election provisions of the MTA Bylaws, which will be made available to candidates.

District Directors — MTA Board*: There will be 16 vacancies for District Director positions on the MTA Board. All terms will be for three years. The open districts are 7B, 9B, 10B, 35C, 42C, 14D, 28D, 32D, 30E, 23F, 24F, 25F, 19G, 44H, 46H and 47H. Each candidate must be an active MTA member** and must be employed in education within the electoral district in which the candidate seeks office.

At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Membership*: The At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Membership will be elected to a three-year term. Any active ethnic minority

member of the association is eligible to be a candidate for At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Membership on the Board. Under Article VII, Section 5 of the MTA Bylaws, ethnic minority shall mean American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Chicano/Hispano or Cape Verdean. The nomination deadline is March 6.

Statewide Retired District Director*: There will be one vacancy for Statewide Retired District Director on the Board. The term will be for three years. Candidates must be members of the Statewide Retired District. There is a self-nomination process, with a deadline of March 6.

NEA Directors*: The vacant NEA Director seats will be filled by direct-mail vote in March and April, in tandem with NEA statewide and

regional delegate elections. The term is three years, beginning Sept. 1, 2015, and expiring Aug. 31, 2018, in accordance with the NEA's fiscal year. Each candidate must be an active MTA member** and an active or education support professional NEA member, as determined by the NEA Constitution and Bylaws, for at least two years immediately preceding the election, and a non-supervisor member as defined by the NEA. The policy procedure for the direct election of NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors is available upon request.

For information on nominations and elections, please contact Maureen Noyes of the MTA Division of Governance and Administration by calling 617.878.8305, e-mailing

mnoyes@massteacher.org or faxing inquiries to 617.742.7046.

*In accordance with Article IX, Section 2B, of the MTA Bylaws, all members of the Board of Directors (including officers; Regional Executive Committee members; the Statewide Retired Region Executive Committee member; the At-Large ESP Member; District, Statewide, and At-Large Directors; and NEA Directors) will be delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates. Election as delegates will occur simultaneous to, and by virtue of, election to the above-named offices.

**RIF'd members and members who have been granted leaves of absence by their employers may be considered active members employed in education.

ELECTION TIMELINE	
NOMINATION DEADLINES	
December 30	Candidate Recommendation Committee
January 9	Regional Ethnic Minority Delegates to MTA Annual Meeting
January 9	Statewide Retired District Delegates to MTA Annual Meeting
January 9	Statewide, Regional and Retired Delegates to NEA RA
January 9	NEA Directors
March 6	At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Membership
March 6	Statewide Retired District Director
March 6	District Directors
March 6	Retired Members Committee
April 10	Student Delegate Election to the NEA RA (if applicable)
FILING DEADLINES FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	
January 9	Bylaws and Standing Rules
January 9	Resolutions

**DELEGATES TO THE NEA RA • REGIONAL ETHNIC MINORITY DELEGATES TO THE MTA ANNUAL MEETING
STATEWIDE RETIRED DISTRICT DELEGATES TO THE MTA ANNUAL MEETING**

A candidate must file this nomination form or a facsimile with the Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 9, 2015, regardless of postmark. ADDITIONAL FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED OR THIS FORM MAY BE DUPLICATED. FORMS MAY BE FAXED TO MAUREEN NOYES AT 617.742.7046.

DISTRICT/REGION:

☐ MTA Retired member

☐ MTA life member who is retired and who holds NEA-R or NEA retired life membership

- ☐ STATEWIDE – Non-Supervisor
- ☐ REGIONAL – Non-Supervisor
- ☐ STATEWIDE OTHER
(Administrator or Supervisor)
- ☐ RETIRED

1. **MTA Policy:** Each candidate may submit a headshot photograph and biography/statement containing no more than 50 words. Note: Only the first 50 words will be printed.
The Credentials and Ballot Committee reserves the right to edit all bios.
2. **Write out your statement on a separate piece of paper first, and then fill out the grid.**
3. **Type or print clearly, using both upper- and lower-case letters, as you expect the final statement to appear.**
4. **Insert only one word per box.**
5. **Do not combine words or numbers with hyphens or slashes.**
6. **“An,” “a” and “the” constitute one word.**

7. **Abbreviations** such as “NEA-RA” and “MTA” count as one word.
8. **Insert punctuation** in the same box immediately after the word that you want it to follow.
9. **Indicate intent to commence a new paragraph** by inserting the paragraph symbol (¶) in the same box immediately preceding the first word in the paragraph.
10. **A date represented as “October 1, 2014” shall constitute three words.** The same date represented as “10/1/14” is only one word.
11. **Send this entire nomination form and photo to: MTA Governance and Administration Division, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. Only this form and photos received by January 9, 2015, will be published with the ballot. PHOTO ON FILE MAY BE USED.** The Credentials and Ballot Committee may request a new or more recent photo.

☐ Use photo on file.

☐ I am not submitting a photo.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

NEA RA delegates to be elected by mail

Statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts to the 2015 NEA Representative Assembly will be elected by mail ballot in March and April.

The election to choose NEA Directors will be held simultaneously and in the same manner. The nomination period for delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 9. The nomination form is on Page 22 of this issue of *MTA Today*.

The election period runs from March 2 through April 24. Ballots for statewide and regional delegates will be mailed to eligible active MTA/NEA members and will be accompanied by bio/statements and photos of candidates who submit them.

Retired delegate ballots and bio/statements will be mailed only to retired and retired life NEA members.

The MTA will be notified by the NEA in February of the number of delegates allocated to Massachusetts. The allocation of statewide and regional delegates will be based on electoral regions A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. A list of local associations by electoral region is available upon request.

The distribution of statewide and regional seats will be voted on by the MTA Board of Directors at its meeting on Jan. 23; candidates will be informed of the final allocation plan and will be given an opportunity to alter the designation for the level they seek to represent.

Tentative dates for the RA are July 1 through July 6, and travel dates are June 30 and July 7. The RA will take place in Orlando, Florida. The statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts will attend, in addition to delegates elected by local associations.

The Credentials and Ballot Committee has adopted procedures for the election that call for ballots and other material to be sent directly to each NEA member in Massachusetts in a self-mailer that bears the notice: "Important: Ballots Enclosed."

Ballots will be returned directly to the Credentials and Ballot Committee at a post office box. Data from the returns will be tabulated and counted at MTA headquarters in Boston under the supervision of the Credentials and Ballot Committee.

Elected delegates are expected to comply with the accountability requirements set forth by the MTA. Funding will not be provided unless accountability requirements are met.

The policy procedure for the election of MTA delegates to the RA should be reviewed carefully by anyone considering candidacy.

The policy procedure for the election of retired delegates is available upon request.

It states that this election "shall be subject to all restrictions, procedures, and deadlines set forth by the NEA guidelines and MTA's statewide and regional election process."

Inquiries concerning procedures for the nomination and election of NEA delegates and NEA Directors may be addressed to Maureen Noyes in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration. Her phone number is 617.878.8305, her fax number is 617.742.7046 and her e-mail address is mnoyes@massteacher.org.

Regional ethnic minority delegates to be chosen

Regional ethnic minority delegates to the 2015 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected by mail ballot in March and April in conjunction with the NEA delegate/director elections.

The nomination period for regional ethnic minority delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 9. Nominations are open to all eligible ethnic minority members through a self-nomination process.

The form appears on Page 22 of this issue of *MTA Today*.

Regional ethnic minority delegates will be elected by mail ballots forwarded in the same self-mailer as the NEA ballots. The election period runs from March 2 through April 24. Ballots for regional ethnic minority delegates will be mailed to active MTA members, accompanied by bio/statements and photos of candidates who submit them.

The 2015 allocation of regional ethnic minority delegates will be based on MTA electoral regions and equal to the number of district directors from each region. No more than one delegate from each district within a region will be elected, with the exception of 44H, which has two directors.

There will be 48 vacancies for regional ethnic minority delegates. All terms will be for one year. The regional vacancies are: Region A, seven vacancies; Region B, five vacancies; Region C, seven vacancies; Region D, five vacancies; Region E, five vacancies; Region F, six vacancies; Region G, six vacancies; and Region H, seven vacancies. Each candidate must be employed in education in the region in which the candidate seeks office.

Inquiries regarding procedures may be directed to Maureen Noyes in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration. Her phone number is 617.878.8305, her e-mail address is mnoyes@massteacher.org and her fax number is 617.742.7046.

Bylaws and Rules Committee now accepting proposals

The MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee will soon begin reviewing proposed amendments.

A proposal to amend the Bylaws addresses the governance of the association or the primary characteristics and functions of the MTA.

A proposal to amend the Standing Rules addresses the procedures of the Annual Meeting of Delegates, nominations and elections or governance documents.

Filing process and deadline: Proposed changes to the Bylaws must be received in writing by the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee by 5 p.m. on Jan. 9.

Proposed changes to the Standing Rules only may be submitted in writing to the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee up to the opening of the first business session of the May 8-9 Annual Meeting in Boston.

However, early submission by the Jan. 9 deadline provides an opportunity for a full hearing by the committee, by the Board of Directors and at the April pre-convention meetings.

It also allows advance publication in the Spring issue of *MTA Today*.

Submitters will be informed of hearing dates and will be expected to meet with the committee to discuss the language and intent of their proposals.

Proper format: Please use the following format for each proposed amendment.

- Specifically cite all articles, sections and lines of the Bylaws or Standing Rules that are to be changed or affected.
- Set forth your proposal in two columns, comparing the proposed text opposite the present text. In the proposed language, underline amended or added language. Enclose in parentheses language to be deleted. Indicate the location of completely new language.
- Accompany each proposed amendment with a written rationale on its purpose, impact and intent.
- Include at the end of all proposals the submitter's name and local association information.
- Provide your full name, address, telephone number(s), fax number(s), e-mail address or addresses and your MTA membership ID number, which can be found on your MTA membership card.

Who may submit proposals? Individual MTA members, groups of members and local associations are eligible to submit proposed

Please turn to **Bylaws**/Page 24

MTA Resolutions Committee accepting proposals

Proposed revisions to MTA Resolutions are now being accepted.

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

A proposal for a new resolution or revision of an existing one may be submitted by any member.

The initial deadline for submissions to the Resolutions Committee is Friday, Jan. 9.

Proposed resolutions may also be submitted by the end of business on

Friday, May 8, at the Annual Meeting of Delegates. The committee may also propose resolutions.

All resolutions submitted are considered by the Resolutions Committee, and those submitted by the January deadline are also brought before the Board of Directors.

To become the official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the delegates to the Annual Meeting.

To see the MTA’s current resolutions, please visit www.massteacher.org/resolutions.

Nominations sought for Candidate Recommendation Committee

Nominations are now open for the election of members to the MTA Candidate Recommendation Committee.

The committee is responsible for making recommendations to MTA members to support candidates for state and federal office. There are currently openings in each of the following congressional districts: District 1, two vacancies; District 3, two vacancies; District 4, one vacancy; District 6, one vacancy; District 7, two vacancies; and District 8, one vacancy.

Terms are for three years. Each committee member must reside in the congressional district to be represented.

Any MTA member interested in running for the CRC should contact Maureen Noyes in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration to request a nomination form by calling 617.878.8305 or e-mailing mnoyes@massteacher.org.

The nomination form and a biographical statement of not more than 100 words must be received by Dec. 30. Those eligible to vote for

CRC members are delegates to the past year’s MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates who reside in the specified congressional district.

Upon request, candidates will be provided with lists of MTA Annual Meeting delegates for their respective congressional districts, along with names and addresses.

If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question.

Ballots including the candidates’

biographical statements will be mailed to the electorate on the first Friday in February (Feb. 6) and must be returned no later than 5 p.m. on the last Friday in February (Feb. 27).

Candidates who are elected via the ballot process or the election waiver will start their terms on March 15.

Members of the CRC are eligible to be elected for two consecutive three-year terms.

In no event can a person hold one of these positions for more than six consecutive years.

Statewide Retired District delegates to be chosen by mail ballot

MTA Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2015 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected by mail ballot in conjunction with NEA delegate/director elections.

The nomination period for statewide retired delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 9.

Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. The form appears on Page 22 of this issue of *MTA Today*.

Statewide Retired District delegates will be elected by mail ballots forwarded in the same self-mailer as the NEA retired delegate ballots. The election period runs from March 2

through April 24. Ballots for statewide retired delegates will be mailed to retired MTA/NEA members and will be accompanied by bio/statements and photos of candidates who submit them.

The 2015 allocation of Statewide Retired District delegates and successor delegates will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members from the Statewide Retired District on record no

later than March 2. Terms last one year. The policy procedure for the election will be mailed to any candidate who requests a copy.

Inquiries may be directed to Maureen Noyes in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration at 617.878.8305. They may also be e-mailed to mnoyes@massteacher.org or faxed to 617.742.7046.

Bylaws and Rules Committee assistance available

Continued from Page 23

amendments to the MTA Bylaws and Standing Rules.

Members wishing to use an official title representing an MTA affiliate or committee are required to submit evidence that a vote was taken by authorized representatives of the affiliate or the committee.

Current document: A copy of the current document containing the MTA Bylaws, Standing Rules and Resolutions is available to any member upon request.

Assistance: The Bylaws and Rules Committee and members of the MTA staff are available to discuss ideas for potential amendments and to provide technical assistance.

Inquiries and proposals submitted to the Bylaws and Rules Committee should be channeled through Mary Gilgallon, director of the Division of Governance and Administration. Her mailing address is MTA, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. Her phone number is 617.878.8213, her fax number is 617.742.7046 and her e-mail address is mgilgallon@massteacher.org.

Election waiver

If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question.

Retired committee has four seats open

Four members of the eight-member Retired Members Committee will be elected by Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2015 MTA Annual Meeting in May.

Please see the Winter issue of the *MTA Reporter* for details and the self-nomination form for these positions.

The deadline for nominations is March 6.

The terms last two years, starting July 1.

Contract includes coverage for adjuncts

Continued from Page 5

two sides agreed to a ratio of 2.75 work hours per credit hour of instruction.

The Legislature will eventually have to vote on the trust fund. Qualifying adjuncts would receive health care coverage through the state's Group Insurance Commission.

The Day Unit's three-year pact calls for 1.75 percent pay raises every six months and streamlines the grievance process. The agreement also brings state universities in line with other higher education institutions in terms of linking tenure and promotion from assistant to associate professor.

The MSCA's Division of Graduate and Continuing Education is about to embark on its own negotiations for a successor contract. O'Donnell said that unit will also pursue language that makes adjunct faculty and part-time staff eligible for health insurance.

About 500 part-time MSCA members from the two units will be eligible for health care insurance if the provision is adopted.

About 500 part-time MSCA members from the two units will be eligible for health care insurance if the provision is adopted.

Meanwhile, the Association of Professional Administrators, which represents administrators at all nine state universities, has settled its contract with the BHE. The three-year pact calls for annual pay increases of 3.5 percent.

The new contract also boosts stipend rates and includes provisions for more professional development. The APA successfully fought merit-pay provisions and new caps on sick leave that the state originally sought.

Advocates continue to push for tougher laws on guns

Continued from Page 15

The law created a firearms trafficking unit within the state police and enhances sentences for existing crimes, such as gun-related slayings. It also requires school districts to have emergency response plans that include a direct means of communication between schools and local police and fire departments. Each district is required to have a school resource officer assigned by the superintendent and chief of police. In addition, the law requires schools to address the mental health needs of students and staff by stipulating suicide awareness and prevention training for school personnel.

Moms Demand Action is part of the umbrella group Everytown for Gun Safety, which describes itself as the largest gun violence prevention organization in the country.

Everytown, with more than 2 million supporters, also encompasses Mayors Against Illegal Guns, which was formed in 2006 when Michael

Bloomberg and Thomas Menino — then the mayors of New York and Boston — created a coalition of 15 mayors who wanted to win support for gun prohibitions and policies, as well as get guns out of the hands of criminals.

Since then, Mayors Against Illegal Guns has grown to more than 1,000 current and former mayors, and Bloomberg earlier this year pledged to pour \$50 million of his considerable fortune — plus his political clout — into the effort.

With Moms Demand Action's immediate goal of passing legislation in Massachusetts met, the Massachusetts chapter focused on the national organization's effort to visit town fairs, festivals and farmers' markets over the summer in an effort to get 1 million people to pledge that they will vote for laws and political leaders who will work to end gun violence.

"We as Americans don't have to tolerate more than 31,000 deaths from gun violence every year," Malloy said. "Almost eight children and teenagers are shot and killed every day in our country."

She said Moms Demand Action's message to Congress is clear. "We want our elected officials to know that we want them to be as passionate about the safety of our communities as they are about the right to bear arms."

Malloy said that while she occasionally feels guilty about being away from her children in order to attend forums or lobby for gun laws, she realizes she is doing the right thing.

"I have to show them how to be the change they want to see," Malloy said.

She was surprised that even her youngest child seemed able to grasp what her mother is trying to accomplish.

Just heading off to preschool, she asked her mother, "Will the teachers keep the bad guys out of the school, mommy?"

For more information about gun safety organizations, visit momsdemandaction.org, mayorsagainstillegalsguns.org and everytown.org.

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Classifieds

CONFERENCE

JANUARY 23-25 IN PROVINCETOWN — GLSEN Massachusetts, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, will hold its annual educator retreat. The retreat is open to LGBT and straight ally adults working in any school system. Topics include networking, coming out and strategies for building support networks. For more information, e-mail ma.retreat@chapters.glsen.org.

EMPLOYMENT

NEED ADDITIONAL INCOME? LOVE TO ENTERTAIN AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS?

Provide room, board, friendship and tutoring for a foreign student of English in your own New England home (within three hours of Boston). Average pay \$550 per week. Please review details at <http://www.HLI-HostFamilies-Boston.com>. Contact: info@HLI-HostFamilies-Boston.com.

PROCTORS WANTED! Harvard Law School is looking for proctors to assist with our fall, winter and spring exam periods. If interested, please contact Exam Administrator Samantha Fitzgerald at sfitzgerald@law.harvard.edu or 617.495.4605.

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FOR SALE

"GROWING UP IS A HARD JOB" — This book introduces young people to the basic tools that they need and will use their entire lives. It teaches hygiene and the importance of exercise, proper foods, sunshine, plenty of fluids and proper sleep. These tools will ensure a healthy, strong child. For a copy, e-mail James Wheeler at wheelerjames20@yahoo.com.

TRAVEL

2015 SCHOOL VACATION WEEK ADULT TRAVEL — 2/13-21 Sorrento/Rome; 4/17-25 Ireland or Paris and French countryside; 4/18-26 Sorrento/Rome or Tuscany/Rome. All/most meals, full sightseeing, fully escorted, 1st-class hotels, RT flights. Group/leader specials. Call Durgan Travel at 781.438.2224, visit www.durgantravel.com or e-mail info@durgantravel.com.

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WORLD'S FAIR/EXPO 2015 IN MILAN — Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see an Italian World's Fair. The theme is "food — where better than Italy?" Included in special packages: Italian/French Riviera, Lake Como/Switzerland, and Austrian Lakes/Oktobefest. Call Durgan Travel at 781.438.2224, visit www.durgantravel.com or e-mail info@durgantravel.com. Group/leader specials available.

TRAVEL STUDY

IN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS, Finnish students are top performers (PISA, TIMSS). To gain insight into their success, join this April vacation study tour (April 18-26) to visit schools in Helsinki and Turku, talk with educators, and enjoy sightseeing and Nordic ambience. For additional information, e-mail Ingrid at ingridurponen@gmail.com or call 561.758.5941.

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Are you aware that you do not have access to Social Security Disability Insurance as a Massachusetts educator?

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In order to ensure your family a worry-free holiday season, be sure to review your insurance policies and consider purchasing an umbrella policy. An EIA advisor can help assess your current coverage and put together a package to fit your needs. EIA is the preferred personal insurance partner of the MTA.

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- Liability coverage helps protect your assets in the event of a lawsuit.
- An umbrella policy provides additional liability protection above and beyond the coverage limits on your auto and home policies.

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- An umbrella policy will protect your assets, home and income in the event you are sued.
- Legal fees, medical bills, lost wages and other liabilities can quickly exhaust your auto and home policy coverage limits.

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Massachusetts Teachers Association

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Gathering features call to political action

By Scott McLennan

Calls for political activism resounded through the MTA's 13th annual Retired Members Gathering.

Neil Clarke, who received the "Honor Our Own" award at the event — held on Sept. 29 at the Sheraton Framingham Hotel — reflected on how his work as an educator in Lee, his union activism and his current role as a Senate district coordinator in MTA's Division of Grassroots Campaigns became entwined.

"Throughout all of my experiences, it was the people I got to know and worked with who made the difference," Clarke said. "One lesson I've learned is to connect the dots regarding significant changes to the art and joy of teaching. Those dots often lead to the doors of politicians, through legislation or funding, or to boards that dictate to educators. As a Senate district coordinator, I've once again found the joy of collegiality and helping achieve positive change."

Clarke, who attended the ceremony with his wife, Barbara, taught in Lee for 34 years. He is a former member of MTA's Board of Directors and Executive Committee.

"Honor Our Own" recognition is awarded each year by the Retired Members Committee, which evaluates materials that outline the accomplishments of nominees. Joshua Hall, one of Clarke's former students who is now an educator in the Lee Public Schools, nominated Clarke.

MTA President Barbara Madeloni, Vice President Janet Anderson and Executive Director-Treasurer Ann Clarke thanked the crowd of more than 200 retired members for their years of service to public education and their continued involvement in the MTA.

Anderson pointed out the work of former MTA President Mary Gilmore as an example, explaining that her advocacy of strong bonds between current and retired members is vital to the association.

Madeloni urged the retirees to share their stories about what the profession was like when they were in the classroom — before standardized testing and punitive evaluation systems became the norm.



Above from left to right, Kathleen Comer, Louise Russell, Eileen Cleary and Mary Gilmore of the Retired Members Committee listen to speakers at the Sept. 29 event, which drew a crowd of more than 200. At left, Neil Clarke and his wife, Barbara, are pictured with the "Honor Our Own" award. Clarke was given the award for his many years of service as a teacher in Lee, his union activism and his work as an MTA Senate district coordinator. "Participation in the political process is so important today, especially to help our younger teachers," Retired Members Committee Co-Chair Kathleen Roberts told the audience.

Photos by Scott McLennan

"Our active members don't get to live out the hopes and ideals that drew them to teaching, but you could help make learning joyful again," Madeloni said. "You have the expertise, and often the time, to speak out when our younger members cannot. And you can't be fired anymore!"

Kathleen Roberts, co-chair of the Retired Members Committee, also spoke up for activism. She cited her recent 100th birthday as a milestone and asked her colleagues for the "gift" of their political action in the Nov. 4 election. Each table at the gathering was adorned with a birthday card for Roberts that doubled as a signup sheet for MTA activities aimed at helping to elect Attorney General Martha Coakley as the state's next governor.

"Participation in the political process is so important today, especially to help our younger teachers," Roberts told the crowd.

U.S. Senator Edward Markey sent birthday greetings to Roberts from Washington, D.C., and the retirees enjoyed a large cake in Roberts' honor.

Each year, the Retired Members Committee works with a school in need of educational supplies. This year, Fonseca Elementary School in Fall River was chosen. Retirees donated books and classroom materials.

The gathering also featured a variety of workshops covering topics from financial planning to technology — as well as a crash course on this year's campaigns.

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

MTA Benefits launches on-site mobile optical program

Perhaps one of the most exciting and unique undertakings of MTA Benefits is the launch of Optical Academy — a full-service mobile optical shop that travels to visit local association members throughout the state. Optical Academy's mission is to provide the best eye care and eyewear for a fraction of the usual cost. For the past two years, OA has brought its optical shop to MTA's Annual Meeting. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and as a result, Optical Academy has been approved as an endorsed program.

"In our quest to provide members with benefit programs that will save them money and increase the value of their MTA membership, we think we've hit gold with Optical Academy," said MTAB President Maryann Robinson.

Significant savings

Optical Academy's prices are as much as 70 percent lower than retail. Here are just a few examples of the significant savings members enjoy with the MTAB program:

- **Single lens with frames** – \$29; average retail is \$119
- **Progressives (no-line bifocals)** – \$60; average retail starts at \$200
- **Bifocals (with line)** – \$20; average retail starts at \$89

For a full price list, visit www.mtabenefits.com.

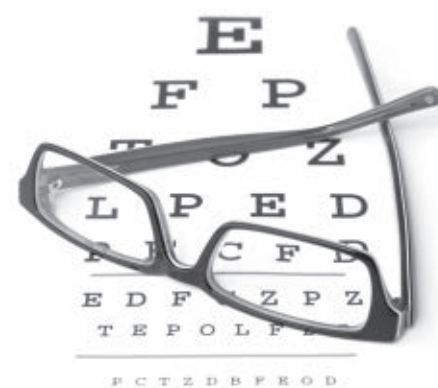


Optical Academy's mission is to provide the best eye care and eyewear for a fraction of the usual cost.

A full-service optical shop

Local presidents can arrange for OA to set up shop in district schools so that members and their families won't have to travel far for exams and to make purchases. Students may also have their eyes examined. Fifty preregistered appointments are necessary in order to arrange an on-site visit. Sites contain a registration area, digital eye exam equipment, lab area, eyewear dispensing, contact lens training and frames and accessories. On-site visits can be scheduled during school hours, in the evenings and on Saturdays. On-site visits to schools save members both time and money.

Optical Academy's president, Abby Ayoub, is personally involved in the launch of this one-of-a-kind MTAB program. The leader in



on-site eye care and eyewear, OA specializes in schools.

Ayoub said that scheduling eye exams in doctors' offices doesn't always meet the needs of working people, and in the case of children, eye exams don't always take learning differences into account. Ayoub said that her state-of-the-art digital equipment instantly reads an individual's eye strength, for instance, with no verbal communication required.

To arrange for an on-site event, please contact Ayoub at 800.530.2730 or e-mail her at Abby@Optical-Academy.com. If a local is planning a membership meeting and would like Ayoub to make a presentation, call Beth Bejoian at 617.557.6677 or e-mail her at eab@mtabenefits.com.

ALERT FOR FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS

Start early to meet stricter lending standards

“The rules have changed,” said Paul Gershkowitz, first vice president of retail lending for Berkshire Bank Home Lending, a partner in the MTA Mortgage Program. “Today’s tougher mortgage standards call for more paperwork and documentation. First-time buyers should seek out a mortgage consultant to help them with the lending process six to 12 months ahead of buying a home. Getting information as early as possible can help MTA members save a lot of money over the years.”

Gershkowitz pointed out that MTA Mortgage Program professionals at Berkshire Bank educate buyers about the process and explain how to prepare for it so members can achieve the best possible outcome. Being knowledgeable before the process starts is essential to pulling it all together, he said. Without professional help, the experience can become daunting — and more expensive — for the buyer.

“In the past, consumers got similar rates and closing costs, regardless of factors like credit scores and down payments,” Gershkowitz said. “Now, loan pricing and interest rate quotes are made based on each consumer’s risk factors. The stronger the consumer, the better the rate and transaction costs. The higher the credit score, the more a member will save.”

Looking at finances

“Credit scores and stable income are major factors in obtaining a loan and keeping payments low,” said Gershkowitz. “Buyers may need to improve their credit by reducing or restructuring debt, or even by establishing a successful credit record. That takes time. They also need to have enough money for a down payment. A large down payment and a high credit score are going to

translate into a low rate, one that could mean savings of tens of thousands of dollars over the life of the loan.”

A mortgage consultant can point out ways that buyers can save in order to make a more significant down payment. The mortgage professional will also explain other fees and costs associated with buying and owning a home, such as property insurance, real estate taxes and closing costs.

The consultant can provide information on what price range the member will qualify for and what a comfortable payment might be. Even though the homebuyer might be eligible for a larger loan amount, Gershkowitz said, the buyer must budget comfortably and realistically for mortgage payments and other expenses.

Preapproval

The preapproval process is more formal and important than the prequalification process. Preapproval verifies a homebuyer’s credit, finances, employment and ability to qualify for a mortgage. This strengthens the buyer’s position when making an offer.

Types of loans

“Many loans are available to first-time homebuyers,” said Gershkowitz. “Banks need to show reinvestment in the community, and loans favorable to first-time homebuyers demonstrate that commitment.”

An FHA loan, insured by the Federal Housing Administration, is a favorite of first-time homebuyers. It requires a very low down payment of approximately 3.5 percent. Conventional loans, veterans’ loans, USDA loans and other options are available.

Some past homeowners can be first-time homebuyers.

A first-time homebuyer is defined as someone who has not had ownership of a property for the past three years.



MTA Mortgage Program advantages

MTA members enjoy all of these advantages through the MTA Mortgage Program:

- ▶▶ Reduced monthly payments through low-interest-rate programs
- ▶▶ A wide range of programs, including low down payment options for first-time homebuyers
- ▶▶ FREE prequalification and FREE preapproval
- ▶▶ FREE flood certification
- ▶▶ Reduced appraisal fees
- ▶▶ Capped attorneys’ fees

Direct line to Paul Gershkowitz

“MTA members are welcome to contact me for more information at 866.475.HOME (4663), ext. 125,” said Gershkowitz. “I’m available to help first-time and other homebuyers get an early start on the mortgage process.”

The Tip Sheet



FRIGHTENING FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Hersheypark in the Dark

The fun doesn't stop at Hersheypark just because summer has ended! Visit Hersheypark in the Dark for Halloween-themed excitement. Enjoy "roller-ghosters," spooktacular attractions and live entertainment, all included in your admission fee. Children 12 and younger can get their fill of sweets in *Hershey's Trick-or-Treat Adventure*. The trail through the park's *Treatville* has eight stops at which children receive snack-sized treats.



Fright Fest at Six Flags New England

This fall, Six Flags New England has thrills by day and fright by night. While the sun still shines, take your turn on the Fright Rides, including Terror Twist, Voodoo Vortex, Rage in the Cage, and LightmosFEAR on the Pandemonium Zombie Coaster! Then watch the creepy crew dance to classic Halloween tunes during the Spooktacular Street Party. Catch a scary show such as Mayhem Mission, Mort's Used Coffins or Showdown in Tombstone Terrortory.

If you're brave enough to stick around once the sun goes down, you're sure to find ghouls and ghosts galore. Enter the Main Street Graveyard if you dare, navigating your way through coffins, tombs and other horrors. The Demon District includes a slew of frightening activities such as the Creepshow Freakshow and Slayer's Lair, but be leery of creatures lurking in the dark. Most Fright Fest activities are included in your MTA member-discounted ticket price of \$37. Tickets must be purchased online. Visit mtabenefits.com for more information.

Haunted Happenings in Salem

There's no better time to visit Salem than during October. Known for the Salem Witch Trials in the late 1600s, Salem has become a hub for Halloween-themed entertainment. Head back in time to 1692 at the Salem Witch Museum, where a rousing narration details the changing conception of witches, the truth behind the stereotypes and the practice of witch-hunting. Admission is free for MTA members.

The Land of Witches & Pirates is made up of three museums: The Witch Dungeon Museum presents an award-winning reenactment of the trial of Sarah Good, using the original 1692 transcript of the trial; the Witch History Museum presents the historically accurate, largely untold stories of 1692 as you walk through a forest, visit Old Salem Village and view life-sized scenes depicting these unknown stories; and the New England Pirate Museum allows you to experience the adventures of New England's legendary sea villains, peruse artifacts from sunken ships and eye pirate treasures. Admission to all three museums is free with your MTA member card.

Bewitched in Salem is a unique gift shop that offers witching oils, incense, talking boards, cauldrons, fairy stones and more. Members receive either a 20 percent discount on their purchases or a \$30 psychic reading.

Do you ever wish you lived in another time? Now's your chance to dress as if you did. At Salem's Vintage Photography, choose costumes from the Wild West, the Civil War or the Roaring Twenties. Since you're in Salem, you might as well dress the part and choose to be a witch, a wizard or a pirate. Members receive a 10 percent discount.



All discounts listed in the Tip Sheet can be found at mtabenefits.com.



Trip Interruption for Any Reason travel insurance



You've worked hard for your vacation. Travel insurance, which is offered by many suppliers, can help protect you and your investment. Now, a new benefit is being offered by Travel Insured International: Trip Interruption for Any Reason insurance. TII is the first company to offer this benefit, and it is the only provider in the market today to do so.

What is TII?

TII is a leading family-owned travel insurance provider. Since 2012, TII has been the endorsed program administrator for MTA members. Because travel insurance is its only business, TII is able to provide superior travel-related insurance services to each customer. TII offers two plans: Worldwide Trip Protector and Worldwide Trip Protector Plus. The Trip Interruption for Any Reason benefit is a feature of the Plus program.

Why is Trip Interruption for Any Reason insurance offered?

What would you do if you were on vacation and faced one of these situations? You receive a call that your pet has become sick at the kennel. You really dislike the place you are visiting and want to end the trip early. Besides taking an emotional toll on you, having to cut your trip short can be financially unmanageable. With TII's new benefit, most of your costs can be covered.

What does the benefit provide?

Trip Interruption for Any Reason insurance provides up to 75 percent reimbursement if you must interrupt your trip **72 hours or more** after your actual departure date. Coverage may include your unused, prepaid, nonrefundable trip costs and additional transportation costs.

WTP Plus also includes coverage for primary medical care and baggage costs, as well as "cancel for any reason" coverage and a fixed rate of \$20 per child for children younger than 18 accompanying you on your trip.

"Many MTA members are avid travelers, and we thought TII's programs were well suited to our members' needs," said MTAB Marketing Manager Beth Bejoian. "I was thrilled to learn of this never-before-seen benefit. It's a wonderful enhancement to TII's insurance options."

"One of MTAB's top priorities is to provide members with exceptional programs that are well researched, vetted and serve as additional options for members' everyday needs."

TII's program goes well beyond basic travel insurance, which generally covers problems such as trip cancellation, missed connections, itinerary changes, baggage delays and emergency evacuations.

For details about the MTA travel insurance program, visit mtabenefits.com or call 800.336.0990.

This material is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to be a representation of coverage that may exist in any particular situation under a policy issued by one of the companies within the Crum & Forster Enterprise. All conditions of coverage, terms and limitations are defined and provided for in the policy. C&F, Crum & Forster, and Fairmont Specialty are registered trademarks of the United States Fire Insurance Company. The Crum & Forster Enterprise, which is part of Fairfax Financial Holdings Limited, comprises leading and well-established property and casualty business units. The insurance companies within the enterprise, rated A (Excellent) by A.M. Best Company, are: The United States Fire Insurance Company, The North River Insurance Company, Crum and Forster Insurance Company, Crum & Forster Indemnity Company, Crum & Forster Specialty Insurance Company, Seneca Insurance Company, Inc., Seneca Specialty Insurance Company, First Mercury Insurance Company and American Underwriters Insurance Company.

NEW OPTION FOR LEGAL PROTECTION

As an MTA member, you are eligible for legal services for certain work-related issues at no cost. In addition, your membership includes up to three free half-hour consultations for general legal advice and up to a 30 percent fee reduction in non-work-related legal matters through MTA's attorney referral program.

MTA Benefits is now providing members with a new benefit program to supplement these services. LegalShield is a prepaid legal plan that costs just \$15.95 per month and provides members with access to legal assistance in non-employment matters. Last year alone, firms participating in LegalShield received more than 2.1 million calls.

A 2012 study titled *The Legal Needs of American Families* shows that we face legal issues on an almost daily basis and that the barriers of cost, confusion and trust limit our access to the legal help we need. LegalShield removes these barriers and empowers its members by giving them uncomplicated, affordable access to the legal assistance they need, whenever they need it, to protect themselves and their families.

For a low monthly fee, LegalShield members gain access to qualified attorneys who are

experts in the areas of law that most affect families, such as estate planning, financial issues and auto and driving issues. Participating LegalShield attorneys have been with their respective law firms for an average of 19 years.



LegalShield has dedicated law firms in 49 states and four provinces in Canada, ensuring coverage even when you are traveling.

For more information on this new program, visit mtabenefits.com. Under "All Benefits," click on Legal Plan, or go to www.legalshield.com/info/mtabenefits.



2014 Election Guide



**MAKE YOUR
VOTE COUNT!**

**SUPPORT CANDIDATES WHO WILL FIGHT
FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION**



MTA
Massachusetts Teachers Association

MTA RECOMMENDS

MARTHA COAKLEY
FOR GOVERNOR



STEVE KERRIGAN
FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



As governor, Coakley plans to increase investment in the full range of public education, from prekindergarten through college.



MTA's recommended candidates for governor and lieutenant governor — Martha Coakley and Steve Kerrigan — can be counted on to make the best choices for students and public education in Massachusetts.

As governor, Coakley plans to increase investment in the full range of public education, from prekindergarten through college. She has pledged to eliminate the list of income-eligible families waiting for vouchers to help send their children to preschool. She is passionate about making public higher education affordable, and she is concerned about the amount of time and money being spent on standardized testing in our schools. Coakley understands the importance of safeguarding retiree health benefits, and she respects the collective bargaining process.

Kerrigan will bring his experience — as a trusted top aide to U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy, as CEO of the Democratic National Convention in 2012 and as president of the Massachusetts Military Heroes Fund — to the role of lieutenant governor. Kerrigan says he would like to make Massachusetts' public education system “not just the envy of the country, but of the world.” As a former selectman and Finance Committee member in his native Lancaster, he understands the need to provide cities and towns with the resources they need.

MTA President Barbara Madeloni said Coakley and Kerrigan have proven their commitment to the public good through the career choices each has made.

“As attorney general, Martha Coakley has stood up for the working families of Massachusetts,” she said. “After taking office in 2007, she led the charge in holding Wall Street accountable for its role in the nation's economic crisis.

“Steve Kerrigan has been a strong leader in government,” Madeloni said. “His stance against lifting the charter cap shows that he understands that we must keep the public in public education.

“Together,” she continued, “Coakley and Kerrigan are leaders whose commitment will be to citizens, not CEOs.”

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



1ST DISTRICT
Richard Neal



2ND DISTRICT
Jim McGovern



3RD DISTRICT
Niki Tsongas

U.S. SENATE



Ed Markey



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



4TH DISTRICT
Joe Kennedy III



5TH DISTRICT
Katherine Clark



6TH DISTRICT
Seth Moulton



7TH DISTRICT
Mike Capuano



8TH DISTRICT
Stephen Lynch



9TH DISTRICT
Bill Keating



ATTORNEY GENERAL / TREASURER / STATE AUDITOR



ATTORNEY GENERAL
Maura Healey



TREASURER
Deb Goldberg



STATE AUDITOR
Suzanne Bump

HOW THE MTA RECOMMENDS CANDIDATES

Candidates in statewide races are interviewed by MTA's member-elected Candidate Recommendation Committee. The CRC's recommendations are reviewed by MTA's Board of Directors for final approval.

Candidates in congressional races are interviewed by members of the CRC and by local association presidents from the candidate's congressional district. Final approval is given by the NEA.

Evaluations of incumbent legislators in contested races are based on support for the MTA's legislative agenda, their voting records, and access to MTA lobbyists and activists. Candidates running in open-seat legislative races fill out questionnaires developed by the CRC. They are interviewed by CRC members, MTA local presidents, MTA Board and Executive Committee members and Senate district coordinators.

The recommendations in this Election Guide are the result of that process. We hope you will take the guide with you to the polls on November 4 and help elect MTA's recommended candidates. These candidates will listen to educators and act in the best interests of students and public education.

The MTA also urges you to join our Legislative and Political Action Teams and participate in campaigns.



MASSACHUSETTS SENATE



Michael Barrett
(D-Lexington)
3rd Middlesex



Harriette Chandler
(D-Worcester)
1st Worcester



Sonia Chang-Diaz
(D-Boston)
2nd Suffolk



Linda Dorcena Forry
(D-Dorchester)
1st Suffolk



Jennifer Flanagan
(D-Leominster)
Worcester & Middlesex



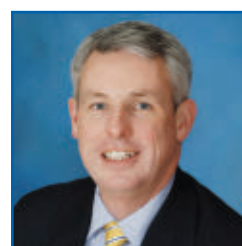
Anne Gobi
(D-Spencer)
Worcester, Hampden,
Hampshire & Middlesex



Dylan Hayre
(D-Natick)
Norfolk, Bristol & Middlesex



Patricia Jehlen
(D-Somerville)
2nd Middlesex



John Keenan
(D-Quincy)
Norfolk & Plymouth



Thomas Kennedy
(D-Brockton)
2nd Plymouth & Bristol



Patrick Leahy
(D-Holyoke)
2nd Hampden & Hampshire



Eric Lesser
(D-Longmeadow)
1st Hampden & Hampshire



Jason Lewis
(D-Winchester)
5th Middlesex



Barbara L'Italien
(D-Andover)
2nd Essex & Middlesex



Richard Moore
(D-Uxbridge)
Worcester & Norfolk



Kathleen O'Connor Ives
(D-Newburyport)
1st Essex



Marc Pacheco
(D-Taunton)
1st Plymouth & Bristol



Matthew Patrick
(D-East Falmouth)
Plymouth & Barnstable



Michael Rodrigues
(D-Westport)
1st Bristol & Plymouth



Daniel Wolf
(D-Harwich)
Cape & Islands

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Denise Andrews
(D-Orange)
2nd Franklin



James Arciero
(D-Westford)
2nd Middlesex



Cory Atkins
(D-Concord)
14th Middlesex



Christine Barber
(D-Somerville)
34th Middlesex



Carlo Basile
(D-East Boston)
1st Suffolk



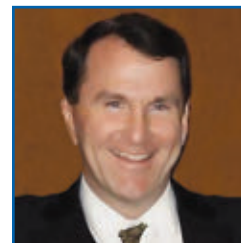
Douglas Belanger
(D-Leicester)
17th Worcester



Paul Brodeur
(D-Melrose)
32nd Middlesex



Edward Cameron
(D-Newburyport)
1st Essex



James Cantwell
(D-Marshfield)
4th Plymouth



Evandro Carvalho
(D-Dorchester)
5th Suffolk



Matthew Castriotta
(D-Hubbardston)
5th Worcester



Josh Cutler
(D-Duxbury)
6th Plymouth



Michael Day
(D-Stoneham)
31st Middlesex



Robert DeLeo
(D-Winthrop)
19th Suffolk



Marcos Devers
(D-Lawrence)
16th Essex



Mark Dowgiewicz
(D-Webster)
18th Worcester



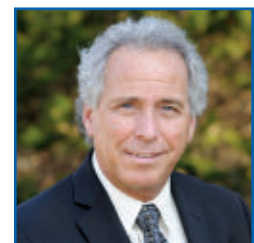
Michelle DuBois
(D-Brockton)
10th Plymouth



Beverley Griffin Dunne
(D-Peabody)
12th Essex



Carolyn Dykema
(D-Holliston)
8th Middlesex



John Fernandes
(D-Milford)
10th Worcester

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Ann-Margaret Ferrante
(D-Gloucester)
5th Essex



Michael Finn
(D-West Springfield)
6th Hampden



Carole Fiola
(D-Fall River)
6th Bristol



Sean Garballey
(D-Arlington)
23rd Middlesex



Kenneth Gordon
(D-Bedford)
21st Middlesex



Martin Green
(D-Northbridge)
9th Worcester



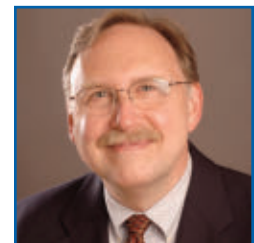
Danielle Gregoire
(D-Marlborough)
4th Middlesex



Paul Heroux
(D-Attleboro)
2nd Bristol



Kate Hogan
(D-Stow)
3rd Middlesex



Stephen Kulik
(D-Worthington)
1st Franklin



David Linsky
(D-Natick)
5th Middlesex



John Mahoney
(D-Worcester)
13th Worcester



Brian Mannel
(D-Barnstable)
2nd Barnstable



Ronald Mariano
(D-Quincy)
3rd Norfolk



Christopher Markey
(D-Dartmouth)
9th Bristol



James Murphy
(D-Weymouth)
4th Norfolk



Harold Naughton
(D-Clinton)
12th Worcester



Rhonda Nyman
(D-Hanover)
5th Plymouth



Joseph Pacheco
(D-Raynham)
8th Plymouth



Jerald Parisella
(D-Beverly)
6th Essex

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Denise Provost
(D-Somerville)
27th Middlesex



Angelo Puppolo
(D-Springfield)
12th Hampden



Gene Rauhala
(D-Townsend)
1st Middlesex



John Rogers
(D-Norwood)
12th Norfolk



Frank Smizik
(D-Brookline)
15th Norfolk



Theodore Speliotis
(D-Danvers)
13th Essex



Karen Spiewak
(D-Charlton)
6th Worcester



Thomas Stanley
(D-Waltham)
9th Middlesex



Ellen Story
(D-Amherst)
3rd Hampshire



Matthew Terry
(D-Sandwich)
5th Barnstable



Timothy Toomey
(D-Cambridge)
26th Middlesex



Jose Tosado
(D-Springfield)
9th Hampden



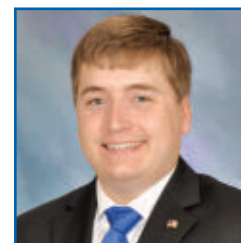
Steven Ultrino
(D-Malden)
33rd Middlesex



John Velis
(D-Westfield)
4th Hampden



Chris Walsh
(D-Framingham)
6th Middlesex



Jon Zlotnik
(D-Gardner)
2nd Worcester

YES ON EARNED SICK TIME FOR EMPLOYEES NO ON REPEAL OF GAS TAX INDEXING *MTA POSITIONS ON BALLOT QUESTIONS*

Four questions will appear on the Nov. 4 statewide general election ballot.

The MTA Board of Directors has voted to support Question 4, which would guarantee every worker in Massachusetts access to earned sick time, and Question 2, which would extend the state's nickel bottle deposit to most nonalcoholic and noncarbonated drinks.

The Board voted to oppose Question 1, which would repeal automatic indexing of the gas tax to inflation, and it decided to take no position on Question 3, which would repeal the state's 2011 expanded casino law.

The votes took place at the Board's August meeting in Williamstown.

On Question 4, the Board reaffirmed its unanimous decision of last fall to stand behind the sick-time initiative. The proposed law, designed to improve fairness for some of the lowest-paid workers in Massachusetts, was the result of months of work by the Raise Up Massachusetts coalition.

The coalition is made up of more than 100 community, faith and labor organizations, including the MTA. The ballot question would require companies with 11 or more employees to allow workers to earn up to 40 hours of paid time a year to visit the doctor or take care of a sick family member. At companies with 10 or fewer workers, employees would earn up to 40 hours of unpaid sick time.

MTA President Barbara Madeloni said the initiative is important as a matter of social equity.

"More than 1 million working people in Massachusetts lack sick days, paid or unpaid, and they are often among the lowest-paid workers," Madeloni said. "How can we claim to care about children, families and communities when staying home with a sick child can cost you your job? We must fight for policies that support people being able to care for themselves, have full lives, and not be subject solely to the demands of employers."

Madeloni reminded MTA members to vote on all of the ballot questions as well as for their chosen candidates. "If we are to

amplify our voices as educators and as members of a democratic society, we need to participate fully," she said.

The gas tax initiative, Question 1, would eliminate the current practice of automatically indexing the gas tax to inflation.

Advocates of a "no" vote say eliminating automatic indexing would in effect threaten the safety of all who travel on Massachusetts roads and bridges. Existing and future gas tax revenues are needed to fix the state's many unsafe roads and bridges, they note.

Indexing adds about \$15 million each year to total gas tax revenues, so after five years, for example, indexing adds about \$75 million a year more in revenue than would be the case without it.

Question 2, the "bottle bill" expansion initiative, would require deposits on containers for all nonalcoholic, noncarbonated drinks in liquid form, including water and many sports drinks.

The law would not cover containers made of paper-based biodegradable materials and "aseptic multi-material packages" such as juice boxes or pouches. The law would also increase handling fees.

Proponents say a "yes" vote would result in more recycling and less trash, and they estimate that expansion of the bottle bill would bring in approximately \$20 million a year in new revenues.

Question 3, on which the Board voted to take no position, would repeal the state's 2011 Expanded Gaming Act, which allows up to three casinos and one slot machine parlor. Simulcasting of live greyhound racing would also be prohibited if the law passes.

Many proponents of a "yes" vote on the repeal argue that casinos promote gambling addiction and create other health, social and law enforcement problems. Those calling for a "no" vote say casinos create economic growth through short-term and permanent jobs and that casinos would bring in hundreds of millions of dollars a year through license fees and taxes, which under the law would have to be used for public education, local aid and infrastructure improvements.

The logo for VotEducation features a large red checkmark to the left of the word "VotEducation". The word "Vot" is in red and "Education" is in blue, both in a bold, sans-serif font.



Who will deliver for public education in Massachusetts? See for yourself.

Martha Coakley



Coakley calls for increased funding support for early childhood education and college affordability. Coakley says her agenda can be paid for with existing taxes, but does not rule out new revenues in some circumstances.¹

Coakley faults Baker for his work under Governors Bill Weld and Paul Cellucci in authoring state budget blueprints that would have cut education funding by as much as \$100 million.²

Coakley calls for ensuring early childhood education for all children, starting with low-income families in Gateway Cities.⁶

Coakley emphasizes expanded learning time and strengthening STEM education, especially computer science.⁷ She says some charter schools have fallen short, and accountability is important.⁸

Coakley says she wants to “reduce the singular emphasis on teaching to the test, so that educators are empowered to succeed.”¹¹

Coakley says that educators and their unions are essential partners in crafting effective, lasting education reforms.¹³

Coakley supports Question 4, the ballot measure requiring that employers with 11 or more workers provide earned sick time.¹⁴

Coakley proposes a \$250 million plan to provide for “full need” financial aid at community colleges to fill the gap left by existing student affordability programs.¹⁸

Coakley proposes a tax deduction for those contributing to 529 college savings plans.¹⁹

**EDUCATION
FUNDING &
REVENUES**

Baker maintains that current spending on public schools is sufficient and says he would not support new funding.³

Baker pledges he “will not raise taxes, period,” as governor. He calls for cutting certain business taxes and repealing indexing of the gas tax.⁴

Baker criticizes Coakley’s plans for early childhood education and expanded learning time as too expensive.⁵

**PREK-12
EDUCATION**

Baker wants to open 50 or more new charter schools and be more aggressive about identifying and implementing “reforms” in urban districts.⁹

Calling himself a “little bit of a contrarian,” Baker voices skepticism about major expansion of early childhood education, citing costs and what he says are uncertain benefits.¹⁰

TESTING

Baker champions the value of MCAS and believes it is important.¹²

**PROTECTING
THE RIGHTS OF
EDUCATORS AND
OTHER WORKERS**

Baker has alleged that teachers’ unions often “put their own interests above what is right for the students,”¹⁵ and he co-founded the Pioneer Institute, a right-wing advocacy group that champions concepts such as “merit pay.”¹⁶

Baker opposes Question 4, the ballot measure requiring that employers with 11 or more workers provide earned sick time.¹⁷

**HIGHER
EDUCATION**

Baker says “online learning” and “three-year degree” programs are ways to cut college costs.²⁰

Visit www.massteacher.org for information about independent candidates for governor

Check the Facts: 1. “Coakley outlines education pledges, views new taxes as last resort,” *Wicked Local Waltham*, 12/8/2013. 2. “Coakley pledges millions in new student aid,” *State House News Service*, 9/30/2014. 3. “Charlie Baker won’t pay more as Massachusetts governor,” *Walpole Times*, 2/16/2014. 4. www.charliebaker2014.com/jobs; www.charliebaker2014.com/prosperity. 5. <https://www.charliebaker2014.com/coakley-needs-to-be-honest>. 6. “In Quincy campaign stop, Coakley pushes for expansion of early education,” *Patriot Ledger*, 9/23/2014. 7. www.marthacoakley.com/issues/education. 8. “AG Martha Coakley on lessons learned, Todashev killing,” *Boston Public Radio with Braude and Eagan*, WGBH-FM, 10/2/2013. 9. “Where the gubernatorial candidates stand on education,” *Boston Globe*, 10/4/2014. 10. “Gubernatorial candidate Charlie Baker calls for DCF, education changes,” *Berkshire Eagle*, 5/1/2014. 11. www.marthacoakley.com/issues/education. 12. “Mass. schools poised to try out test that could replace MCAS,” *Lowell Sun*, 9/24/2013. 13. “AG Martha Coakley on lessons learned, Todashev killing,” *Boston Public Radio with Braude and Eagan*, WGBH-FM, 10/2/2013. 14. “Baker opposes sick-time ballot question,” *State House News Service*, 9/30/2014. 15. <http://votesmart.org/public-statement/561518/baker-union-actions-put-own-interests-above-students#.VCRFnEuFHBc>. 16. “Meet Charlie Baker,” *Boston Magazine*, August 2010; “Unions call for higher pay for teachers in poorer schools,” *Associated Press*, 11/30/2010. 17. “Baker opposes sick-time ballot question,” *State House News Service*, 9/30/2014. 18. “Coakley pledges \$225 million in new student aid,” *State House News Service*, 9/25/2014. 19. “Coakley pledges \$225 million in new student aid,” *State House News Service*, 9/25/2014. 20. <http://www.charliebaker2014.com/>.