

MTA

The voice of
our retired
members

REPORTER



BALLOT VICTORY

RETIRED MEMBERS WERE
CRITICAL TO SUCCESS

DECEMBER 2024

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- * Elected by the Board
- ** MTA Board of Directors
- *** President's Designee
- **** Appointed Active Member



In a celebration on Nov. 5, MTA Vice President Deb McCarthy, center, spoke to supporters of YES on 2. McCarthy, a former teacher, was instrumental in advocating for a replacement for the MCAS-based high school graduation test.



Message from the Co-Chairs

Kathy Greeley and Rick Last

As retirees, we are extremely proud of our union. In spite of an onslaught of attacks from some of our political leaders, a segment of the business community, the mainstream media and a handful of millionaires and billionaires (we're looking at you, Michael Bloomberg), we once again were able to win a vote for the people! Question 2, replacing the MCAS as a graduation requirement, was overwhelmingly approved by Massachusetts voters, validating what educators have been saying for decades: We cannot use a one-size-fits-all test to measure our rich diversity of students. Once again, it became clear that people trust their educators, certainly more than their legislators.

We can add our victory on MCAS to our other achievements that have benefited the people of Massachusetts: stopping the expansion of charter schools, passing the Student Opportunity Act, implementing the Fair Share Amendment which added \$2 billion in its first year to the state budget to support public schools and transportation. We have helped to



secure fair contracts for educators in towns and cities across the state. We also have been fighting to end the unfair WEP/GPO laws, which have affected thousands of not just teachers, but other public employees in our state. And it looks like we are closer to a victory on that than we have ever been!

The media likes to cast the MTA as a "special interest" bloc that dictates education policy from on high. But we know that our union is a profoundly democratic institution. We welcome diverse ideas and debate. We invite our members to participate in decision-making, to get involved in serving on boards, task forces, committees and campaigns. We win our fights because we put boots on the ground, not money in the pockets of corporations.

We invite you as retired members to get involved. With our experience, wisdom and energy, retirees are in a unique position to make a difference in our union, in our communities and in our Commonwealth. You will see in this newsletter many of the projects of the Retired Members Committee and



we welcome you to join us in any way you can! ■

For more information or to get involved, contact Lisa Lemieux at LLemieux@massteacher.org.

Contact Kathy Greeley at kegreeley@gmail.com. Contact Rick Last at ricklewislast@gmail.com.

IF YOU HAVE SOME NEWS from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send it to Lisa Lemieux at LLemieux@massteacher.org.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR NEWS, make sure to visit and bookmark massteacher.org/retired.

Executive Committee / Board Report

Andrei Joseph



Now, triumph is clear: Our efforts succeeded in passing Question 2 by an overwhelming margin. We have eliminated a substantial obstacle for many students and championed a vision of education based in trusting educators to care for and challenge our students appropriately.

Yet, when the Board met in mid-October, the outcome was uncertain. Then, we voted to add \$750,000 more from the PR&O budget to support the campaign. About a week later, billionaire publisher Michael Bloomberg added \$2.5 million on the “No” side. At a brief, emergency meeting of the Board, we voted to add an additional \$1 million in the final stretch of the campaign. On our side, the NEA contributed half a million dollars and the AFT, \$250,000. I supported these MTA expenditures; our reserves remain comfortable. We were able to both fight for a ballot initiative and maintain our financial security as an organization.

Where Shall We Live?

Our headquarters has been in Quincy for 10 years, since the sale of our building on Ashburton, in downtown Boston. Our current lease expires in December of 2025. We have been paying \$1.6 million a year for two floors. As we look to the future, multiple issues arise: What office size do we need? What is the cost? What is the function? Do we want a “union hall” with more meeting space? Does remote work reduce our space needs? Should we return to ownership or continue to lease? What location is preferable? How do we pay attention to sustainability? Our print

shop has grown and needs to move. How do we account for their space needs? It should not be hard for you to imagine the data gathering, the committees, the meetings required to address these matters in a thoughtful manner. No decision yet.

Our Website

We received a report from our Communications Division as it continues the process of updating our website, www.massteacher.org. We were assured that our criticisms have been received. The division is attempting to face the challenges of building a new website that provides timely updates, is user friendly, with content that is easy to find while working well on mobile devices. A fancy version of this would allow the website to “learn” who was using it and individualize content. That alternative is pretty expensive, with estimates ranging to \$500,000. A more modest approach would be to adopt the existing NEA platform, which is currently used by 15 states with a cost of only \$5,000 a year. In either case, we are hoping to launch in the spring of 2025. Website subcommittee members, including Ora Gladstone, Maureen Colgan Posner, Patrick Patterson and Phyllis Neufeld, will meet with Amanda Torres-Price, the director of communications, to ensure that retiree input is a robust part of the process.

International Concerns and NBI Process

There continues to be a wave of guest speakers at Board meetings. Some fervently defend the behavior of Israel; others condemn it. Some argue

Andrei Joseph and his grandson campaigned recently for the YES on 2 ballot question.



that our organization should not be involved in international issues; others insist that it is our obligation. As Chair, MTA President Max Page has repeatedly asked for extended time on our agenda to allow all speakers to be heard. The Board, and I, have supported that request.

You may recall that the 2024 Annual Meeting of Delegates passed a motion requiring the Board to develop a process to deal with New Business Items related to international issues before dealing with any new motions. This became relevant when an NBI requiring MTA to divest from holdings with companies doing military-related business with Israel presented both a conundrum and perhaps some steps forward. It was complicated. I will try to explain:

With the Board's approval, Max separated the NBI into three parts. The first part, which demanded that Massachusetts Pension Reserves Investment Management (PRIM) divest from Israel, he ruled out of order. That would have required an immediate vote and the Board had not yet met the Annual Meeting demand to establish a process regarding motions related to international issues. The second and third parts of the NBI, regarding staff pension funds and other MTA investments (largely, our reserves), he allowed as they were considered policy changes. Policy changes require two readings, the first being only for questions and clarification. A vote is not held until second reading. No doubt, these issues will return for a vote at a subsequent Board meeting. Later in the meeting, the Board

responded to the requirement of Annual Meeting and passed a policy change which will require that all NBIs be submitted two weeks prior to both Board meetings and the Annual Meeting. This will allow both Board members and the larger membership to know in advance what issues will be addressed, as well as permitting the staff to develop whatever supporting documents might be needed. Further, the policy changes that I had introduced were passed as well: Agendas for both Executive Committee and Board meetings will be posted on the website 10 days prior to the meetings, and include full wording of all NBIs. Results of these meetings, including all Board decisions, will be posted on the website within four business days whenever possible, but no later than seven days after the meeting. These changes are designed to increase both transparency and democracy.

Executive Session

We heard confidential matters. We unanimously approved a three-year contract for Mike Fadel, our executive director-treasurer.

Also of Note:

- We elected June Gustafson, Jen Zabelsky and Kirsten Frazier to the Massachusetts Teachers Association Benefits Board.
- We are spending \$14,000 to provide "official" MTA email addresses for Board members.
- Task Forces were created for both Safe Schools and Pensions.

Wishing you all a healthy and joyful holiday season. ■

Contact Andrei Joseph at ajoseph@rcn.com.

Pressure for Repeal of Windfall Elimination Provision & Government Pension Offset

Mary MacDonald

In a historic vote, the U.S. House of Representatives on Nov. 12 approved a repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. The focus for activists who want to repeal these federal laws that have reduced retirement income for many educators has now turned to the U.S. Senate.

The House vote to approve the Social Security Fairness Act was 327 in favor, 75 opposed. It was a bipartisan vote and the first time that an effort to repeal WEP/GPO had passed the House. The Senate has 62 sponsors for the Senate version of the bill, a majority.

Proponents, including the NEA and MTA, are encouraging members to contact their senators to urge passage.

The repeal measure passed with support of the Massachusetts delegation.

Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey are among the co-sponsors of S.597, the Senate version of the bill.

The Social Security Fairness Act was introduced by U.S. Representatives Garret Graves, R-Louisiana, and Abigail Spanberger, D-Virginia. Addressing the House as it prepared to vote, Spanberger said the measure would restore basic fairness to 2.5 million Americans.

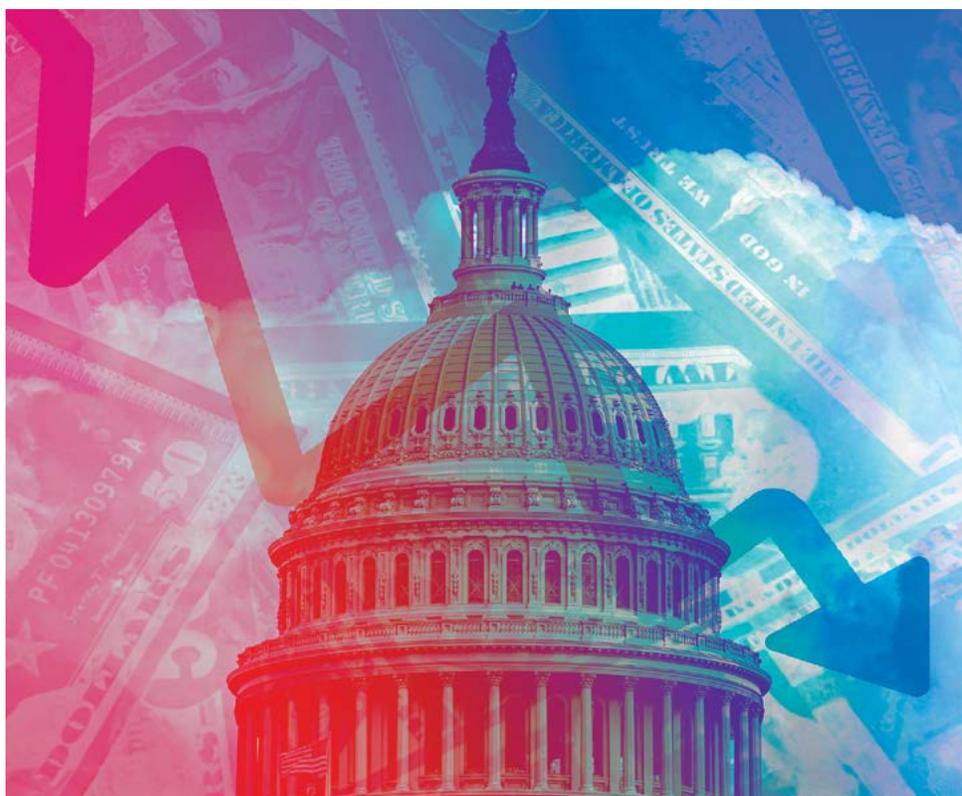
“The WEP and the GPO, two misguided provisions that were added to the Social Security Act in 1983, have denied Americans the retirement security they

worked for and expected to receive. Today the WEP steals benefits from more than two million retired Americans ... who both paid into Social Security long enough to earn these benefits and worked in the public sector during their careers.”

The vote came after a discharge petition was signed by 330 House members. The two laws reduce or eliminate Social Security income for public service workers, including police officers, firefighters, state employees and educators, who may qualify for a public pension and who did not have Social Security taxes taken from their public earnings. But these workers qualified for Social Security by holding second or summer jobs, or for career switchers who worked in the private sector and had payroll taxes deducted from those earnings.

The NEA and MTA encourage members to contact their Senators right away and make sure they are ready to vote for the measure. ■

Visit nea.org/advocating-for-change/action-center/take-action/repeal-unfair-social-security-penalties.



Retired Members Celebrate the Careers of Two Educators

Mary MacDonald

Kenneth Kalen and Elaine Koury graciously accepted the 2024 Honor Our Own awards with a luncheon held at the New England Botanic Garden. The Oct. 21 gathering was the first in-person event for MTA Retired members since the pandemic began in 2020.

The open-air event space offered the perfect environment for people to gather safely. More than 70 people attended, according to MTA events staff.

The Honor Our Own Award is designed to recognize MTA retirees for their contributions to public education. Kalen, a 35-year elementary school educator in Stoughton, and Koury, a longtime English and performing arts teacher and administrator in Cambridge and Boston, spoke about their experiences as educators and union members.

Kalen, who retired last year, invited family and colleagues to the luncheon. One of those attending was Bob Trotta, the former president of the Stoughton Teachers Association, who Kalen recalled said to him on his first day of work as a teacher: “So, you’re going to get involved in the union, right?”

Kalen went on to become a building rep, and then a contract team member and union secretary. Kalen volunteered in early retirement to help finish the last contract cycle. “He really showed me the importance of organization and the importance of a union voice,” Kalen said, of Trotta, “and how strength in the union is just the epitome of what we are as



Kenneth Kalen and Elaine Koury were celebrated recently for their contributions to public education.

educators, where we have the ability to further our career and profession and keep it a wonderful place to be.”

Koury invited Wyatt Jackson and Trinidad Ramkissoon, two former students who went on themselves to become theater teachers at schools in Cambridge and Boston.

Koury, who also founded the Wisdom Warriors activist group, encouraged her fellow retirees to get involved and stay active in campaigns. “When we show up for active educators, teachers who have not yet retired, they are so thankful for the support. You remember what it was like. When you’re a teacher, you sometimes feel the world is against you. It’s so great

when a bunch of grey-haired people show up for you and shout for you and sing for you and say, ‘Yeah! Keep going, you’re doing great!’”

For information about the Honor Our Own awards, please visit massteacher.org/honourourown. ■



Retired Educators Key Factor in

VICTORY ON QUESTION 2

Mary MacDonald

On Martha's Vineyard, Amy Rugel talked about YES on 2 to her yoga instructor and young adults working in retail stores.

In Cambridge, 86-year-old Phyllis Bretholtz talked to anyone who had a few minutes as she shopped at Stop & Shop and Whole Foods.

Andrei Joseph, a member of the MTA Retired Members Committee, canvassed door-to-door through the neighborhoods near his home, accompanied by his 12-year-old grandson.

Throughout Massachusetts, part of the reason why Question 2 was approved overwhelmingly by voters in November was through the activism of retired members and allies. More than 100 retired volunteers participated in either canvasses or phone banks. Even more took part in conversations with family and friends.

The Vote Was Decisive

Question 2 was approved by 59 percent of voters, to 41 percent opposed, according to the Associated Press. The effort on the campaign, led by the MTA, included 200,000 doors reached by canvassers and more than 500 organized canvass events. Volunteers on phone banks made more than 816,000 calls.

“I would stop people and ask them if I could talk to them. I don't know why but I had tremendous success, I felt, in just talking to people very casually about the question and why I was supporting it.”

Phyllis Bretholtz

MTA President Max Page and Vice President Deb McCarthy thanked supporters and said a truly collective effort succeeded in passing the question. “Massachusetts voters have proclaimed that they are ready to let teachers teach, and students learn, without the onerous effects of a high-stakes, standardized exam undermining the mission of public education: to prepare all students for future success as citizens, workers and creative, happy adults,” they said.

The ballot initiative replaces the MCAS high school graduation requirement with a more common-sense measure in which districts certify that graduating students have satisfactorily completed coursework that shows mastery of the skills, competencies and knowledge contained in the state's academic standards.

Rugel, a retired member of AFT-Massachusetts, who lives seasonally on Martha's Vineyard, spoke to people as she went about her days

on the island. Very few understood the question, and everyone seemed receptive to learning from her about it.

Rugel, who taught kindergarten in Boston, retired in 2000, just as the accountability movement started imposing standardized tests on students. She explained Question 2 as she encountered people in Cambridge and on Martha's Vineyard, understanding that most were going to vote in a presidential election year.

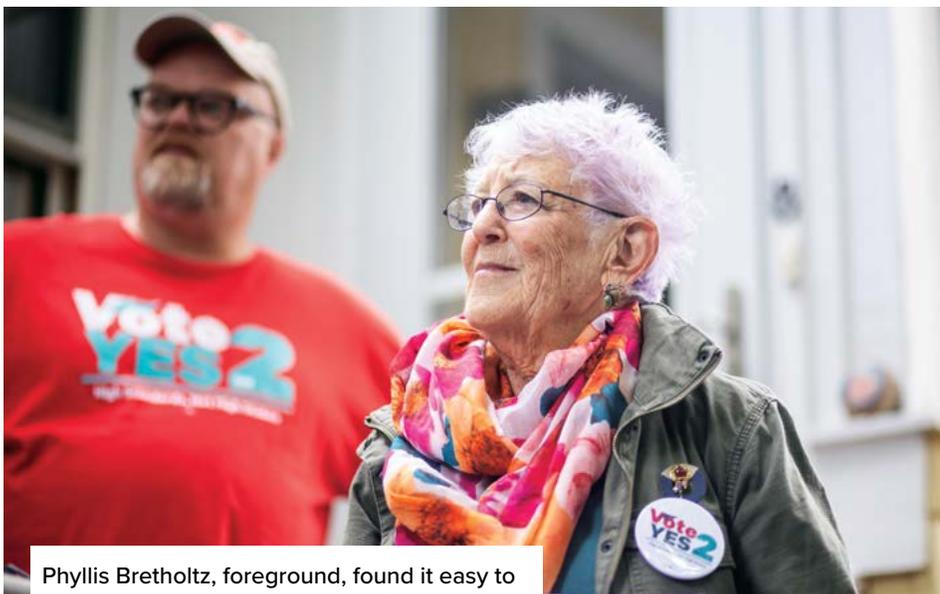
“I found people were very interested and receptive,” she said. “I would just go up to people and talk to them, like young men working behind a counter. They wanted to talk about it. They wanted to talk about education, in general.”

Bretholtz, who taught language arts, primarily writing and literature comprehension at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, said she enjoyed speaking with people about the ballot question. She didn't go



Retired members who canvassed through Cambridge for Question 2 were among more than 100 who volunteered for the campaign this year.

ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT



Phyllis Bretholtz, foreground, found it easy to speak to people casually about Question 2 as they grocery shopped.



Deb Mousley canvassed through Methuen, beginning in the summer.

to organized canvasses, instead opting to talk with people as she encountered them while shopping or walking through her neighborhood.

“The standardized test is such a terrible disservice to most young people,” she said. “I am 100 percent opposed to having any standardized test. It limits what any of us can demonstrate. And there is no indication, none as far as I know, that anyone who can pass those standardized tests is therefore a more successful adult.”

Bretholtz felt her casual approach to the campaign was effective. “I would stop people and ask them if I could talk to them. I don’t know why but I had tremendous success, I felt, in just talking to people very casually about the question and why I was supporting it.”

Joseph took to the neighborhoods around his home with his grandson, who helped him broach the meaning of Question 2 with residents as they opened their doors. “It was a great benefit, canvassing door-to-door with him,” Joseph said. “All I had to

do was point to him and say: “He shouldn’t be judged by a single, multiple-choice exam.”

Joseph, who retired in 2011 after a career as a social studies teacher at Concord-Carlisle High School, said his experience carried weight with many voters. “When you have decades of experience behind your assertion, people are more likely to listen.”

MTA leadership is keeping up with state efforts to implement the new requirement, and Page and McCarthy attended a recent Board of Elementary and Secondary Education meeting. They told state education officials that educators are ready to be part of the robust conversations that will take place. ■

To keep up to date with news about the implementation of Question 2, subscribe to MTA News at massteacher.org/mtanews.

Please also join the new Retired Facebook page at facebook.com/groups/mtaretired.



The Way We Work: Learning from Experiences with the Help of a Mentor

Joe Zellner

Students and educators work in social groups to teach, learn, support and enculturate each other into a teaching and learning compact that is required for them to learn from each other. While we commonly envision the process as the older generation teaching the younger generation, it is necessarily a two-way street. That is, the younger generation often shares its knowledge with its elders.

Society entrusts, expects and requires much from the teaching profession and the people in it. We have a high bar of expectations for educators in this compact and should also hold similar expectations for the students. Teachers and students who are singled out because of their identity in society may face the most challenges and impacts because of that identity within their school or classroom.

For the classroom and all people in it to be most effective, educators and students need personal and material support. With that in mind, the MTA Mentor-Mentee program has been established to offer assistance, as needed, to new educators of color, to support them and their students and also enable new educators to receive support from experienced, retired educators of color.

Throughout our culture, most people want to conform to the dominant culture and its expectations. Educators and students who have been singled out because of their identity have often felt an additional challenge and responsibility to fit into the dominant culture within their school environment. Most commonly,



Joe Zellner, who is participating as a mentor in the program, retired in 2007 after a long teaching career at Concord-Carlisle High School.

the immediately noted and frequently challenged difference is based on ethnicity or race. Those educators are sometimes identified as being Latino, Latinx, indigenous, LGBTQ+, Black, African American, Asian American and Pacific Islanders, as BIPOC or people of color, or simply as ethnic minorities. The Retired Members Committee seeks to support educators who identify themselves as being within these groups as they enter the field of education. The goal is to have minority educators enter the profession, remain, succeed and feel supported.

A shoulder to lean on

The classroom can be a challenging environment for new educators. The names and personalities of students and colleagues have to be learned; a climate of mutual respect must be established; subject content must be mastered and presented; and all of this aimed at students with varying abilities and interests.

Is there room for error? Not really, but there will be many errors made and overcome. Is there a need for a mentor? Retired educators know that there is. Few of us in society want to admit our errors, but the wisest among us do admit to them and then

SOCIAL JUSTICE

avail ourselves of any assistance that can help us overcome them.

Hopefully, one of the things that we learn from our mistakes is how to avoid repeating them. A retired educator can help new educators through that maze.

Minority educators also are often a numeric minority in their buildings. This adds to a subculture of isolation and makes it challenging for many minority educators to request and share their need for professional support with other minority-race professionals. It may be easier to share their experience and seek support from a senior professional who is not associated with their building or professional evaluation. A mentor could be seen as an

experienced “shoulder to lean on,” or someone who can offer a non-judgmental alternative or suggestion.

In my professional experience as an educator, I never experienced blatant racial discrimination or hostility. I cannot tell you that I was assaulted; nor was my desk or room trashed. I was not called vile names or referenced as such. I cannot remember and do not believe that racial prejudice was the initiating or extending factor in any disciplinary actions toward me. Professionally, I have counseled students on several occasions who have been the recipients of racial insults and blatant acts of discrimination. But often, it is the “death (injury) by a thousand cuts” and unconscious or unintended bias, through statements such as “I don’t see color,” that have been more harmful, wearying and wearing.

To the younger educators newly entering the profession, I encourage you to continue your career journey and may you experience and enjoy the positive professional experiences that will enable you to fend off those big and little indignities. Stay the course and enjoy the joys of teaching.

The Retired Members Committee hopes to support new educators of color and minority race and ethnicity educators, by bringing attention to and offering solutions to their unique workplace obstacles. The goal for the educator workforce is to match the student population it is teaching.

Support us! Join us! ■

Zellner is a Retired educator who is participating as a mentor in the program. For more information on the mentor program, email mtamentoring@massteacher.org.

ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT

The Ongoing Fight for Public Education

Dale Melcher

What do the Nov. 5 election results mean for public education nationally and here in Massachusetts?

On Nov. 6, the Retired Members Committee launched its “First Wednesday Retiree Speaker Series” with journalist Jennifer Berkshire and education historian Jack Schneider, authors of “The Education Wars: A Citizen’s Guide and Defense Manual” and “A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education and the Future of School.” (They also have a terrific podcast called “Have You Heard.”)

They both have spent years examining the forces behind the ongoing attempts to weaken, defund and privatize public education through

vouchers and corporate charter schools.

Berkshire and Schneider found mixed news in the election results. While the national results do not bode well for support for public education, with President-elect Donald Trump proposing to shut down the U.S. Department of Education, Massachusetts voters resoundingly passed Question 2 on the statewide ballot, eliminating the MCAS as a graduation requirement in the Commonwealth.

On a positive note nationally, voters in the red states of Kentucky and Nebraska, as well as in Colorado, voted against “school choice” measures. Berkshire and Schneider

pointed out that people across the political spectrum value their public schools and that we need to build new alliances to protect this important foundation of democracy.

The complete conversation between Berkshire and Schneider will be available soon on the MTA Retired page at [massteacher.org/retired](https://www.massteacher.org/retired). Previous recordings of the “First Wednesday Retired Speaker Series” are available there now. ■

Melcher is a member of the Retired Members Committee who can be reached at daleannmelcher@gmail.com.

**FIRST
WEDNESDAY**

RETIREE SPEAKER SERIES



All events are virtual,
on Zoom.
3 - 4:30 p.m.
Registration is
required. Zoom link
will be sent a few days
before the event.

DECEMBER 4 **Memory and Aging** **Dr. Rebecca Starr**

Are you worried about dementia? Listen to Dr. Rebecca Starr, an expert on memory loss, and learn the difference between everyday age-related memory challenges and early warning signs of possible dementia. Bring your questions and curiosity about this vital topic in our lives. Understanding the nature of memory loss and dementia will help you learn the best approaches to dealing with this life challenge.

JANUARY 8 **Media and Bias** **Charlotte Ryan**

What is propaganda? How does it differ from typical political opposition? This workshop will focus on anti-labor propaganda and describe communication strategies used to undermine union organizing and discredit unionized labor. It also will review effective pro-labor communication strategies. We will reserve ample time for discussion, during which time workshop participants will be strongly encouraged to share their experiences.

STAY TUNED FOR UPCOMING SESSIONS!

FEBRUARY 5 **Care and Life Balance**

MARCH 5 **Protect our Pensions**

APRIL 2 **HEAT: The Impact of Global Warming on Elders**

MAY 7 **RMC Educators of Color Mentoring Project**

JUNE 4 **Books Not Bombs: A Look at Education Funding**

Registration
information will
be posted at
[massteacher.org/
retired](https://www.massteacher.org/retired).



Election Opportunities for MTA Retired Members

Our union's strength comes from full participation of all members, including retired educators, in MTA and NEA election processes at the local, state and national levels. Please consider the following opportunities to engage in the democratic processes of our union. Share with other retirees, and let's grow our union power.

The election and nomination process for the seats described here are subject to MTA Bylaws and to MTA policy/procedures for nominations and elections, all of which are available upon request from the MTA Division of Governance.

Statewide Retired District Directors on the MTA Board of Directors

Two seats are available for Statewide Retired District Director on the MTA Board of Directors. The Board is the governing body of the MTA, with various duties including full control of the affairs of the association, except when the delegates are in session. Terms are for three years beginning July 1, 2025. Candidates must be members of the Statewide Retired District. There is a self-nomination process, with a deadline of March 7, 2025, at 5 p.m. The election will take place at the 2025 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates, voted on by delegates representing the Retired District.

Those wishing to run for these Board seats should submit a self-nominating letter no later than 5 p.m. on March 7, specifying the candidate's name and address and the office being sought. The letter should be addressed to

Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, or sent via email to MTAGovernance@massteacher.org.

MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

The 2025 NEA Representative Assembly is scheduled for July 2 through July 6, in Portland, Oregon. This meeting of representatives from all NEA state associations is the world's largest democratic deliberative assembly! At the NEA-RA, delegates debate the vital issues that impact American public education and set association policy and activities for the year ahead. It is an opportunity for democratic engagement and making national connections to build our movement and strength.

Elected NEA-RA retired delegates are strongly encouraged to attend the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, typically held immediately before the NEA-RA. Information will be sent to all the elected delegates, and the MTA will reimburse additional hotel and meal expenses.

The NEA will allocate the number of retired delegate seats to the NEA-RA for Massachusetts based on membership figures in January 2025. MTA/NEA retired members are eligible to run in the NEA Retired category for the seats allocated by NEA. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. These delegates will be elected by ballots provided to retired members in February.

MTA provides funding for travel expenses to the winners of the MTA Statewide, Regional and Retired elections to the NEA-RA, up to \$2,000 per delegate, subject to accountability requirements and reimbursement guidelines.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, at 5 p.m.

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AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES for MTA Retired Members

- Statewide Retired District Directors on the MTA Board of Directors.
- MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly.
- Statewide Retired District and Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting.
- MTA Retired Members Committee.

Nomination forms available online at massteacher.org/nomform.

GOVERNANCE

Statewide Retired District Delegates and Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting

The 2025 Annual Meeting of Delegates is scheduled for May 2 and 3 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield. In this meeting, delegates from across the state gather to vote on policies and set the direction for the MTA in the year ahead. Your voice matters.

The Statewide Retired District Delegates will be elected by ballot provided to the retired membership in conjunction with the NEA delegate elections in February. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. The 2025 allocation of retired delegates seats will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members as of January 15.

In addition, there is an allocation of two (2) ethnic minority delegate seats for the Statewide Retired District. As with the districts among the active membership, this allocation is equal to the number of seats per district on the MTA Board of Directors. Election of these seats will be held concurrently with the other retired delegate seats mentioned in this article. Retired members may run for Annual Meeting delegate seats in both categories, and if elected to both, must notify MTA which seat they intend to fill.

Retired delegates to the Annual Meeting may apply for reimbursement of certain travel expenses incurred to attend Annual Meeting, up to \$450.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, at 5 p.m.

MTA Retired Members Committee

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by the Statewide Retired District Delegates at the 2025 Annual Meeting. This committee plans the statewide retiree conference and serves as an important voice of retirees within the MTA. The committee seats have terms of two years, starting July 1, 2025.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, March 7, 2025, at 5 p.m.

Election Waiver

MTA's election waiver policy applies to the elections described in this issue. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, the election(s) may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the position(s) in question.

Nomination and Election Details Now on the MTA Website

In addition to the information published here and in the fall issue of MTA Today, all MTA and NEA election information may be accessed at the MTA website:

massteacher.org/MTAelections.

MTA Retired Elections Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the nomination or election process, please contact Governance Specialist John Connelly at jconnelly@massteacher.org.

The co-chairs of the Retired Members Committee are also available to assist you with information on election opportunities available to retired members and the election

process. Committee chairs Kathy Greeley and Rick Last can be reached at kegreeley@gmail.com and ricklewislast@gmail.com.

ELECTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MTA RETIRED MEMBERS

Please note that paper forms are available in this issue of the MTA Reporter, but we strongly encourage you to use the online nomination forms at massteacher.org/nomform.

Get Comprehensive Dental Coverage

Maintaining good health, including dental care, is a priority for many people. To help lower the cost of dental services, MTA Benefits offers a range of dental insurance options through MetLife and United Concordia. These plans are designed to provide flexibility and coverage for a variety of dental needs, whether MTA members are seeking basic care or more extensive coverage.

MetLife

MetLife provides two distinct options for MTA members, each tailored to different needs. The standard plan offers a lower level of coverage for both in-network and out-of-network services, making it an affordable choice for those who need basic dental care. While orthodontia is not covered, this plan helps offset the cost of routine dental services. For members who prefer more comprehensive coverage, the premium plan offers the highest

benefits for both in-network and out-of-network care. Like the standard plan, orthodontia services are not included, but the premium plan provides broader coverage for a wider range of dental treatments. MTA members can purchase coverage for themselves or for themselves and their dependents, ensuring that their families also benefit from affordable dental care.

United Concordia

In addition to MetLife, United Concordia offers another popular option for MTA members. This plan provides significant savings, with discounts of more than 40% on provider fees for in-network services. One of the key advantages of the United Concordia plan is its flexibility: Members can visit any dentist, and there are no waiting periods or claim forms required. The plan also offers portable coverage, making it convenient for members who travel out of state or internationally. Coverage is available for dependents

up to age 26 and for dependents of any age who have disabilities, providing coverage for family members as well. United Concordia also offers coverage for dental implants, with savings of up to 44% when using in-network providers.

Both the MetLife and United Concordia plans offer valuable dental insurance options, allowing MTA members to choose the level of coverage that best fits their needs and budget. When comparing plans, it's important to consider both the cost and the benefits to select the option that provides the best value for ongoing dental care. ■

For more information or to enroll, visit www.mtabenefits.com/dental.



WISDOM WARRIORS

COME JOIN US!

Calling on retired MTA members to show up to support:

- Locals and their issues.
- The MTA legislative agenda.

Wisdom Warriors is a statewide program of the Retired Members Committee of the MTA. We have coordinators in the Metro-Boston, Eastern, Southern and West regions of the state.

The Wisdom Warriors provide encouragement to locals in need, demonstrate union solidarity, and engage in friendship and fun while supporting MTA-sponsored legislation and our broader mission to champion public education. While frequently injecting song and humor into otherwise challenging situations, the particular manifestation of our solidarity varies according to the issue, the circumstance, and the members' needs.

Recent activities have included participating in rallies organized by

locals and helping our union win Question 2.

We welcome all retired MTA members as an important way to stay involved with our union!

Come be a part of creating what it will look like as retirees support our members. It will be fun! We have set up an email and text list of retired MTA members who are willing to be contacted when we receive a "bat signal" request to support a local struggle or a statewide action. If you can participate in the action, that's great. If not, don't worry about it!

To join our list, simply send an email to mtawisdomwarriors@gmail.com with your contact information. Please include where you live. You will then be contacted by a regional coordinator to get you on the list. ■

Three members of the Wisdom Warriors, from left, Beth Blanchard, Patrick Patterson and Maria Wilkins, shown at a recent rally.



UNION MTA SKILLS

Winter Conference



SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY

25

JANUARY

2 0 2 5

LOCATION

**Hilton Boston
Park Plaza
50 Park Plaza
Boston, MA
02116**



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unionskills](https://massteacher.org/unionskills)



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STAY INVOLVED AND RENEW YOUR RETIRED MEMBERSHIP

Help a friend/colleague become an MTA and NEA Retired Member



massteacher.org/RetiredSignup

