



## President's Message

I think Congress should declare February "National Hug a School Employee Month." At this point in the year, if you are like me, you are sick to death of everything PARCC. We could use some inspiration as we take another look at our SGO's and read yet another write-up of yet another observation.

I'd like to think that there are people lined up waiting to give us the encouragement and the recognition we all deserve. I'd like to believe that, just maybe, the public tide is turning away from the vilification of public school staff, and is beginning to embrace the idea that the public schools and the people who work in them have provided the foundation for some of the greatest thinkers, scientists, entrepreneurs, artists, musicians and writers in the world.

That's why the idea that we need to embrace untested and poorly constructed standards which align with an even more poorly designed test is a fundamentally flawed one. It negates the data that shows that American Public education, and NJ Education in particular, is not only working, it is working very well. One recent measure of public school success has shown that NJ is number 2 in the nation in the quality of their public education.

On January 7, I testified at a State Board of Education Meeting about the Common Core and PARCC. If you are interested, you can read my testimony, [here](#). Your Pequannock Township Education Association is also crafting a statement to address our concerns about PARCC testing. We welcome your input.

We would also like to host a viewing of the movie, "Standardized: Lies, Money, and Civil Rights" for the community and our members. We will be sharing information about this, soon.

It may take a while for everyone to appreciate and understand the importance of our work, so until Congress agrees with my proposition, remember that your job is vitally important, and please accept my appreciation for all of the work that you do.

*Lee Ann*

### Teaming up for Scholarships!

This Friday, January 30 the staff of all three elementary schools will be supporting our PTEA Philanthropic Fund by "Teaming Up for Scholarships." In exchange for wearing favorite team jerseys and jeans, staff members will make a donation to the fund. This year we hope to award more than \$5000 in scholarships. PTHS raised over \$200 last month on their denim day. Thank you to all members who have contributed. You can always send cash or checks made out PTEA Philanthropic Fund to Ann Marie Finnen (SJG). Also, contact her if you would like a payroll deduction form.

### Health Insurance Contributions

On January 1, premium rates for our health insurance increased. The new monthly rates can be found [here](#). In addition, the pay increases that go into effect this month (12 month employees), or next (10 month employees) could move you into a different level on the [contribution charts](#). Remember, if you were a PTEA member prior to the expiration of our contract (June, 2013) you are on the second year of the phase in. All staff hired after that point, are fully phased in on Year 4.

If you have any questions, please contact Negotiation Chairs, Ann Marie Finnen (SJG) or Josh Danziger (PV).



## **Scholarship Update**

Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)

The PTEA Scholarship Committee has revised our scholarship application form. Applicants will be asked to respond to one of two brief writing prompts. The scholarships are open to all graduating seniors who have maintained the requisite grade point average (77). Children of PTEA members are especially encouraged to apply.

To raise funds, in addition to events in each building, we will host a Baked Potato Night and we will once again be signed up with Yankee Candle for their Spring Sale. More info about the candle sale will be forwarded soon, and orders will be received in time for Easter and Mothers Day. Thank you to all members for your generosity.

## **Baked Potato Night!**

PTEA's first Baked Potato Night to support the Philanthropic Fund will be held in the high school cafeteria on Friday, March 20 from 4-6:30, before the opening night of the musical. Enjoy a baked potato with all the toppings, salad and dessert for a low price and support our scholarship fund. Information about tickets will be distributed to all members. Please consider supporting this event, and stay to see our high school production of *Godspell*. Look for more information as the date approaches.

## **In Case You Missed It:**

NJEA President, Wendell Steinhauer, along with Susan Cauldwell from Save Our Schools NJ, was a Star Ledger Guest Columnist this past weekend. Read their piece about the PARCC tests [here](#).

## **Congratulations to our Teachers of the Year and Education Services Staff Members of the Year!**



**Valerie Munro, Patty Sedran – HV**  
**Dana Vuolo, Lorraine LaTempa – NB**  
**Eileen Ciavarella, Susan Soroko – SJG**  
**Erin Codey, Terri Praschak – PV**  
**John Chorazy, Betsy Crocker – PTHS**

**You inspire us every day!**



## Third Annual Optical Fair March 24 in the PTHS Cafeteria



Once again, your PTEA will partner with the Optical Academy to host an optical fair for all members, their families and the residents of Pequannock Township. Join us on Tuesday, March 24 at PTHS, beginning at 3:00. Come visit Optical Academy's Complete On-Site Optical Shop  
Eye Exams \$30 – Glasses starting at \$29 – Sunglasses – Contacts –  
---ALL Insurance Accepted -- NO INSURANCE NECESSARY ---  
-Light dinner will be provided-  
Please register: Call 1-800-530-2730

Hope to see you there!



On December 4, at 7PM, your PTEA partnered with the Pequannock Municipal Alliance and Board of Education to present a drug-awareness/self-esteem program by John Morello called "Dirt." We provided snacks and free copies of the book "Buzzed" by Cynthia Kuhn.

### Upcoming Dates

**Jan 30** – "Teaming up for Scholarships"

**Feb 18** – XYZ's of Retirement  
4:30 @ Zeris Inn  
call to register 973-366-0202

**Feb 19** – PTEA Rep Council/  
Friends of Education Celebration

**Feb 24** – MCCEA workshop  
"Teacher Evaluation and Professional Learning"  
call to register 973-366-0202

**Feb 18** – XYZ's of Retirement  
4:30 @ Zeris Inn  
call to register 973-366-0202

**March 18** – PTEA Rep Council

**March 20** – Baked Potato Night

**March 24** – Optical Fair

**March 25** – General Membership