



THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT

OF '76

1700 SANSOM STREET • SUITE 903 • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 • 215-568-4175 • VOLUME XXVII

No. 2 - Fax 215-568-8270 - E-mail (naest.naest@verizon.net) - web site (www.act1776.com) - October 2006



From the
President's Desk

A WORD OF CAUTION

No one disputes the growing importance, not to mention the increasing intrusion, of computers and the Internet in our daily lives. The world is instantaneously available. However, with this age of My Space.com and You Tube, there are certain issues of which teachers should be aware. There can be serious problems; some can even be job-threatening.

Over the past several years, the Association has accompanied teachers who have been asked to meet with school and diocesan administrators concerning the use of the Internet both in school and at home. There have been two incidents so far this school year.

Use of the Internet and e-mail at school brings its own set of caveats, since you are using your employer's computer, and workplace transactions can be monitored. If you use e-mail to give or check assignments, always keep the message class and curriculum related. Do not use a "chat room" approach and never place students on your personal e-mail list.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

Outside of school, there is a separate area known as off-duty conduct, sometimes, misconduct. This is not about restricting your personal freedom. If you have created or are thinking about creating a personal web site, that is your decision. However, please remember who you are, what your occupation (vocation) is and by whom you are employed. Be extremely careful about the words that you use, the comments that you make and any photographs that you post.

When in doubt about any of the above, please think before you act. It might be helpful to ask a fellow teacher to look at what you intend to write, post, etc.

As you are reading this, I am sure that many of you are saying to yourselves, "She has got to be kidding! Who doesn't know this?" My answer is, "More people than you would imagine." In fact, this might be a good time for all teachers to review their computer files both in school and at home and, please, don't hesitate to use the "delete" key.

Finally, if you should be asked to attend a meeting with school or Archdiocesan administrators and the meeting concerns the use of computers, the Internet and/or e-mail, please make sure your Senior Delegate or other Association representation is present.



Seniority Lists Posted

Article V, Section 1a states "On or before October 31 of each school year, the Secondary School System shall supply to the Association and shall post in the individual schools a complete listing of all teachers in the Secondary School System including those on approved leaves of absence arranged according to system seniority and school seniority."

"Teachers shall have until December 15 to call attention in writing to errors or file grievances with the local school administration concerning their positions on the seniority roster."

ACT School Visit Schedule 2006-2007

NAME OF SCHOOL	ACT VISITOR	DATE	DAY
Bonner-Prendergast (Del. 445)	Rita & Irene	November 7 & March 20	Tuesday
Carroll (Del. 472)	Rita	December 12	Tuesday
Conwell-Egan (Bucks 789)	Rita	December 19	Tuesday
Dougherty	Irene	January 17	Wednesday
Hallahan	Irene	January 10	Wednesday
Holy Cross (Burl. 669)	Rita	January 9	Tuesday
St. Hubert	Rita	February 27	Tuesday
Fr. Judge	Rita	February 20	Tuesday
Kennedy-Kenrick (Mont. 322)	Irene	November 8	Wednesday
Lansdale (Mont. 347)	Irene	November 29	Wednesday
Little Flower	Irene	February 8	Thursday
McDevitt (Mont. 321)	Rita	January 16	Tuesday
Neumann-Goretti	Irene	December 7	Thursday
North	Irene	December 14	Thursday
O'Hara (Del. 459)	Rita & Irene	February 6	Tuesday
St. Pius X (Mont. 370)	Rita	November 14	Tuesday
Roman	Rita	March 6	Tuesday
Ryan	Rita & Irene	February 13	Tuesday
Shanahan (Chester 877)	Rita	December 5	Tuesday
West Catholic	Rita	March 13	Tuesday
Wood (Bucks 761)	Irene	November 17	Friday

Negotiations 101

Act 1

I have spent thirty-nine years in the classroom and two more years as a member of the ACT Staff. But last spring, I was a rookie on the Negotiating Team.

As a math teacher, logical and rational reasoning, analyzing a situation/problem, reasonable arguments for and against an approach to solving problems, concise yet thorough knowledge of the problem, have been my weapons of choice.

As a young teacher, raising a family on a salary that fails the Church's definition of a living wage, I learned time management as I balanced two, sometimes three, jobs, family obligations and the responsibility that goes with the profession I embraced.

For the better part of six months of 2006, I found myself in a situation that contradicted that which was me. To try to understand how intelligent adults could sit across the table from one another, talk to (or at) one another and yet never hear what was being said was becoming an effort in futility. For someone who prefers to get to the root of the problem and lay it to rest in a timely manner, I struggled with what I perceived as a waste of time and talent.

It was clear that both sides of the table truly want the Secondary School System of the Archdiocese to survive and be a viable force in the educational spectrum of Philadelphia and the surrounding counties. However, both sides needed to spend more time on those areas that would attract new teachers as well as encourage our present staffs to remain a viable part of the diocesan system. That time was not afforded us because of the inordinate amount of time ACT spent trying to remove proposals that were offensive to those who have kept the system competitive and viable for so many years.

I came away from the experience enriched as well as grateful for those colleagues who in the past had worked so hard negotiating contracts for me as I, unaware of their sacrifices, did my "job" in the classroom and on various committees serving the youth of the Archdiocese. I would encourage anyone who finds themselves in a position to serve on future negotiating teams to do so. The enrichment outweighs the frustrations.

*Joseph Schuler
Senior Delegate
Conwell-Egan*

Negotiations 101

Act 2

It has been five weeks since the ratification of our new contract. I know many people were glad school opened on time, but the road to acquiring a just and equitable contract was a very long and arduous one.

I am often asked if I would sit on the ACT Negotiating Team again. If this question had been posed to me Labor Day weekend, I would have replied, "I would not wish this on my worst enemy." From the outset of negotiations in April, both sides of the table were far from agreement on all major issues--financial, medical and working conditions. The System had crossed out over half our contract, a contract that basically served our teachers well for over 30 years. The financial offering was 3 figures and stayed that way most of the summer.

Sitting at the negotiating table was not pleasant. No real movement on acquiring a just contract occurred until the final hours on Labor Day night. ACT's declaration of impasse and leaving the negotiating table, coupled with the intercession of Dr. Richard McCarron and Bishop Joseph McFadden caused a contract to begin to materialize.

I appreciate Rita's tenacity in working all through the night and early morning of September 5 to get our teachers a contract. Irene was also amazing as she kept track of all transcripts and written proposals. Joe Schuler worked very hard behind the scenes with an excel program that constantly kept us abreast of the financial end of the contract. His efforts were phenomenal. Thanks, Joe.

Rita, Irene and John Zoccola never lost their "game face" during these final meetings. Their goal was to get a contract, and get a contract they did.

It was 5 A. M. when all the items that were needed to come to an agreement appeared in our hands. It was like Christmas morning! The money (although never what it should be) was now 4 figures. our medical plan was back, not to mention the return of existing language, especially in the Leave Article. We had something to bring to our members.

Would I negotiate again? Hmmm, I would say a qualified yes. But, there has to be a better way to negotiate a contract." Our teachers deserve better. Maybe start in August. Talk salary and benefits; leave the language alone.

I do appreciate all of the teachers at the ratification meeting and my own colleagues at Ryan who thanked me and the other Team members for settling the contract. Although it certainly wasn't easy, all the expressions of appreciation made the efforts worthwhile.

Have a good year. See you in two.

Chuck Panepressa
Archbishop Ryan High School



Another Note Of Thanks !

From: A John J. Reilly
Scholarship Award
Winner

Each year, the Association's Executive Board awards a \$500 Scholarship to the 9th grader in each Diocesan high school and at Holy Cross who has the highest general average as of the end of the first semester. If that student is already on scholarship, it is given to the highest student not receiving financial assistance. The \$500 Scholarship is sent to each school to be applied to the student's 10th grade tuition.

Dear Association of Catholic Teachers,

Thank you very much for the great honor of receiving your \$500 scholarship. I am a sophomore at Roman Catholic. This scholarship has helped me to continue my Catholic education at Roman, which is very important to me and my family. I am committed to working and studying hard throughout my high school years. Again, I want to thank you for this wonderful honor.

Sincerely,
Thomas Shattuck
Class of 2009

Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to Holy Cross H. S. (Delran N.J.)

The contract and the Memoranda of Understanding were finally signed on October 3, 2006. The contract is being printed as this goes to press.

In-services on Block Scheduling continue. A Membership Meeting was held on September 27th to address teachers' concerns about the implementation of Block Scheduling next school year.

New Medical Cards

New identification cards were mailed to all Independence Blue Cross (IBC) members. The new cards have the word "**Futurescripts**" on the bottom left hand corner. **Futurescripts** is Independence Blue Cross' in-house pharmacy benefit manager (PBM). Futurescripts will process all prescriptions processed by local pharmacies. Caremark will continue to be the provider of mail order services.

Medical Information

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS OVER 17 PAYS

(Beginning with the November 3, 2006 pay and ending with the pay of June 15, 2007)

	<u>PERSONAL CHOICE PPO</u>	<u>KEYSTONE EAST HMO</u>
Employee	\$37.60	\$33.20
Employee & child	\$76.03	\$67.72
Employee & children	\$84.86	\$75.58
Employee & Spouse	\$90.52	\$80.62
Full Family	\$99.21	\$88.36

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS OVER 22 PAYS

(Beginning with the November 3, 2006 pay and ending with the pay of August 24, 2007)

	<u>PERSONAL CHOICE PPO</u>	<u>KEYSTONE EAST HMO</u>
Employee	\$29.06	\$25.66
Employee & child	\$58.75	\$52.33
Employee & children	\$65.57	\$58.40
Employee & Spouse	\$69.95	\$62.30
Full Family	\$76.66	\$68.28

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Part-time teachers are needed at Huntington Learning Center of Bala Cynwyd for tutoring of students in grades K-12. All candidates must be PA state certified. Teachers of all experience levels, including new and retired teachers, are needed. Hours are flexible and based on your schedule.

Huntington Learning Center is located at 4610 City Avenue across from the LA Fitness & Acme in Bala Cynwyd. For more information, please call 610-626-9930.

Anyone interested should submit a resume and cover letter to jobs@hlc-bala.com.

ACT MEMBER SERVICE PROGRAM

Franklin Institute Tickets - \$11.00
AMC Movie Tickets - \$5.50
Regal/United Artist - \$6.00
National Constitution Center - \$5.50
Philadelphia Zoo - \$11.00

To purchase any of the above tickets,
send a check payable to the Association of
Catholic Teachers with a note indicating
which tickets are being ordered.



**Happy Halloween
from the ACT Staff**

Rita

Ginny

Irene

Mia