

The Springfield Teacher

The UNITY newsletter of the Springfield Education Association 1000 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA 01109
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President's Message

As we approach the end of the school year, I want to wish all of you a safe, restful, joyous, and rejuvenating summer break. **You deserve it!** In my thirty-three years of working in the Springfield Public Schools, this has been, without a doubt, the most devastating circumstances Springfield teachers have faced.

Across the nation, there is a perfect storm descending upon public education. Springfield is in the eye of this storm. The catalysts of this storm are chief executives in the White House and the Massachusetts State House who are out of touch with the people they are supposed to be serving. This storm is fortified by laws and regulations that are incredibly unjust.

Here in Massachusetts, the Governor's Board of Education's implementation of the President's reenactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also called No Child Left Behind or NCLB) calls for 100 percent of all the children in every school, regardless of disability or linguistic challenges, to reach proficiency on MCAS. Proficiency on MCAS, when compared to nationally normed tests such as the Stanford 10 and IOWA, is in the 80th percentile. This means that by the year 2014, in order to meet AYP, every child in a school must be able to outperform 80 percent of the rest of the children in the nation. Many of our schools are not on track to meet this standard (surprise, surprise). These schools are facing sanctions because they are not on track. Eventually, every school in the Commonwealth will find themselves in this situation.

The following is just some of what the law is doing. Fifteen to twenty percent of our Chapter I funds have been set aside and diverted from these schools and given to private-for-profit vendors to provide tutorial services. These vendors do not have to hire licensed, highly qualified teachers as our schools are required to do. They face none of the MCAS accountability that our schools face. They do not have to report to the community the progress of the students they serve as our schools are required to do. There is also a section of this law that will soon be labeling our schools as "persistently dangerous." That is because we are doing what is appropriate to keep schools safe for students and staff by suspending students for weapons, assault, assault and battery, and drug possession, etc. I will continue to insist that our Student Code of Conduct is followed, even though doing so may very well have the Department of Education labeling some of our schools as "persistently dangerous."

continued on next page

President's Message, Continued from page 1

Never before has it been so important for all teachers to stand together and oppose the unjust situation facing them. Teachers across the nation, the state, and in Springfield especially must work together in unity to change the unjust and underfunded mandates in the NCLB. We must unseat the elected officials who are unwilling to make the changes necessary to have a fair and just accountability system for our students and schools. We must unseat the elected officials who have seduced many of our colleagues with promises of cutting taxes, maintaining essential services, and an affordable health care system. We must unseat the elected officials blinded by corporate influences who are willing to mortgage our children's future and sacrifice our quality of life on the altar of no new taxes.

Yours in unity,



ARE YOU REQUIRED TO TAKE THE MASSACHUSETTS TESTS FOR EDUCATOR LICENSURE? HELP HAS ARRIVED!

What kind of help? Tutors will conduct help sessions to prepare you for the Communication and Literacy Skills portion of the test. The focus of the sessions will be on reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, and dictation.

Where? All of the tutorial sessions will be held at the Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center.

When? See the schedule for 2003-2004 below. The sessions will run from 3:30-5:00. You may come in at any time during those hours.

What is the cost? FREE!

**SCHEDULE OF TUTORIAL SESSIONS
2003-2004**

TEST: **July 24** **(Register by June 11
to avoid fee.)**

Tutorial Sessions: June 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

Test Registration Bulletins are available at the Office of the Licensure Mentors located at the PD Center, area colleges, or can be sent to your home if you call (413) 256-2892. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Chamberlain or Linda Christofori (750-2148).

***JOBS WITH JUSTICE
IN SPRINGFIELD SCHOOLS***

So, how are you spending your summer vacation? Whether you'll be at home, the beach, or another job, we hope you'll consider being there for someone else's fight for a "job with justice."

Jobs With Justice (www.jwj.org) is a national organization that has created a network of local coalitions connecting labor organizations, other organizations and individuals who work together on workplace and community justice campaigns. The SEA is one such member organization, belonging to the *Western Massachusetts Jobs With Justice Coalition* (www.massjwj.net.) By the way, the *Jobs With Justice* web site has information in Spanish, too.

Many people get involved by taking the *Jobs With Justice* "I'll Be There" pledge. By taking the pledge, you promise to "be there" five times a year at a demonstration or on the picket line, standing up for someone else's fight for a job, a living wage, or the right to unionize. We can protect our own rights and keep our contract fair by standing in solidarity with other workers. When workers win, we all win.

Some recent activities across the Bay State have included supporting nursing home workers at Mercy Care here in Springfield, inviting Red Sox fans to support janitors at Fenway Park, and a big campaign focused on health care benefits for everyone.

Feel free to contact me for more information or to share ideas about how *Jobs With Justice* might make Springfield schools better places to work.

Scott McGinley
SEA Jobs With Justice Liaison
Zanetti Montessori School
Scott.mcg@earthlink.net

WHAT'S OUR UNION DOING FOR US?

Mary Chamberlain

June 18th is rapidly approaching. I can almost hear the collective sigh of relief because of the troubled times in which we are living. Whether you are working or playing this summer, please take time to relax and renew. I extend my wishes to all members for a happy, healthy, and revitalizing summer.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank specific people for doing the hard work of the union.

I would like to thank Nora Todd at the MTA for her diligent work on licensure regulations and her availability to help new teachers. Her latest advice is about earning an approved Master's degree at the initial stage of licensure for Early Childhood, Elementary, and Moderate Disabilities (SPED) licenses. Although DOE wants teachers to get a Master's heavy in content, a specific content Master's generally will not be acceptable. For example, a Reading Master's will probably not be acceptable for the three areas of licensure. However, to confuse matters even more, there may be a few Reading Master's acceptable for an Elementary license because the elementary requirements have been included in the Reading Master's program. Nora's advice, assume nothing about a Master's. Before you enroll in a Master's program, ask, "Is this Master's program DOE approved for a Professional license in (name of license and grade level of license)? Do not invest a cent until the answer is an unequivocal yes. And then, double-check on the DOE web site.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Executive and Legislative Board members and all committee chairs and committee members for the many hours they have given to do the work of the union.

I am especially indebted to the committees I chair:

Success Press:

Thanks to Sharyn Kakley, Sheryl Stanton, and Nina Tepper

Meline Kasparian Scholarship Committee:

Thanks to Lisa Bakowski, John Kagan, Al LeMay, Lynn Russell, and Sally Suomala

Finance Advisory Committee:

Thanks to Diane Brouillard, Gail Carneiro, Mary Scherpa, Ronnie Tillman, and Committee Advisors: MaryAnn Dion, Treasurer and Sue Fielding, Assistant Treasurer

New Teacher Committee:

Thanks to Amy Carithers, Linda Christofori, Marya Fonsh, Nicole Fusco, Geogina Geck, Christopher Lane, and Ronnie Tillman. To Ronnie, a special thanks for continuing the Retiree/New Teacher mentoring program

Another committee I would like to single out is the Negotiating Team. As an SEA member, I personally would like to thank all members and their chairperson, Peter Ortega, for staying the course through these troubled financial times. I truly appreciate the hard work you do, the many hours you put in, and the professionalism you exhibit when you come in contact with discontent. I encourage all SEA members to lobby the people in charge of the money, starting with state representatives and senators.

Because of the many devastating lay-off notices that went out on May 14, 2004, I would like my last words of the 2003-2004 school year's *Springfield Teacher* be directed to the new teachers. Although so much around us is gloom and doom, it is important to maintain optimism in our hopes that all are recalled. The new teachers give our school system so much of the energy and the idealism necessary to move our system forward. With this in mind and to say thank you for your hard work, the two Educator Licensure Mentors and the building-based mentors hosted a New Teacher Appreciation Reception at the Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center on June 2. For those of you who could not attend the reception, we want to thank you for the work that you have done for the children of Springfield.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nancy S. Fitchin

The Professional Development Budget has been used in full for this year. If money has already been set aside for you, please submit all paperwork and receipts prior to June 8, 2004. Reimbursements for this year's professional development will not be available once school is out. If you attend a conference or course during the summer, remember you can apply for funds during the 2004/2005 academic year, if you are eligible according to the guidelines. **Applications will not be accepted until September.** You may access the guidelines and application online at www.seateachers.com.

The Professional Development Library has acquired a few volumes that may be of interest to our members. Accountability for Learning How Teachers and School Leaders Can Take Charge by Douglas B. Reeves discusses practices, policies, and tools in an accountability system. Education and Public Health Natural Partners in Learning for Life by Jenny Smith addresses the relationship between health and education and how they support one another. Classroom Management that works Research-Based Strategies for Every Teacher by Robert J. Marzano with Jana S. Marzano and Debra J. Pickering discusses perspectives, responsibilities, and relationships. Please feel free to check these out and review them.

A special note of gratitude goes to the members of the SEA Professional Development Committee for 2004. The members are: Margaret Ashe, Tim Collins, Maureen O'Shea, and Lesley Webb. Thanks also to Kate Fenton for listening to us and working to incorporate our suggestions.

Congratulations to Fran Shute, this year's Patricia Hunter Teacher Leader Award winner. Kudos to finalists, Paula Moran and Sheryl Stanton.

One final plea is being made - **RE-CERTIFY**, if you haven't already, and don't forget to register for the August Professional Development Days. You can register on-line for professional development on Springfield Public School's web site. Have a great summer.

FALL CONTRACT COURSES

The current Unit A Contract calls for the Springfield School Committee to offer two graduate courses per semester for staff members. The two course offerings for the Fall 2004 semester appear below:

Understanding the Reading Process and Application for the Struggling Reader

Day/Time: Wednesdays 3:30 - 6:30

Venue: Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center

Course Description: This course will present an overview of the reading process in detail including the five components of reading: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Comprehension, Fluency, and Vocabulary. Participants will read articles containing current research and then connect that to their daily practice which would include lesson planning, assignments, diagnosing, and providing interventions.

Combating the Literacy Ceiling

Day/Time: Thursdays 3:30 - 6:30

Venue: Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center

Course Description: The objective of this course will be to provide a better understanding of the reading continuum, word study, and comprehension. Participants will familiarize themselves with the skills needed by students in order to become fluent readers and approach reading different texts in all content areas. Participants will conduct a case study of a struggling reader and conclude with a presenting a menu of interventions and accommodations created for the case study student.

Enrollment information from Central Office will be posted in your building on August 30, 2004. Application letters received by Central Office prior to August 30, 2004 will not be accepted.

A CALL FROM TIM COLLINS

The AFL/CIO is holding a labor walk in New Hampshire supporting John Kerry on June 12, 2004. We will be going door-to-door talking to union members who are registered voters, encouraging them to vote for John Kerry. If you are interested in joining me, the bus will leave from the parking lot of the Plantation Inn of New England in Chicopee (across from the Springfield entrance/exit of the Mass. Pike) at 7:30 a.m. and will return at approximately 5:00 p.m. Please call (413) 781-4272 and leave a message if you would like to join me.

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2004-2005 SCHOOL YEAR

August 30 – September 2	Monday-Thursday	Four (4) Teacher Work Days
September 3	Friday	Convocation
September 6	Monday	Schools Closed – Observance of Labor Day
September 7	Tuesday	School Begins – All Students in Grades 1 – 12
September 7 - 10	Tuesday-Friday	Kindergarten Screening
September 13	Monday	Kindergarten Students Begin
September 14	Tuesday	All Preschool Students Begin
October 11	Monday	Schools Closed – Observance of Columbus Day
November 11	Thursday	Schools Closed - Observance of Veteran’s Day
November 24	Wednesday	Schools Close for Thanksgiving Vacation. Dismissal Covered by Bulletin.
November 29	Monday	Schools Reopen
December 22	Wednesday	Schools Close for Holiday Vacation. Dismissal Covered by Bulletin.
January 3	Monday	Schools Reopen
January 17	Monday	Schools Closed – Martin L. King Jr. Birthday
February 18	Friday	Schools Close for Midwinter Vacation
February 28	Monday	Schools Reopen
March 25	Friday	Schools Closed – Observance of Good Friday
April 15	Friday	Schools Close for Spring Vacation
April 25	Monday	Schools Reopen
May 30	Monday	Schools Closed - Observance of Memorial Day

Because the three Teacher Work Days, which have normally been scheduled during the school year, have not been negotiated into the calendar as of May 26, 2004, the last day of school cannot be determined at this time.

2003-2004 LEGISLATIVE BOARD

Meeting Attendance

Nine Meetings were held so far in the 2003-2004 school year.

School	# of Meetings Attended	School	# of Meetings Attended
Balliet	9	Warner	9
Beal	1	Washington	5
Boland	8	White	2
Bowles	8	Zanetti	6
Brightwood	7	Brookings	7
Brunton	7	Chestnut	8
DeBerry	5	Duggan	1
Dorman	9	Forest Park	6
Dryden Memorial	6	Kennedy	7
Ells	7	Kiley	8
Freedman	5	Van Sickle	7
Gerena	9	Commerce	7
Glenwood	7	Putnam	8
Glickman	7	Science & Technology	8
Harris	8	Springfield Central	6
Homer	6	Bridge Academy	0
Indian Orchard	9	Central Office	7
Johnson	5	Early Childhood Screening	0
Kensington	8	Island Pond Pre-K	2
Liberty	9	ECOS	0
Lincoln	4	MCDI	1
Lynch	9	Parent Info Center	4
Milton Bradley	9	New Leadership	2
Pottenger	0	SAGE	0
Sumner	6	School of Pro Development	8
Talmadge	5	Springfield Academy	0
Walsh	4	Springfield High School	9

After reading May's issue of the *Springfield Teacher*, Antonette Pepe called to clarify her statement regarding the new secretarial position at Central Office.

Antonette Pepe said to Dr. Burke and the School Committee: "I have read your memo of layoffs for 120 teachers, 25 paras, 2 school psychologists, and an assistant superintendent (for which I'm not sorry). But, I have also read about a posting for a new secretary for Connie O'Hare with a salary between \$40,000 and \$45,000 a year. You already hired a temp for personnel and a number of consultants. David Cruise did this by himself for years. The average secretary earns between \$22,000 and \$26,000 a year. Yet, at a time when many Special Education classes are out of compliance due to over crowding, rather than hire one new teacher or classroom aides, you are spending the money on another secretary?"

**POP
QU?Z**

by
Peter Dupuis





Meline Kasparian Scholarship

The committee to select the winners of the Meline Kasparian Scholarship for this year met recently and awarded scholarships to the following individuals:

William Dawkins is presently a senior at the High School of Commerce. This Fall he will be attending Emerson College majoring in Communications/Video Production.

Jonathan Dziok is a senior at the High School of Science and Technology and will be attending Embry Riddle Aeronautical University majoring in Aeronautical Science/Air Traffic Control.

Adam Ferrarini is currently a senior at Minnechaug Regional High School and will be attending the University of Massachusetts – Isenberg School of Business with an undeclared major.

Rachael Jacobson is a senior at East Longmeadow High School and is attending New York University this Fall majoring in Theater.

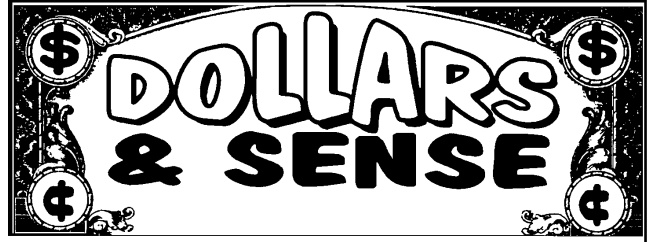
Matthew Kakley is presently a senior at Springfield Central High School and will be attending Boston University with a major in Television and Film.

Kara Koceniak is a senior at East Longmeadow High School and will be attending Assumption College with an undeclared major.

Kathryn Premont is currently a senior at Longmeadow High School. She will be attending College of Saint Rose majoring in Speech Pathology/Communication Disorders.

Thanks to the donation made by David Cruise, two additional scholarships were awarded this year. The \$1,000 awards are presented at the SEA's June Legislative Board meeting at Lido Restaurant.

Congratulations to you all!



All committee chairs and committee members who receive stipends should turn in their logs, detailing hours of work, no later than Friday, June 11, 2004. The stipends must be paid out of the budget for the 2003-2004 fiscal year, which ends on June 30, 2004. I need time to do the paperwork prior to that date.

Also, for anyone receiving checks from the SEA, such as members attending Professional Development Conferences, it is critical to cash these checks prior to June 30, 2004. Again, this impacts the end of the fiscal year paperwork and bookkeeping.

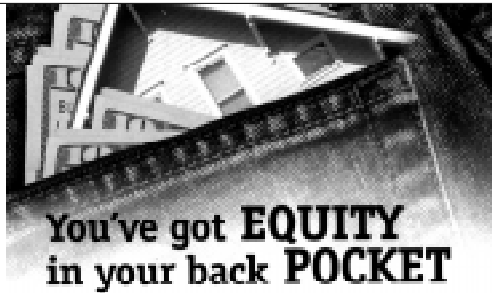
*Thank you,
MaryAnn Dion*

TIPS FOR TEACHERS **Keep this handy for August!**

Once again, here are some tips for the month taken from the MTA's published Teachers' Calendar/Planner.

Preparing for a New School Year

- Review assignments and curriculum requirements.
- Rough out a sequence of units and lessons.
- Review 2003-2004 files and flag for specific use in 2004-2005.
- If possible, get into your building prior to the opening of school.
- If you have an assigned classroom, get it ready for the first day. No matter what subject or grade level you teach, this is a must.
- Be sure all first day lists, protocols, procedures, and materials are ready.
- If you are in a new building or assignment, introduce yourself.
- Offer to help new colleagues. You're an experienced teacher!



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Think the Refinane Boom Is Over, Think Again!!!

	BEFORE	AFTER
House Payment	\$665	\$645
Car Payment	\$325	\$0
Credit Cards	\$300	\$0
Personal Loan	\$181	\$0
Total	\$1471	\$645

Total Monthly Savings \$826

Are you in Pain?

Did you Know:

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*Have a
safe & happy
summer*

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

- Kudos to the following Executive Board members who had perfect attendance at the Executive Board meetings this year: Marilyn Daly, Gerena; Susan Fielding, Balliet; Jennifer Stogner, Warner; Ronnie Tillman, Indian Orchard.
- Kudos to the following Association Representatives who had perfect attendance at the Legislative Board meetings this year: Susan Fielding, Balliet; Margaret Ketchum, Dorman; Mary Scherpa and Ronnie Tillman, Indian Orchard; Karen Mangine and Sally Suomala, Lynch; Elaine Karalekas, Milton Bradley; and Diane Ascioti, Springfield High.
- Kudos to the following Association Representatives who together made perfect attendance for their school at this year's Legislative Board meetings: Susan Fielding and Gail Carneiro, Balliet; Jeannie Budd and Margaret Ketchum, Dorman; Marilyn Daly*, Richard Doiron, Claire LaBonte, Linda Pope, Maria Silva, Marilyn Spedding, Alan Suher, Gerena; Mary Scherpa and Ronna Tillman, Indian Orchard; Phyllis Bryar and Collette Proctor, Liberty; Karen Mangine and Sally Suomala, Lynch; Yvette Bishop-Ramos*, Ruth Franco, and Elaine Karalekas, Milton Bradley; Mary Haseltine and Jennifer Stogner, Warner; Diane Ascioti, Springfield High.

**Although the individual was not a Legislative Board member for the 2003 – 2004 school year, their attendance at the meeting(s) helped their school achieve perfect attendance.*

- Kudos to Joe and Pam Lyons, and Nina Tepper for their letter to the editor which appeared in *The Republican* on May 24 and May 30, 2004 respectively.
- Kudos to the Springfield teachers who attended this year's MTA Convention. In spite of their unified opposition to an MTA dues increase, the increase passed. The Springfield delegation fought hard for you.
- Kudos to the four School Committee members eligible to vote on our Contract! (Ken Shea and Marjorie Hurst are ineligible to vote because a family member is employed in Unit A.) In spite of opposition from Mayor Ryan, **Tom Ashe, Nick Fyntrilakis, Jennifer Murphy and Antonette**

Continued on page 10

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT, con't

- Pepe** stepped up to the plate and delivered for Unit A members of Springfield by **voting for the retirement buyout**. By offering this benefit to members who have given a lifetime of service to the children of Springfield, this will also benefit those of us still employed by guaranteeing that all savings (\$2M+) from this program will be spent only on Unit A. This will help save jobs and help minimize the impact the current layoffs will have on class size.
- It's time to get WILD again! WILD'S 18th Summer Institute at Clark University in Worcester, MA is being held Friday and Saturday evening, June 25 and 26, 2004. Contact Nina Lessin Joseph, WILD SI Coordinator at 617-426-0520.
 - **WILLIAMSTOWN 2004 IS ON THE HORIZON!** MTA's annual summer conference will be held Sunday, August 8 through Thursday, August 12, 2004 at Williams College, Williamstown, MA. The conference is open to all MTA members. The Summer Conference brochure was sent to every member via the April/May issue of *MTA Today*. Additional copies of the brochure and registration forms are available from MTA/CEQPD by calling 617-878-8300, by e-mail at jmorrissey@massteacher.org, or by visiting www.massteacher.org. If you are interested, please **send your registration form to the SEA office by Tuesday, June 8, 2004**. The SEA will fund a limited number of participants.
 - **MTA NEW TEACHER PROGRAM Summer Conference 2004** is being held August 8 through August 12, 2004 on the campus of Williams College. This five-day program is designed for MTA members in their first five years of teaching. For more information go to www.massteacher.org or see your latest issue of *MTA Today*. If you are interested in attending, please **send your registration form to the SEA office by Tuesday, June 8, 2004**. The SEA will fund a limited number of participants.
 - MASCD invites you to enroll in one of the premier professional development programs of the summer. The two day program is being held Thursday and Friday, June 24 and 25, 2004 at the Cape Codder Resort in Hyannis, MA. For complete program information go to www.mascd.org. If you have questions, contact Mary Forte Hayes at mascd@mascd.org.
- Every day children are bullied by their peers. The NEA Health Information Network and the federal government are promoting *15+ Make Time To Listen, Take Time To Talk...About Bullying*, a multi-media initiative that helps guide children through conversation toward more positive activities and friendships. For details, visit www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus
 - One of NEA's more enduring listserv is "Works4Me." The listserv is a community discussion forum that provides weekly tips and lesson ideas. Subscribe by sending an e-mail with the words "subscribe works4me" in the message box to lyris@list.nea.org. An online library of tips is available at www.nea.org/helpfrom/growing/works4me/library.html.
 - NEA's efforts to support high standards for teachers are challenged by policy makers looking for quick fixes. Learn about many services and resources, including grants, teacher testing support, professional development, advanced certification, and more. E-mail mberrian@nea.org for *NEA's Teaching Quality Agenda* brochure.
 - Are you wondering how recent changes to ESEA/NCLB affect students with disabilities, why full funding of IDEA is important, why special education vouchers are a false promise, or why paperwork is such a burden under the law? Check out the new IDEA Briefs on NEA's Web site at: www.nea.org/specialed/allbriefs.html.