



## President's Message

In October, Ann Marie and I attended the BOE Candidates Night at the Republican Club. We are happy to report that Pequannock schools will be in good hands, no matter who wins the election. Each candidate affirmed their beliefs in the excellence of the school system, and of their appreciation for the employees of the district. Regardless of the outcome of the election, we are confident that the candidates will be excellent board members.

This week is the NJEA Convention, and we've heard from many of you that you plan to attend. If you're there on Thursday, we encourage you to see Mark Webber (Jersey Jazzman) - his education blogs have cut through much of the rhetoric of standardized testing and of for-profit education "reform". Don't forget to stop by the MCCEA hospitality suite at the Sheraton at 3:30 - great food, friends, and drink! If you're around on Friday morning, stop by the Exhibit floor and look for Ann Marie at the Editorial Committee Booth or for me at the Youth Services Committee Booth.

On a different note: I've been reflecting back on the years I've been president. I believe the Association has always attempted to have a good relationship with the Administration, even when that proved to be very difficult. Though we may have disagreed, the superintendent and the Association understood the nature of our relationship as partners who are sometimes adversaries. And there were very few instances where we were unable to maintain that professional relationship. So I am disheartened to find the Association in a position where we are in a constant struggle to gain respect for our members. I'm concerned that valid personal

days are being denied, and I'm angry about recent grievances which could have been easily settled, had the administration shown this respect for our members. I've been concerned from the beginning of the year when, (even after I respectfully asked for it to be put back in its traditional place) our meeting was put at the very end of the day, and the Association President was not acknowledged, (as had been the practice for many years). And as more and more decisions are being made which illustrate the lack of respect for our professional judgment, and for the Association as a whole, I find myself bewildered. I'm unsure of the nature or the origin of this attitude, but be assured that your Association will fight to the best of our ability, to make sure every member is treated with respect and dignity.

Finally, please remember that it's a privilege and our constitutional right to vote. Please get to the polls on Tuesday.

*Lee Ann*

## Vice President's Message

Last month, Lee Ann and I attended the PTHS Hall of Fame Celebration. We were inspired by the five inductees and their many accomplishments in their chosen fields. They had varied backgrounds, but each of them praised the education they received in Pequannock from our outstanding faculty and staff.

As parents in town, my husband and I also recognize how fortunate we are that our children attend school here in Pequannock, and I believe the vast majority of the residents in town understand that as well.



I was disappointed that the BOE Negotiations Team was not willing to entertain any of our reasonable proposals during the negotiations process. We obviously had hoped to come to a fair settlement. When the board's proposal in September was worse than the one they presented in August, we knew filing for impasse was the right decision.

I ask that during the next few months, while we await a mediation date, we stay unified and continue to deliver the best possible education to our students. Please reach out to me at any point with questions or concerns.

*Ann Marie*

## REMINDER

**Open Enrollment for the SEHBP has been extended until November 11. You still have a few days to make changes to your medical or dental plans. Contact Ann Marie Finnen or Denise Donch if you need assistance.**

## Grievance

Diane Wolfe (HV)

The Association filed a grievance on behalf of a member who is retiring and who requested compensation for unused sick leave. Although she submitted her request far in advance of the deadline, the date she selected is not at the end of the school year or the first semester as outlined in our contract. She did request to amend her date within the five month deadline and the superintendent refused to recommend to the board that they accept a new retirement date. We also believe there is a lack of clarity in our language as to the exact date required.

Along with our PTEA President and Vice President, I presented our case to the BOE at a hearing last month. Although we have yet to receive a written response from the board, at the meeting following the hearing, the BOE voted to affirm the superintendent's decision. Once we receive written confirmation we will file for arbitration.

For all members considering retirement, since the Board Office will not advise you if there is an error in your retirement letter, we suggest you include the following: "I wish to collect payment for unused sick days, per Article 18. Please confirm within three days that my requested date is correct and kindly do not include my retirement date on a BOE agenda before doing so."



## Philanthropic Account

Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)

Thank you to all members who purchased Yankee Candles or attended the recent PTEA Day at Sunset Pub and Grill. Candles will be delivered the week of November 14. Thank you also to those schools which have held Denim Days to support our fund. Several schools are planning this for November. Please be on the lookout for more information. We are also excited about plans to partner with Tiff's of Pequannock. I will forward details soon about generous discounts for PTEA members, and opportunities to support our scholarship fund while enjoying food and drinks at Tiff's!

## Upcoming Dates

**Nov 10-11** – NJEA Convention in Atlantic City

**Nov 15** – PTEA Rep Council

**Nov 16** – MCCEA Rep Council

**Nov 17** – County ESP Celebration at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany

**Dec 10** – MCCEA Winter Fun Fest for children in Morris County

Visit [www.mccea.com](http://www.mccea.com) for more information and to register

## PTEA Apparel

Apparel orders will be delivered the week of November 14. Thank you to all members who purchased apparel with our PTEA logo. If you are still interested in placing an order, or have your own item you would like embroidered, please contact Ann Marie. We are encouraging all members to wear PTEA apparel on Fridays to demonstrate unity in our Association. All items are priced at cost.

