



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 XXXI  
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## From The President's Desk

### NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

The 5th negotiating session between the Association and the System occurred on May 10th. Both Teams continue to work through the contract articles receiving explanations of the proposals on the first time through. As of today, a sizable number of proposed contract changes have yet to be discussed.

The greater majority of the System's proposals, as I stated in the April newsletter, are "an all-out attack on our high school teachers, on 43 years of the Labor-Management Agreement and on the Labor-Management relationship that has been established." (For a listing of System proposals, check the ACT website at [www.act1776.com](http://www.act1776.com)).

There are two all-day negotiating sessions scheduled for May 16 and May 23. Hopefully, the ACT Negotiating Team will have more positive news for the membership at the May 25th General Membership Meeting. However, if the System's proposals have not changed significantly, the Association's Negotiating Team will be asking you, the members, for a strike authorization vote.

It is vital that you attend the May 25th Meeting so that you can make an informed decision.

# CONSTRICTION 2011

The Constriction numbers are out and, while they are about half as large as last year's, that doesn't make their impact any less upsetting to those notified that their positions have been cut. As we move through the process, other teachers will become involved in Constriction through bumping, and certain catchwords, such as "Hardship Forms," "Hybrid Subs" and "Temporary Transfers," will become familiar terms to those on this year's List.

Presently, the 75 positions being cut by the System translate into 53 actual teachers. There are almost two dozen retirements and a few schools have been given positions back. Hopefully, the numbers will decrease further prior to the Constriction Meeting set for June 13th.

The Constriction List breaks down as follows:

THEOLOGY - 7; ENGLISH - 10; SOCIAL STUDIES - 5; MATH - 5; SCIENCE - 5;  
WORLD LANGUAGE - 8; BUSINESS - 6; FINE ARTS - 3; LIBRARY - 4.

It is extremely important for teachers to check their transcripts for other possible competencies. If a teacher is close to the twenty-four (24) credits needed to declare a competency, he or she should think about taking on-line courses to get those last three to six credits. Having more than one competency could result in continued employment.

As we do every year, the Association of Catholic Teachers will carefully monitor the 2011 Constriction Process.

Teachers with any questions or concerns should contact the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or by e-mail at [nacst.nacst@verizon.net](mailto:nacst.nacst@verizon.net).

# Contempt Unveiled

“Partners in Education”

“Sharing in the mission of Jesus Christ”

“Catholic Identity”

If any teacher ever had hope that maybe these commonly used phrases from OCE had some truth, the proposed contract changes from OCE's negotiating team shattered that illusion completely. It's as if those who speak those words and those who made these proposals have never met each other. Unilateral changes to the contract at any time during the contract mean having no contract at all. Concentrating power and decision making at the top directly conflicts with Church social justice teaching and the principle of subsidiarity. We hear “21st Century learning” *ad nauseam*, while a 1950's contract is proposed.

Not content to stop at gross insult, the Archdiocesan negotiating team decided to “explain” to us in a condescending letter that their primary concern is the good of our students and parents. Really? I missed the part about how increasing class size accomplishes this. One of the most common questions asked at open house is about how big the classes are. Where was the explanation about how students in a teacher's fifth consecutive teaching period benefit from the teacher's depleted energy? I guess they thought it was obvious that increasing numbers in study halls and the cafeteria would increase safety and learning. Extended hours for parental contact? Many teachers spend lonely hours on parent-teacher night as it is. How can one claim to have students' interests at heart while diminishing those who teach them in the classroom?

Unless we are truly “partners in education,” there cannot be Catholic education. If the values we teach are not an integral part of how we relate to one another, we will have no credibility to parents and students. Spare us the videos on our “faith formation.” Let us see the witness to the Gospel values and Church teachings in how teachers are spoken to and treated.

*Mary Edwards*

*Senior Delegate*

*Association of Catholic Teachers,*

*Local 1776*

## PENSION ASSETS

ACT Members have recently raised questions concerning the assets of the Lay Employees Retirement Plan. The Association contacted the Deputy Secretary for Temporal Services for the Archdiocese to get the answers.

A number of questions have been raised by our members in regard to the security of the Pension Plan's assets. The teachers are concerned, and rightly so, that pension funds may be used to offset possible civil and criminal judgments against the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

The Deputy Secretary's response is reprinted below:

I appreciate your members' concerns, but I can assure you that Cardinal Rigali remains committed to ensuring that the assets of the Retirement Plan are never used for any purpose other than funding and administering the pension program for our employees.

...under no circumstances could the Trustees cause Retirement Plan assets to be used to satisfy any obligations or liabilities of the Archdiocese.

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## ACT HAS GONE GREEN

Since January, the ACT has been sending most of its communications such as Executive Board Minutes, Negotiation updates, and other pertinent information to teachers via email. There are still many teachers who have not provided us with a personal email address and, therefore, have not received these mailings. Some teachers have provided us with email addresses, but the email comes back to us as a bad address or with a note saying that our email address has been rejected by the server.

It is extremely important that we have an email address for each teacher and that you list our email address as an accepted email address, so that you receive up-to-date information on extremely important matters.

If you have not received any emails from the ACT Office in the last two months, please send us an email and let us know. Once you email us, we will have your correct email address (it cannot be a school email address) and we will send you a copy of anything that was sent out in recent months.



# A Few Notes Of Thanks !

From: John J. Reilly Scholarship Award Winners

"Each year, the Association's Executive Board awards a \$500 Scholarship to the 9th grader in each Archdiocesan high school and at Holy Cross High School, Delran, New Jersey 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 Ms. Schwartz and Association,

Thank you very much for the scholarship in the amount of \$500. My family and I are very appreciative of this generous award. I have attended Catholic school since pre-k. I am very proud to represent Holy Cross High School and I will continue to work hard to achieve academic success.

Sincerely,

Steve Butcher '14

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Ms. Schwartz & Association,

We are very grateful to receive this scholarship. We currently have 3 children enrolled in Catholic School so it is very much appreciated.

Thank you for recognizing Steve's academic achievement. He works very hard and is proud to accept this award.

Sincerely,

Steve & Janice Butcher

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Dear Rita,

This is an outstanding gesture on the part of the ACT, especially in this tough economic environment.

I am very grateful for your generosity.

Gratefully,

Bob (O'Neill)

Principal, Roman Catholic

Dear Ms. Schwartz and the Association of Catholic Teachers,

A big thank you to you and your entire Association! My freshman year at Neumann-Goretti has been amazing and your recognition of it is greatly appreciated by me and my family.

Thanks again!

Monica Starr

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Dear Ms. Schwartz:

We wanted to thank you and the entire Association of Catholic Teachers. The scholarship for Monica Starr is greatly appreciated; she is having a wonderful experience at Sts. John Neumann and Maria Goretti H.S.

Again thank you for the generous tuition assistance for our daughter.

Ed Starr and Anne Starr

Dear Rita,

Many thanks for continuing this scholarship in difficult economic times.

Sr. Maureen

Principal, Bishop Shanahan

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

Thank you for honoring me with the gift of money to further my education at Bishop Shanahan High School. In these difficult financial times, my family and I really appreciate the help.

Sincerely,

*Paul Blanchard*

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Dear Rita C. Schwartz,

Thank you for choosing me to be the recipient of this \$500 scholarship award. By presenting me this scholarship, you have given me another opportunity to succeed. This scholarship reflects the hard work and effort I have placed in the first semester and continue to demonstrate throughout the year. It has also given me the motivation to maintain my academic status and pursue my education to the best of my ability. I sincerely appreciate the work of the Association of Catholic Teachers and hope that you will be able to award scholars for many years to come.

God Bless,

*Pearl Galido*

Lansdale Catholic

To the Association of Catholic Teachers,

Thank you so much for this prestigious award. I am both surprised and elated that you have gifted me with a scholarship for my hard work. Just receiving recognition for my efforts would've been more than I could ask for, but you went one step further and awarded me a scholarship and for that I am very grateful.

Sincerely,

*Eléna J. Varela*

#1 Freshman

Dear All,

Thank you very much for the gift of the scholarship. It was very generous of you, and I am extremely appreciative of your benevolence. Thank you for all you do for Archbishop Wood High School!

Sincerely,

*Kasey Brown*

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## *Making Sense of Money and Banking: A 5-Day Course for Teachers*

**When:** July 18 through July 22, 2011  
8:00 A. M. - 3:30 P. M.

**Where:** Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia  
7th and Arch Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

**Cost:** There is a \$50 registration fee payable by credit card at time of registration. Registration fee includes breakfast and lunch each day and all conference materials.

**Credit:** Teachers who complete all five days of the course will receive 30 hours of professional development credit (Act 48 in Pennsylvania) in their respective states.

Register Online at: [www.philadelphiafed.org/education/teachers/training-programs/](http://www.philadelphiafed.org/education/teachers/training-programs/)

Registration Deadline: July 1, 2011 (Registration fee is nonrefundable after this date.)

## ACT MEMBER SERVICE PROGRAM

The following tickets are available to purchase from the ACT Office.

Franklin Institute Tickets	----	\$13.00
AMC Movie Tickets	----	\$ 6.00
Regal/United Artists	----	\$ 6.50
National Constitution Center	----	\$ 9.00
Philadelphia Zoo	----	\$13.00
Morey's Piers, Wildwood	.....	
Waterpark Tickets	----	\$27.00
Amusement Park Tickets	----	\$43.00

To request tickets, send a check made payable to the Association of Catholic Teachers with a note indicating what tickets are being ordered and in what quantity.

## FREEDOM CREDIT UNION

The Freedom Credit Union offers teachers and their families a wide range of financial opportunities. Savings accounts, checking accounts, loans, MAC IRAs, to name a few, are available to members of the credit union.

The Freedom Credit Union has four Philadelphia locations, as well as an office in Abington, Lansdale and Warminster. For more information visit the credit union's website at [www.freedomcu.org](http://www.freedomcu.org). You may also call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or the Freedom Credit Union at 215-612-5900.

## MOONLIGHTING BOOKLET

Any teacher interested in highlighting a business or hobby in ACT's annual Moonlighting Booklet, should send a business card/ flyer to the ACT Office no later than May 15, 2011.



# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2011**

**PENNS LANDING CATERERS  
1301 S. COLUMBUS BOULEVARD**

**4:00 P. M.**

## AGENDA

**NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE**