



President's Message

Many of us have been following the news regarding Cami Anderson's "One Newark" plan. This is not just about wresting power away from a State controlled district. Anderson, appointed and supported by Governor Christie, promises to illegally destroy seniority and tenure, ignoring both when firing teachers. In the fight to save tenure, your NJEA co-authored the current legislation that specifically prevents such a thing. So far, Anderson's plan has been thwarted (helped, in part by testimony by your NJEA President, Wendell Steinhauer and our old friend, Vice-President Marie Blistan), but should she succeed, we can effectively say goodbye to tenure and seniority in New Jersey.

You have a part to play, here: the NJEA website (www.njea.org) has many opportunities for you to be involved in the fight against Cami Anderson. You can, as Ann Marie and I have, attend a rally or a Newark Board Meeting, or you can simply write letters to legislators to tell them that you believe Anderson has no right to manipulate the law to achieve her own ends.

Another issue of great importance is NJEA's call to delay or halt the new evaluation procedures, specifically the over-reliance on standardized test scores. Last week, your NJEA President and Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer Sean Spiller, along with about a hundred other educators, testified at a State BOE hearing and asked that the process be halted until further study can be done.

I was honored to be asked to testify on behalf of all of you who sent in your testing and evaluation stories. Well over a thousand letters from educators all over the state were presented to the State BOE members.

Again, you have a part to play: You can still tell your story via the NJEA webpage. I encourage all of you who have not spoken out to do so.

As members of our local and of our larger Association, events in cities across the state and, indeed the nation, have the potential to affect every one of us. Each of us, in our own way, also has the power to work to protect the educational and workplace rights for which members before us have fought. I invite all of you to participate in whichever way you can; rally, write letters, share information. We are a union of individuals, brought together by our common passion for education, and by our camaraderie as colleagues. These are our strengths and we should never be afraid to use them.

Lee Ann

Vice President's Message

Your Association has been busy these wintery months - honoring community members for their dedication to our schools, supporting our education colleagues around the state and receiving valuable training to better serve all of you. Most importantly, though, we have been listening to our members, and responding to needs as they arise. Sometimes actions are taken behind the scenes, and sometimes strong, public statements are made. We are committed to acting in the best interests of our members. I would like to thank those AR's and committee chairs who will be stepping down or retiring this year. It takes many hands and minds to serve the needs of the entire membership. I invite all members who have not recently done so to roll up your sleeves and join us in advocating for work conditions that benefit our students and our colleagues. Happy Spring!

Ann Marie



General Membership Meeting Wednesday, March 19, 3:30 pm PTHS Cafeteria

Please join us to get the latest updates from your Association leadership. We will also take nominations for PTEA President and Vice President. The Representative Council has nominated Lee Ann Brensinger and Ann Marie Finnen to continue to serve in these positions. Anyone interested in running for either position can contact their AR, or be nominated from the floor at the General Membership meeting. Snacks will be served.

PTHS Peer Group Sponsors “A Night of Comedy”

After the general membership meeting, consider coming back to the PTHS Cafeteria at 6:30 for this annual event sponsored by HOPE and the Municipal Alliance. Three New York City comedians will “take the stage” and provide an enjoyable evening of first rate comedy. Admission is \$5, and coffee and dessert will be served. Contact Maureen Montalbetti (PTHS) for more information.

Negotiations Helene Zablocki, PTHS

The contract has been thoroughly reviewed by all members of the Negotiations Team. A sidebar agreement, which will be discussed at the General Membership meeting, was also negotiated with the Superintendent and approved by the BOE at the March 10 meeting. It will now go to the printers, and we hope to have a copy to each member by the end of March. We thank all members for their patience while every letter and number was checked and corrected.

Friends of Education

The PTEA held its annual Friends of Education Celebration on March 6 at the Regency House in Pequannock. Mrs. Terry Gaffey, Mrs. Diane Fox and Mrs. Lisa Jones were honored and recognized for their dedication to our schools and students. We thank these women for partnering with our teachers and staff in order to create an outstanding learning environment for our students. We also thank all members who submitted nomination letters, as well as Karen Schiffel (SJG) who is stepping down as PRIDE Chair after many years of service to our Association. Perhaps you would like to get involved with PRIDE events next year. Contact Lee Ann or Ann Marie if you are interested. NJEA will provide training.



PTEA President, Lee Ann Brensinger, Vice President Ann Marie Finnen, Terry Gaffey, Lisa Jones, Diane Fox and PRIDE Chair Karen Schiffel (SJG)

On Tuesday, March 18, join educators, students and parents in Newark at a Rally to oppose the “One Newark” plan. Meet at Broad and Market Street at 4:00 pm. Contact Lee Ann or Ann Marie for more info.



Grievance

Ann Marie Finnen, SJG

Please be aware that there have been several cases of administrators placing letters of a disciplinary nature in members' personnel files. Although you are entitled to Association representation during meetings to discuss such letters, the administration is not obligated to offer you a rep. It is your responsibility to request one if you have any reason to believe the meeting is disciplinary in nature.

Your association recommends that all members, once a year, visit the BOE office to review your file. You may not remove any item, but you may make copies.

MCCEA Mall Project

Your PTEA is once again participating in the Morris County Mall Project, held at Rockaway Mall from Sunday, March 16 through Sunday, March 23. Come out and see the beautiful and impressive projects and artwork completed by your students! Janet Drashinsky (SJG) has organized this year's display, and we thank her along with all of the members who have contributed their students' work and/or are planning to help set up or take down.

Upcoming Dates

March 16-23 – Mall Project at Rockaway Mall

March 19 – General Membership, PTHS

March 22 – Optical Fair at Boys and Girls Club
Call to register – 1-800-530-2730

March 26 – MCCEA Rep Council

March 29 – NJEA Exceptional Children Conference, Princeton Marriot

March 29 – MCCEA "Wicked" Matinee Trip
Last call: 973-366-0202

April 4-5 – MCCEA Professional Development Overnight Conference

April 9 – PTEA Rep Council

April 30 – MCCEA Negotiations Workshop
Zeris Inn, Mountain Lakes

June 2 – County Retirement Dinner
Meadow Wood Manor, Randolph

Philanthropic Account

We continue to collect donations and explore fundraising possibilities for our Scholarship Fund. This year, despite the generosity of a great many members, we remain short of our goal. We are investigating different ideas for this Spring and next year, and would appreciate input and assistance from members at each building. Please contact Ann Marie Finnen (SJG) to get involved or to make a contribution.

Winter Leadership

On Friday and Saturday, February 28 and March 1, eight members of your PTEA Representative Council attended training provided by NJEA. We thank these leaders for giving up a large part of their weekend, to learn how to better serve all members in the areas of Grievance, Education Law, Negotiations, Combating Corporate Reform, and building level representation.

Rhett Eveland and Lee Ann Brensinger (PTHS)
Patty Walker, Sue Flood and Susan Quagliana (PV)
Sally Belmont and Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)
Diane Wolfe (NB)