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The Newspaper of Local 1776  
The Association of Catholic Teachers

# SPIRIT '76 OF

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From The  
President's Desk

## THE NEW CONTRACT: A JOB WELL DONE BY ONE AND ALL

Congratulations to the membership of the Association of Catholic Teachers. The tremendously successful completion of contract negotiations could not have been accomplished without your strength and solidarity during the nine days spent on the picket line. Your resolve never weakened; in fact, if anything, it grew stronger.

I cannot say enough about the ACT Negotiating Team (Tom Imburgia, Dave McQuiston, Chuck Panepresso, Joe Schuler, Irene Tori and John Zoccola). They were incredibly focused throughout the six month process. No small feat when they were dealing with some 283 System proposals. They knew what you, our members, wanted and what you didn't want.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

FROM THE PRESIDENT.

My thanks, also, to our attorneys, Bruce Endy and Marty Milz. They provided invaluable assistance as we stood our ground against the punitive anti-teacher and anti-union proposals, most of which did not come off the table until midnight of September 17th.

We, as teachers and as members of the Association of Catholic Teachers, Local 1776, have much to be proud of. I am proudest of the determination of our teachers. Regardless of the propaganda from the System in letters sent to you and to the parents, you understood what was at stake and you fought for your future as Catholic school teachers. You also fought to preserve the dignity and respect to which all of us are entitled.

CONGRATULATIONS, ONE AND ALL, FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

*Rita*



(The photographs of teachers on the picket lines were published in various local newspapers.)

## Representation May Be Crucial

Article III, Section 2 of the Labor-Management Agreement is short but extremely important. Please pay particularly close attention to what it has to say.

No teacher may be asked to attend a meeting with the school or diocesan administration without a representative of the Association being present if the teacher reasonably feels the meeting could result in disciplinary action against him/her.

Disciplinary action cannot be taken against any teacher unless the teacher has been apprised in writing of his/her right to union representation.

Should you "reasonably feel" the meeting could turn into one that involves you in disciplinary action, immediately get to your Senior Delegate for advice or call the ACT Office if you choose. Don't let a relatively minor situation turn into a major one because you decided you could "handle" it yourself.

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### UNION DUES 2011-2012

\$518.70  
\$27.30 per pay  
beginning with the pay of October 14, 2011  
and ending with the pay of June 22, 2012

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### SERVICE FEE 2011-2012

\$414.96  
\$21.84 per pay  
beginning with the pay of October 14, 2011  
and ending with the pay of June 22, 2012



(The photographs of teachers on the picket lines were published in various local newspapers.)

## EDUCATION GRANT APPLICATION DUE

Teachers who wish to apply for the Education Grant under the Labor-Management Agreement (Art. XIII, Sec. 7) must do so by October 21. The grant offers 50 percent tuition reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1800 per year for undergraduate coursework, \$2100 for master's degree coursework, and \$2400 for doctoral coursework. Teachers who have received a study grant for two (2) consecutive years are not eligible to receive for the following year.

Grants are awarded on the basis of system seniority and are available to any teacher with at least one year of teaching in the System.

Forms to apply for the Education Grant are posted at the local school or can be downloaded from the home page of the ACT Website at [www.act1776.com](http://www.act1776.com).

### Additional credits?

If you have received an advanced degree or additional credits over the summer which qualify you for payment under a different column of the salary scale, notify your school accountant immediately.

You must also send proof (an original transcript) of the degree/credits to Mrs. Theresa Ryan-Szott at the Office of Catholic Education so that the change in degree/credits can be verified.

For your records, it is highly recommended that all documents be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested.

#### The five lanes of the salary scale are:

Bachelor's Degree  
Bachelor's + 18 or Certification  
Master's or 30 Graduate Credits  
Double Master's  
Doctorate

### Lancer's Local

**Issues or contractual items of interest to Holy Cross High School  
(Delran, NJ)**

UNION DUES  
2011-2012  
\$517.80  
\$52.78 per month

## Alert on Changes in Status

Have you informed both your school office and the ACT Office of any changes in your marital or family status? Most importantly, have you been sure to include any new dependents on your health and dental plans?

Don't wait until that person needs to use the plan. Please inform the ACT Office and the local school administrators of your changes.

Make sure when supplying the information to your school that you put the information in writing and put a date on it before signing. It could mean a considerable financial outlay on your part or a huge wait in time until the changes can be made if you don't take care of these things **TODAY**.

### **REMINDERS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS AWAY FROM HOME**

1. Always carry your current Personal Choice ID Card.
2. In an emergency, go directly to the nearest hospital.
3. Call BlueCard Access at 800-810-BLUE (2583) or access the National BlueCard PPO online provider directly through [www.ibxpress.com](http://www.ibxpress.com) to find BlueCard PPO providers.
4. Always use a BlueCard PPO doctor or hospital to make sure you receive the highest level of benefits.
5. Call IBC for prior authorization, if necessary. Use the pre-authorization phone number on your ID card, since it is different from the BlueCard access number shown above. If in doubt whether a service is covered or requires pre-authorization, call the Member Services telephone number on your ID card.



(The photographs of teachers on the picket lines were published in various local newspapers.)

## ACT MEMBER SERVICE PROGRAM

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

AMC Movie Tickets	----	\$ 6.00
Regal/United Artists	----	\$ 6.50
National Constitution Center	----	\$ 9.00
Franklin Institute Tickets	----	\$13.00
Philadelphia Zoo	----	\$13.00

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 .

## RETIREMENT INFORMATION

The ACT Office has put together some medical information (rates, comparison sheets and contract provisions) for teachers who are considering retirement in the near future. If you are considering an early retirement or if you will be reaching the age for normal retirement, call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 for your retirement packet. You may also email your request to [ginny@act1776.com](mailto:ginny@act1776.com).

### IMPORTANT NOTE CONCERNING SALARY STEPS FOR 2011-2012

If you were hired prior to the 1966-1967 school year, you are at the top of the scale which is step 37.

## OCTOBER IS OPEN ENROLLMENT MONTH FOR MEDICAL

During the first or second week of October, information will be distributed concerning your medical options. If you would like to switch from Personal Choice to Keystone or vice versa, you will be able to do so during the month of October with changes going into effect on November 1, 2011.

Remember that your dependent adult children are able to be covered on your plan up to age 26. There are no requirements or restrictions on marital, employment, student, resident, or tax status.

They will be removed at age 26 according to the guideline below:

**Coverage for your adult children who turn 26 between November 1 and April 30 will end on April 30.**

**Coverage for your adult children who turn 26 between May 1 and October 31 will end on October 31.**

If you have any questions concerning the medical plans and/or coverage for your adult children, please don't hesitate to call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175.

## ACT HAS GONE GREEN

During the past school year, the ACT Office has focused its efforts on going green. Early this month, teachers were mailed a letter explaining how to update their personal information via the ACT Website. If you are an ACT member and did not receive this letter, please call Ginny at 215-568-4175 or send an email to [ginny@act1776.com](mailto:ginny@act1776.com). When updating your personal record, the computer will allow you to make changes in section one to your name, address, phone, email, and date of birth. Changes made in section two will be sent to the ACT Office. Once confirmed, we will update your record. **Please allow at least 2 weeks for the change to be made.** Please keep your password and username in a safe place so you can update your record in the future should further changes be needed.