



# The Advocate

March 2013

## AFT MA to Host Annual Conference April 6 VP Francine Lawrence scheduled to deliver keynote

On Saturday, April 6 at 9 AM, AFT representatives from across the Commonwealth will gather at the Boston Teachers Union Hall (180 Mount Vernon Street, Boston) for the 2013 edition of the annual AFT MA Education/Legislation Conference.

“The purpose of this one-day conference is to bring you up to date on...key issues and to involve...members in a unified effort to defend our rights and our benefits,” explains AFT MA Vice President Ed Doherty.

At this event, leaders from AFT MA locals will discuss an array of vital issues that affect teachers and workers in the classroom, the boardroom, and the chambers of the Senate and House.

As the scope of topics has expanded so drastically in recent years, Doherty says that the name of the Conference has expanded as well. “Originally, we referred to it as the Annual Education Conference,” Doherty explains. “Over the last couple of years, we have been referring to it as the Annual Education/Legislative Conference because there has been so much happening in legislation that we have had to include those kinds of topics in the Conference agenda.”

**Paraprofessionals are invited to their own conference on Saturday, March 9, 2013 (Please see page 4)**

The Conference will begin with a Continental breakfast, after which participants will come together for a morning plenary and presentations from a series of distinguished speakers, including AFT Vice President Francine Lawrence, who hopes to share her knowledge of recent educational legislation affecting AFT members, their districts and their communities across the country. “I believe that strong political and legislative programs, such as those embraced by AFT MA are making a difference for our schools and communities,” Lawrence suggests. Among the topics Lawrence hopes to cover are charter school growth and AFT’s recent unionization of charter school faculties in other states, as well as effective approaches to community and stakeholder engagement through community schools, and collaborative school improvement strategies that improve upon current turnaround models. Doherty notes that the improvement of collaborative relationships will be a central theme of the conference as well.

After the speakers’ presentations, members will participate in workshops that will be offered both in the morning and afternoon. In between the two workshop sessions, members will be able to mix and mingle during an uninterrupted lunch. Before going back to their locals and their colleagues, members will be involved in a wrap-up session that will help focus their efforts and energize their involvement.

As so many of the issues facing Massachusetts workers are the same as those that are being dealt with on a national level, Doherty says that AFT MA has tried to bring people of national prominence like Vice President Lawrence and AFT President Randi Weingarten (who participated last year) to the Conference. According to Doherty, Vice President Lawrence will discuss “the major educational challenges that the AFT is dealing with around the country.”

As the most effective way to deal with national issues is on the local level, AFT MA will also have many of its own administrators and leaders participate in and present at the Conference. Among these will be AFT MA Field Representative Andy Powell, who will discuss new legislation

related to retiree health insurance, and AFT MA’s Director of Educational Policy and Programs Dan Murphy, who will inform members about the policies related to ESL students that are being put forth as part of the new RETELL initiative. Doherty adds that there will also be a special presentation on what is happening in the City of Lawrence as it is clearly one of the most challenged locals in the Union.

When asked about his planned program, Powell says that it will be an opportunity to learn about and discuss the many important changes that are being proposed and enacted regarding retiree health insurance and other vital matters. “The proposed Retiree Healthcare Reform will impact every working person now and in the future,” Powell suggests, noting that the legislation is expected to be filed by the end of February. Powell also suggests that, while this forum may particularly benefit any employees who are nearing or planning retirement, it will “serve all current employees.”

Murphy’s workshop will focus on the Commonwealth’s new Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative. “RETELL is designed to strengthen teachers’ and administrators’ knowledge and skills in the instruction of English language learners,” Murphy explains, noting that the program includes new training and state licensure requirements that will affect thousands of educators. “The workshop will explain who is affected and how; review the new coursework/licensure requirements and timelines; and offer ideas for how local union leaders can support teachers who must complete the required training.”

At the closing session, the state of the

political arena will also be assessed. With special elections at the state and Federal level, AFT members need to remain vigilant so that their issues remain at the forefront of the legislative agenda.

As an added bonus, members who remain for the entire day will be eligible to win a pair of Red Sox tickets that are being donated by AFT President (and life-long Sox fan) Tom Gosnell.

Though the AFT encourages participation by all members, this Conference is particularly geared toward local leadership and those who aspire to it.

“We invite locals to send teams of roughly 6-10 people,” Doherty explains, noting that larger teams are welcome as long as they inform Conference organizers that they plan to attend. In addition to local presidents and members of AFT MA’s many devoted negotiating teams

and executive boards, and even some superintendents and other administrators, Doherty also hopes to see “up and coming” Union activists who can help support and even spearhead future campaigns and events.

“Certainly, there will be a lot to talk about,” Doherty acknowledges. “We are facing great challenges...and we look forward to bringing our members and our locals together.” ■



**NATIONAL FOCUS AFT Vice President Francine Lawrence is scheduled to speak at 2013 AFT MA Conference**

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### PRIORITIES:



**A REAL CHARACTER** AFT Advocate features our own featured artist Joe Quigley in *Summa Cum Laude* (page 5)





## THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

**Thomas J. Gosnell**  
**President, AFT Massachusetts**

# A Beehive of Activity

**A**FT MA is a member of a coalition called Campaign for Our Communities. The coalition is proposing legislation which will provide more revenue to help our communities thrive.

The following two paragraphs are taken from a flyer developed by Campaign for Our Communities:

- In recent years the state has cut funding for educational programs that keep our schools strong, for public colleges and universities, and for local aid. We have woefully underfunded roads, public transportation and other public systems and structures that we all count on. If we continue down this path, we risk weakening the state economy and making Massachusetts a far less attractive place in which to live and do business.

- We need to adopt tax reforms that raise revenue – and do so in a way that is fair and holds down increases on middle-income families. The reforms supported by the Campaign for Our Communities would restore the state income tax to 5.95 percent and raise the tax rate on

investment income to 8.95 percent. Significant exemptions to protect low-and middle-income taxpayers and seniors are a central part of the proposal. The package is projected to raise approximately \$2 billion a year when fully phased in.

The Campaign, with the full participation of AFT MA, will be sending all members postcards that can be mailed to state representatives and state senators encouraging them to support additional revenues.

• The Charter School Association has submitted a bill to remove the cap on the number of charter schools. Even though the legislature raised the cap several years ago, the Charter School Association believes the demand for their schools is so great that the removal of the cap is necessary. The current funding formula for charter school is unfair because the regular school district loses money even when a charter school student has never been in the regular public schools. In addition, their failure to enroll sufficient number of special education and English language learning students is unfair.

• The Mayor of Boston has submitted a bill which would permit school

districts in which a school or schools have been designated as underperforming to increase the length of the school day and to determine compensation, if any, without engaging in collective bargaining. AFT MA supports the right of school districts and unions to lengthen the school day and to determine compensation through collective bargaining.

• The Mayor of Boston has submitted a bill to expand greatly the number of schools that can be considered underperforming. Passage of this bill would mean that staff in many more schools would lose assignment rights they now have.

• AFT MA and the Massachusetts Teachers Union have jointly filed a bill which will permit early childhood centers to organize and to collectively bargain. The thrust of this bill is to get more resources and opportunities for the children and to enable the staff to obtain a professional wage.

In his book “Kennedy”, Ted Sorensen stated that the domestic subject that mattered most to John Kennedy was education. Throughout his campaign and throughout his Presidency, he devoted more time and talks to this single topic than to any other domestic issue.

President John F. Kennedy said, “Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. The human mind is our fundamental resource.”

If you have any questions or comments, you can email me at [tgosnell@aftma.net](mailto:tgosnell@aftma.net). ■

## BOLD PRINT

An act regarding retirement legislation was officially filed by Governor Deval Patrick on February 12, 2013. House Bill 59 (entitled “An Act Providing Retiree Healthcare Benefits Reform”) mirrors recommendations from the OPEB Commission as reported in the January Advocate. A detailed outline of the proposed changes are available at AFTMA’s website.

□□□□

Berklee alumni and faculty earned seven Grammy Awards on February 10 for their songwriting and performance talents in the genres of pop country, and jazz. Jeff Bhasker (Class of ‘99) won Song of the Year for his work as a songwriter on Fun’s “We Are Young.” These awards bring Berklee’s total alumni Grammy count to 229.

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Got good news to share?  
Send it to [advocate@aftma.net](mailto:advocate@aftma.net)

## The Advocate

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## The ABC's of

Whether you are new to teaching or new to a union, there are certain terms that are helpful to know. In fact, there are many! In the educational spirit, we at *The Advocate* present this collection of definitions and explanations that we hope will make your life in AFT as easy as ABC.

**Collective bargaining (n.)** - A process of negotiations between employers and a group of employees aimed at reaching agreements that regulate working conditions. The employees are typically represented by a trade union to which they belong. The collective agreements reached by these negotiations set out such things as wage scales, working hours, training, health and safety, overtime, grievance mechanisms, and rights to participate in worker affairs.

Collective agreements function as contracts between employers and unions. Collective bargaining consists of negotiation between representatives of a union and employers concerning the terms and conditions of employment and the rights and responsibilities of the unions. The result of such negotiations is often referred to as a “collective bargaining agreement” (CBA).

Though the term “collective bargaining” was first used in 1891 by economic theorist Beatrice Webb, collective negotiations had existed since the rise of unions in the 18th century.

The right to collectively bargain is recognized in international human rights conventions and is considered an essential element of humanity that enhances human dignity, liberty and autonomy of workers by giving them the opportunity to influence workplace rules and thereby gain control over their lives. Collective bargaining also offers more tangible advantages as well. On average, workers covered by collective agreements receive a 5 to 10 percent wage increase compared to non-unionized workers. Unions also tend to enjoy more equalized distribution of income, especially between skilled and unskilled workers

In the United States, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 covers most CBAs in the private sector. The Act makes it illegal for employers to discriminate, harass, or terminate workers because of union membership, to retaliate against them for engaging in organizing, or to refuse to engage in bargaining with the union that represents their employees.

Have a question? Want a term defined? Write to [advocate@aftma.net](mailto:advocate@aftma.net).



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# Getting Up Early

## New ECE legislation will support teachers

As more and more is demanded of students, it is becoming clear that, in order to achieve a successful educational experience, teachers need to have more demanded of them as well. Unfortunately, many of these demands come without a balance of reward. Perhaps nowhere else is this more evident than in the world of early childhood education (ECE).

“Quality early childhood education enables children to achieve better in later grades and to develop more social skills,” observes AFT MA President Tom Gosnell. “AFT MA champions what is best for children.”

Sadly, research suggests that such champions are still few and far between and that ECE educators are not being appropriately or sufficiently supported. In a recent study conducted at Georgetown University, it was discovered that, while the median annual earnings of B.A. graduates with a major in ECE were \$36,000, students with a major in elementary education have a median annual salary of \$40,000. Not only do ECE educators earn 10% less than their elementary education colleagues, they ranked second-to-last in terms of salary of 171 occupations that were considered in the study! Furthermore, according to data from the Occupational Employment Statistics of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (May, 2010), median annual salaries of preschool teachers were \$25,700. In contrast, median annual salaries of elementary school teachers were \$51,660, which is over twice as much!

“To say that our level of concern is high would be an understatement,” says Sara McCormick Davis, Ed.D., president of the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE).

Just because students are smaller does not mean that teacher salaries should be likewise. In fact, many contend that ECE teachers need to be even more qualified, as the demands of ECE classrooms can, in many cases, be more challenging than those faced teaching older students. Even President Obama noted the importance of early education in his State of the Union address and is now pushing for the largest expansions in the sector since head start programs were created 50 years ago.

“Study after study shows that the earlier a child begins learning, the better he or she does down the road,” Obama said in a recent speech given at a Decatur, GA preschool.

A recent position paper from NAECTE emphasizes the “unique developmental and educational needs of children between the ages of 3 and 8.” Citing recent research on brain development, the paper concludes that “experiences of the first years of life have a decisive and long-lasting impact on all areas of children’s later development and learning.” As such, it suggests, ECE workers have the potential to make a profound difference in all children’s lives and need to be recognized and rewarded appropriately.

While the benefits of early education are evident, those who provide it often do not reap similar benefits.

“We can’t keep expecting more of [ECE educators] and not do...something about the compensation question,” says Bridgewater State University Professor Greg Nelson, who is also

President of the Massachusetts Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (MAECTE). According to Nelson, the plight of underpaid ECE workers is an “injustice” that can only be righted by increasing investment.”

In order to support such increased investment in ECE programs, many believe that the people who operate such programs (many of which are independent) need to be given a voice.

“Everyone should have the right to negotiate for their salary and benefits,” says Wheaton College Professor Marge Werner. The daughter of a long-time union member, Werner is especially sensitive to the needs of workers and



**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS UNITED** Members of Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators Union (MECEU) rally to support ECE workers

their families. As director of Wheaton’s laboratory preschool and another long-time member of MAECTE, she is also keenly attuned to the needs of educators, especially those who serve younger students and their families. “I strongly support workers organizing if need be to obtain a fair wage and adequate benefits.”

While the state has shown support in the past for ECE educators, many of them still want and, they say, need more. “[Massachusetts] hasn’t contributed sufficient additional resources to recruit and retain high-quality teachers,” said Tracy Sheerin, assistant director at KidZone Child Care / Educational Centers Inc., a family-owned child care center in Pittsfield. “Early childhood educators need a voice at the state level so we can address the issues that are presenting real challenges to our profession and the children we serve.”

Fortunately, ECE workers and their supporters in Massachusetts have taken note of this need for greater attention and compensation and are doing something about it.

“Our teachers and paraprofessionals, especially those teaching Pre-K and Kindergarten, understand the importance of having a robust early childhood program,” says AFT MA Political Organizer Brian LaPierre. “That is why many have participated in our grassroots campaign to organize.”

In January, 2011, a group of ECE educators and staff that goes by the title the Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators Union (MECEU) filed legislation intended to improve the quality of ECE and the quality of life for ECE workers in the Commonwealth by forming a “non-traditional” union among 5,000 ECE educators who are working at 500 of the Commonwealth’s most resource-needy centers (i.e., those that receive child-care subsidies for at least 10 percent of the children served).

“We are focusing on 500 centers that receive support from the state,” explains MECEU Campaign Director Teresa Rankin. “The focuses are building a group of supporters within the ECE community in Massachusetts.”

While Rankin credits Gosnell with being a “leader” in the movement “from the beginning,” what is more encouraging is that he is not alone and that support and success are building.

“This is a new organizing campaign,” adds AFT representative Chris Johnson. “These early educators are not union members yet, but will be when our [legislation] is passed.”

According to Johnson, the “ulti-

mate goal” of the proposed legislation is “a statewide collective bargaining agreement between centers and the state.”

Entitled “An Act to Improve Quality in Early Education Care Centers,” the legislation states that its intent is to “improve the quality of early childhood in our state by forming a union of early childhood educators.”

Though a similar proposal has been presented before, it did not garner the support it needed to pass. That is why it was recently remounted for a two-year cycle starting in 2013. “It has been revised and improved,” Rankin suggests.

In its introduction, the Act states that, “Decades of research confirms that investment in early education today pays off tomorrow,” citing the skills and other benefits it affords students, both in school and in life.

As many disadvantaged children lack the parental and social supports enjoyed by the more privileged, this Act is intended to allow and encourage ECE educators to work on their behalf in particular. “Our bill aims to improve early education for some of the most at-risk students in the Commonwealth by creating a framework for administrators, teachers and staff working in the neediest centers to negotiate with the state over issues related to workforce development,” it says. According to the Act, this goal will be achieved through the creation of a statewide Providers’ Organization consisting of teachers, directors and support staff that will be allowed to “negotiate with the Commonwealth over issues related to workforce development,” including professional development, recruitment and retention, assessment, and compensation. Regarding this last element, the Act claims to support and build upon the commitment by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care to “support professional growth

for early educators and to remedy inadequate compensation in the field.”

According to MECEU organizing committee member and ECE educator Tracy J. Sheerin, there is still “a lack of correlation between the importance of early childhood educators and the benefits of early childhood education.” Simply put, Sheerin observes, “educators are underpaid.” She notes how, despite the fact that many ECE workers work year-round, they are still paid less (in some cases, up to 2/3 less) than most public school teachers. As they are not unionized, many ECE workers have difficulty getting benefits and also find it challenging to pay for additional training. Furthermore, when they do garner advanced degrees, their pay rarely goes up. “[Many] are being asked to obtain Bachelor’s degrees,” Sheerin notes, “with no increase in compensation.” The most notable results of these situations are high burnout and high turnover, both of which are disruptive both the educators and the students.

“Yet through all this adversity,” Sheerin observes, “early childhood educators are still producing results that show effective teaching with the limited resources available. Imagine what could happen with the right resources, training and compensation?”

Such are the goals of this Act.

Declared to be “an emergency law” by MECEU, the Act has yet to be passed but is now closer than ever, thanks to support from teachers, parents, legislators and others.

Among the champions of the Act are its main sponsors, Senator Sal DiDomenico (D Everett) and Representative Jeffrey Sánchez (D Jamaica Plain).

“Investing in early childhood education is vital to the Commonwealth’s long-term economic health,” says DiDomenico, whose wife is a special education teacher. “In order to ensure that our youth have the tools necessary to compete in our global economy, we must start building a strong foundation today.”

As DiDomenico and his children attended head start programs, he knows first-hand the benefits that come from quality early education. “Teachers are vital to the success of these programs,” he asserts, “and this bill would help attract and retain well-trained child care workers.”

“I am proud to have sponsored this bill that would allow our early education providers the ability to receive essential grants and funding through the State,” adds Sánchez. “The early education centers throughout the Commonwealth are essential to the development of many young children, and I am happy to file legislation that would allow these dedicated educators to provide their students with exceptional educational opportunities”

Another major backer is the AFL-CIO, who is working with both the AFT MA and Massachusetts Teachers Association in support of this legislation. “If we are serious about improving the future of our nation’s children,” says Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Steven A. Tolman, “it is important that we not just invest in early-education, but also in early-educators....We must support and retain well-trained educators, especially in low income areas, by creating an organization that works hand-in-hand with the Commonwealth to provide high quality early-education and care.... We are excited to work to pass this bill and achieve its aim to invest in the future of our children.” ■



# Diary

## of a New Teacher

By Kirk Ahrens  
Ninth grade ELA teacher  
Mary Lyon Pilot School, Brighton

### Meet the 2012-2013 New Teacher Diarists

The following new teachers will be contributing to the New Teacher Diary during the 2012-2013 school year. The *Advocate* thanks all of these fine teachers for sharing their experiences.

**Bill Madden-Fuoco**  
Humanities teacher,  
Urban Science Academy ,West Roxbury,

**Chaya Harris**  
Fifth grade teacher, Mather School, Boston

**Eliana Martinez**  
Social studies teacher,  
Lawrence High School, Lawrence

**Bradford Green**  
English Teacher  
Pickering Middle School, Lynn, MA

**Himilcon Inciarte**  
Fourth grade Spanish teacher,  
Dever-McCormack, Elementary, Boston

**Amanda Perez**  
Middle school teacher,  
Sarah Greenwood School, Dorchester.

**Karina Dise**  
Paraprofessional,  
Zanetti Montessori School, Springfield

**Robert Tobio**  
Math and special education teacher,  
Mary Lyon Pilot School, Brighton

The sweat collected on my forehead as I sat hunched over my desk early last September. However, it was not the sweltering classroom that had my body temperature rising; it was anxiety. An onslaught of internal questions blocked my ability to think rationally: “What am I doing?” “How am I going make it to the weekend?” “How am I going to make it through this year?”

This was me in my first week of teaching.  
This was me having a full-on freak out.

Leading up to this point, I had spent four years serving various educational roles in the Boston area. I was a tutor, one-to-one paraprofessional, after-school teacher, Basketball coach, etc. All of this was done in a quest to become an English Language Arts teacher in Boston. Finally, the day came last June when the principal of The Mary Lyon Pilot High School in Brighton offered me my dream position- ninth grade English teacher. I was ecstatic! The rest of the summer, I obsessed over potential texts and possible units, mentally preparing my bulletin boards, and planning the all-important first day of school.

When that day arrived, I was more than ready. Each minute was planned in great detail, and I couldn’t wait to get the year started. As soon as it started, however, so did my most important lesson- that no one can depend on plans to work as smoothly in reality as they do in reverie. I spent most of that first day answering more questions than Google does on a typical day about topics ranging from bus schedules to locker combinations. There was barely a moment to say, “Oh, by the way, I’ll be your English teacher this year.”

By the end of the day, I was ready to collapse from exhaustion. It was only then that I realized I would have to go back again the next day!

As the days came and went, a pattern began to develop: I would



**DON'T PANIC!**  
Boston ELA teacher  
Kirk Ahrens (right)  
encourages new  
teachers to keep  
their goals in mind  
and to take it easy.

show up at school, fully prepared (at least in my own mind), and each afternoon, I would nearly pass out in my chair from scrambling all day. Then I would do it all again. While at first, the adrenaline was enough to keep me going, eventually, the excitement of the new experience began to wear off, and I was left feeling tired, frustrated, and anxious.

I have never been one to make things up as I go along. For the sake of my students (and my nerves), I like to be prepared well in advance. During those first few weeks in the classroom, however, the planning was becoming too much. I was so intent on getting each detail perfect that I would agonize over every aspect and element. Then, when something didn’t go as I had imagined, it was back to the drawing board and back to my freak outs.

I soon devolved into a mess of nervous energy desperately searching for a routine that would leave me feeling confident and that might also leave some time to see my wife (herself a veteran teacher and life-saving advisor) or do anything

other than think about my classes. Eventually, I came to the realization that perfection is neither an attainable nor a worthy goal (for teachers or for students) and that, if I did my best, the results would speak for themselves. More importantly, I would have enough energy and fortitude left over to stay on task and in the classroom.

While care and attention to detail matter, planning so meticulously for each class can get in the way of actual teaching and supporting students. Teachers need instead to spend more time focusing on the small success of each day (even if that meant helping a student find their locker) and making productive changes to the less successful attempts.

Teaching is the hardest thing I have ever done and I have tremendous admiration for the veterans who continue to work to improve their craft. For me, realizing that teaching is a craft that is built with trial and error, passion and perseverance, was the first step towards making real progress. Here’s to many more years, with many more mistakes, and many more successes! ■



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## “Paras” Get Their Own Statewide conference March 9

Saturday, March 9, 2013, is the date for the 27th Annual Paraprofessional Statewide Conference. The event will be hosted at the Boston teachers Union Hall (180 Mount Vernon Street, Boston) starting at 8:30 AM and will run until 3 PM.

This year’s conference will feature a presentation by AFT MA Field Representative Andrew Powell concerning the recommendations of the OPEB Commission regarding potential changes to retirement policy.

“The Governor has filed legislation that proposes dramatic changes to what every public employee will receive for health insurance upon retirement,” Powell says. “The proposed changes in this legislation will seriously impact those public employees who count on health insurance as part of their retirement. Regardless of your job, everyone from teachers, paraprofessionals, to librarians and firefighters will be subject to the changes.”

As such, Powell suggests, it is important that all public employees educate themselves about their rights and obligations and that is why, he says, this

event is so vital to our paraprofessionals.

“The conference will be a wonderful opportunity for paraprofessionals to meet and share ideas,” agrees AFT MA President Tom Gosnell.

Realizing these benefits, many of our members have taken advantage of this opportunity year after year and have brought colleagues to participate as well.

“I try to go to all of them,” says Connie Motta, president of the New Bedford Federation of Paraprofessionals. “You learn a lot of things you can bring back to your staff members.”

Though she has been attending regularly since 2006, Motta says she is particularly interested in this year’s conference as one of the main topics being discussed will be retirement issues.

“I am so happy because some people don’t understand about retirement,” she suggests. “This will be great for our future!”

The registration deadline is March 1. All paraprofessionals are encouraged to contact the BTU office immediately to reserve space for themselves and their colleagues. ■



# Summa Cum Laude: Joe Quigley

It has oft been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. That is why we at the *Advocate* are so fortunate (and grateful) to have the support and talents of politically-minded educator and artist Joe Quigley.

Once on the path to the clergy, the Boston-born Quigley eventually found his true calling as a teacher and has since gone on to win awards for his talents in the classroom and his abilities to support students outside of it as well.

“At 14, I went to Sacred Heart Juniorate in Ipswich,” recalls Quigley. “I stayed with them through novitiate and two years of college when I left and finished my Bachelor’s degree at Stonehill College in North Easton.”

After garnering a first teaching assignment in New York, Quigley returned to teach in Massachusetts. While at Stoughton High School, Quigley became active in union affairs, eventually becoming president of the Stoughton Teachers Association. “The highlight of that experience was fighting for and finally getting permission to start a sheltered workshop for my special education students as part of their academic school day,” says the champion of students with special needs.

After making his mark in many positive and profound ways in Stoughton, Quigley returned to his native Boston, first as a permanent substitute at Boston Latin School and then as a full-time special education teacher at the James P. Timilty middle school.

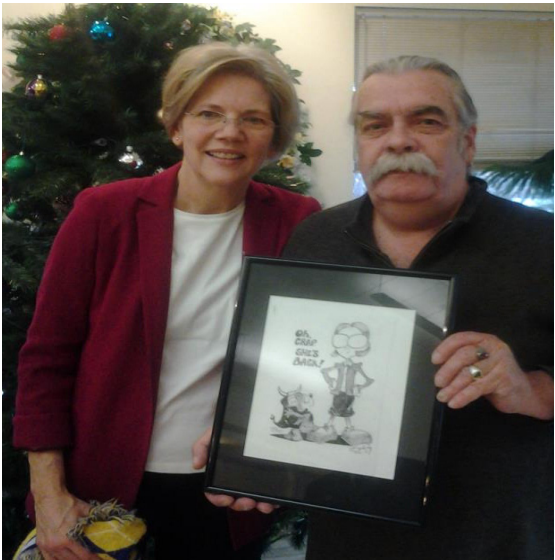
Taking a break from the east coast, Quigley headed to Los Angeles to serve as a building representative. It was in the cartoon capital of the world that Quigley began to use drawings as a new means of expression and support. “I drew cartoons for the *United*

*Teacher*,” he recalls, mentioning the West Coast version of the AFT MA’s *Advocate*. Quigley also designed and drew large-format posters and signs to bring to rallies. “My cartoons were instrumental in convincing the teachers of the need to strike in 1989 and educating the public about the reasons for that strike,” he says proudly, noting that one of his cartoons ended up festooned on city buses as part of a workers’ action. A fan and student of multiple media, Quigley’s self-produced videos resulted in the Los Angeles district establishing an annual Video in the Classroom competition which, he adds, “my students won the first year!” In addition to helping them learn the lingua franca of Hollywood, the competition also helped Quigley’s students with other important skills. “They learned to better their reading and writing skills as they came up with the plots and scripts,” he explains, “and also learned to follow directions as production depended on that.”

In addition to supporting SPED students, Quigley was also an ardent champion of gay rights. “I was the chair of the Gay and Lesbian Caucus when it was granted full standing committee status by the union,” he recalls, “and was one of the first group of teachers to walk in the L.A. Gay pride Parade as official representatives of the United Teachers of Los

Angeles.”

As he knew how to use a camera, Quigley also quickly came to know others in the area who did as well and used these connections to get his colleagues on local television news programs. Among the many public displays he helped produce was what Quigley calls an “informational picket” intended to spread the word about the alleged poor treatment of a colleague by the administration. “We



**DRAWING ON HIS PASSIONS** Joe Quigley with Senator Elizabeth Warren

demand that the meeting requested... be held at the school, not the central office, as the offense was done on our campus and the faculty should be present,” Quigley explains, noting proudly that, television cameras were present when the

assistant superintendent arrived for the meeting. “This whole thing got on local and national news,” he recalls, “and allowed the principal to return to work.”

Having been bi-coastal for some time, Quigley decided to split the difference and went to work in Oklahoma City. There, he again initiated media programs, including the video morning announcements at Taft Middle School. He was also involved in the local AFT chapter, serving as both a building representative and a board member. In 1997, Quigley was at the forefront of anti-bullying efforts intended to protect all students but especially

members of the GLBT community. After leaving the Taft, Quigley went further with his student support efforts, eventually creating a GLBT History Month display in his classroom. “I refused to take it down,” he recalls, “even when the principal passed on a parental objection.”

Such ardent support of undersupported students eventually led to an effort to have Quigley dismissed. And while a district court ruling nullified the attempted dismissal, Quigley himself began to face more and more harassment and discrimination. Still, he fought on, and even today, after returning to Massachusetts for retirement, Quigley remains a champion for SPED and GLBT students.

“I side with the underdog usually,” he admits.

In what may be an example of delayed justice, Quigley was recently awarded the prestigious Angie Debo Award by the Oklahoma American Civil Liberties Union in recognition of his fight to protect the rights of GLBT students in the Oklahoma schools. “When I did what I did,” Quigley explains, “I just did it because it needed to be done. And it finally was. The award made me aware how important it was to other people.”

As for why he supports these “other people,” Quigley says that, “I support these students because I know from experience that life is better if who you are is not something to be ashamed of,” Quigley explains.

As for why he has chosen illustration as his main medium, Quigley suggests that “information should be available” so that people can be informed and “make fewer mistakes.”

“I have no regrets in my life,” he says, “but I know things could have been different if I could have gotten good information early.” ■

**Know a student or teacher who gives back and deserves to be honored? Send their name to [advocate@aftma.net](mailto:advocate@aftma.net).**

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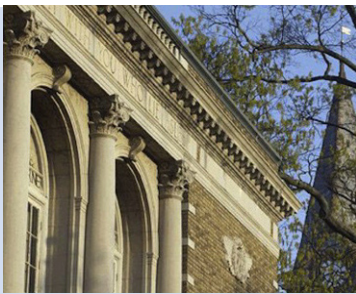






# On Campus

Dan Georgianna, Political Director  
UMass Faculty Federation, Local 1895



## Why So Many College Administrators?

The number of college administrators seems to be growing much faster than college students and full-time faculty. I wrote “seems” because data on the number of college administrators are not sufficient to measure the growth of college administrators.

The simplest definition of administrators is presidents (or chancellors), vice presidents, provosts, deans, division heads, and the assistant and associate administrators who work for them. These data are not usually available because colleges and universities do not separate administrators from other non-faculty professional staff in their staffing reports.

My own campus is the only data that I’m sure about, and it shows a sharp increase in the number of administrators. Their numbers have grown from 30 to over 90 in the past 15 years. These are the people who control hiring and make management decisions.

These increases are not proportional to the number of students. The College of Arts and Sciences, the largest college that enrolls nearly half of all students at UMass Dartmouth, has fewer assistant or associate deans than the Law School that has less than 300 students.

A common explanation for increas-

ing numbers of administrators is that bureaucracies tend to grow, both in number and in functions, especially if the bureaucracy controls hiring. Bureaucracies continue to grow even when revenues decline and rarely, if ever, shrink.

But bureaucratic entropy is not an explanation; it’s a description. Over the 30 years before the recent growth spurt of administrators at UMass Dartmouth, from its origin as Southeastern Massachusetts University, the number of administrators grew hardly at all.

The two major changes since then were the creation of the UMass system, uniting the five campuses into one system, and the cuts in state appropriations.

I don’t remember if cost cutting was an argument for the creation of the UMass system in 1991. I remember the arguments for better organization (synergy was in vogue) and the political benefits of five separate areas of the state lobbying for state funds for UMass.

Neither prediction has proven true. The UMass system remains five separate campuses with little gains from centralized organization, except in the growth of the central and campus administrations, driven by administra-

tions’ need to interact with each other.

Political power from the inclusion of additional campuses, if it has increased, has not stopped the almost continual cuts in the state appropriation for higher education, reported by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center as 35% since 2001.

These budget cuts changed the financial structure of public higher education from state funded to student funded, as campus administrations adopted the business model that considered students as customers willing to pay higher tuition and fees. Except that contrary to best business practices, colleges and universities often hire more administrators when enrollments decline.

Colleges and universities now market themselves as new and exciting places with wide assortments in educational programs, other student activities, and systems not oriented towards students. During the worst of budget crises, colleges and universities added new programs, even new schools and colleges, and non-academic centers and programs. Universities, especially, tried to become everything to everybody.

Examples abound; ubiquitous online education programs present some successful courses in fields adaptable

to this form of education but online programs have rarely proven either financially or academically successful. Virtually every university has also created programs to attract foreign students, who generally pay higher tuition and fees.

Each of these new programs requires additional administrators. For example, the UMass Office of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs & International Relations, originally an academic vice president with a staff of two or three, now has an Executive Director of the University of Massachusetts China Institute and Senior Advisor to the President.

The incentive structure for administrators feeds the widening of university goals and the accompanying demand for additional administrators. Administrators are usually talented people seeking to build their resumes with trendy initiatives in jobs they don’t expect to keep very long.

I’m not arguing that all new programs drain the system or that every administrator is wasteful. I’m proposing orienting evaluation of administrators of university programs, centers and other divisions toward students. The goal of higher education should be education. ■

## Pushing for Public Education:

### An interview with Higher Ed. Commissioner Richard M. Freeland

Despite recent economic challenges, many people are realizing that the key to growth and advancement is investment in education and that sacrifices may have to be made in order to shore up and develop our education system in a way that truly serves the students, the economy, and the nation.

Though Massachusetts is considered by many to be a world leader in this realm, many of our schools and districts face growing challenges that need support from within and from without. Fortunately, the cries of the underserved and undersupported are being heard. In fact, in his FY14 budget proposal, Governor Deval Patrick is pushing hard for increased investments in education across the Commonwealth. From universal early childhood education to increased budgets for higher education students at our many world-class public colleges and universities, the Governor’s ambitious proposals reach out to all students in all districts.

As public campuses now educate two-thirds of Massachusetts high school students who go to college in state, and as it is predicted that, by 2018, Massachusetts will lead the nation in the number of jobs requiring a college education, it is clear that our higher education system must be a priority if Massachusetts is to remain

competitive and continue to attract the best and the brightest. Though Massachusetts is the proud home of many of the world’s most prestigious private institutions, our public schools of higher education rank as low as 30th in the nation in terms of funding. The Governor’s proposal would help the Commonwealth lead not only in terms of academic capital but in terms of capital invested in academics by enhancing the funds that pay for such important elements of education as full-time faculty salaries and financial aid for public colleges and universities.

Through its ongoing Vision Project ([www.mass.edu/visionproject](http://www.mass.edu/visionproject)), which launched in September of 2012, the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education has been laying down the groundwork for what it hopes to be a future of growth and prosperity. Among the desired outcomes of the Project are increases in college participation and completion, student learning, and support for both faculty and research. Some specific goals are to make sure that students who enroll in our public schools of higher education are ready to engage in rigorous academics and are not held back due to insufficient preparation, to maintain affordable enrollment rates so that no student need be turned away, and to attract top teaching talent across all departments and fields. It is particu-

larly hoped that more students will also enroll in courses related to the demanding and in-demand fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). The Project also hopes to increase alignment between skills learned in our public schools and those required by the changing global marketplace, and to prepare students appropriately and effectively not only for academics and employment but also for citizenship and public service. As is the case with so many schools in the Commonwealth, a great deal of focus is also being paid to ways to close achievement gaps and disparities among students of various cultures and backgrounds and to encourage more students from underserved populations to enroll and graduate.

While the future appears promising for educators, the fact is that these expenditures will need to be offset with tax increases. As such, even many educators and students who stand to benefit from them are not certain as to whether they support the proposed changes or not. One individual who does support the proposals and the Project is Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Commissioner Richard M. Freeland.

In his first in-depth interview (the entire text of which is available on our website), Commissioner Freeland spoke with the *Advocate* about where



**BACKING THE BUDGET**  
Department of Higher Education  
Commissioner Richard M. Freeland

things stand and how he hopes to stand with the Governor moving forward.

**Advocate:** Why is now the time for this push by the Governor?

**Commissioner Freeland:** It’s true that in the K-12 sector, we are an education leader in terms of overall achievement, but it’s also true that we have large achievement gaps among different racial/ethnic and socio-economic groups. So Massachusetts is a national leader in K-12 math and reading achievement but with big caveats. And while we are making important progress in the higher education sector through the Vision Project, our public

*Continued on next page*





# Retiree Corner

Marie Ardito, Co-founder  
Massachusetts Retirees United  
www.retireesunited.org

## No Sense of Entitlement

Most of us are tired of the use of the word “entitlement” that so plagued the past election. We are exhausted from the talk about the greedy people who have their hands turned outward to get everything they can. Supposedly these same people account for almost half of our country’s total population! The fallout from this permeates the atmosphere and affects all of us on State Pensions, Social Security and Medicare.

An article that decried the pensions public employees (especially teachers) receive was recently sent to me by one of our members. It spoke about the size of the monthly pensions that new retirees receive, but failed to note the hundreds of older teacher retirees whose pensions are below \$350 a month; and the thousands who are well below a thousand a month.

Our pensions are not entitlements, but a benefit received for years of work in the public sector. We need to know the facts about our pensions and retirement contributions.

First, you are the only one who contributes to your pension until the day you retire. There are no matching

funds from employers. According to Tom Lussier, former Executive Director of the MTRS, our funds have done well in generating revenue. Anyone who contributed an average over 8.5% a year into their pension will never live long enough to collect all the money their contribution generated.

Second, the line item that cities and towns have in their budgets earmarked for retirement does not apply to teachers or state workers, but rather

Were any of you asked if you wanted to contribute to Social Security from your public sector job? Nobody is. Why? The cost would be prohibitive. Social Security contributions have the employee contribution matched by the employer. Who is going to match those funds- the state or city or town? Where are they going to get the money to pay 6.5% of every employee’s salary? The state has extended to 2040 the deadline for the elimination of the unfunded

liability for our pensions because they do not want to meet their full obligation in regard to our pensions. The same is true of the other 105 retirement systems.

We should resent the political

rhetoric of entitlement whether it is directed toward those retired under Social Security or the public sector. We worked, contributed, sacrificed to have these benefits in our senior years whether they apply to health insurance or monthly revenue. As for greed, there is no more unselfish group of people then our older Americans. No matter in which work force they were involved they gave the best that was within them. They not only did their job, but in many

### ATTENTION RETIREES:

The interest rate change deadline on retirees’ service buyback is April 2, 2013.

We urge you to go to the Mass. Teachers Retirement System website (www.mass.gov/mtrs) immediately to find the appropriate information and forms.

Any questions may be directed to MRU Information Coordinator Marie Ardito by calling 617-482-1568 or emailing mardito@retireesunited.org.

to those in each retirement system or one of the County Retirement Systems. There are 106 retirement systems in Massachusetts of which the Teachers’ Retirement System and the State Retirement Systems are the largest.

We are called greedy because we are looking to collect Social Security without penalty in addition to collecting our pensions. If you contributed to both because of a part-time job, shouldn’t you collect both?

## Commissioner Freeland

Continued from page 6

colleges and universities are not yet national leaders in most areas of academic work and graduation rates. The Governor is calling for these essential investments now because he recognizes that education is our calling card in the global marketplace. Businesses want to locate in Massachusetts because of our brainpower! So, investments in education actually help to boost the assets of today’s taxpayers because they support economic growth and future prosperity.

**Advocate:** What will change materially and who will be affected the most?

**Commissioner Freeland:** The Governor has made it clear that the new revenues he is seeking will come to higher education with some strings attached regarding performance. For example, the \$20 million in new FY14 dollars targeted for the community colleges will be distributed using a new formula that allocates state funding to individual campuses based on their achievements with respect to a variety of high priority educational outcomes. So the Governor is not just giving us more money. He plans to hold us accountable for delivering on the goals and aspirations we have defined for ourselves. Our challenge in spending the new dollars will be to use them in ways that improve our performance in

measureable ways. My guess is that one key thing we will want to do is reduce our reliance on adjunct faculty by hiring more full time professors. I also think we will want to strengthen the support services that are so vital to assisting students who often face major complications and barriers as they pursue their academic work. The Governor is also proposing a significant increase in funding for financial aid. Right now the financial aid program for our neediest students, MASSGrant, covers just 8% of the average student charges at a public college or university, down from 80% in 1988. The additional funding would help more students across the state to reach their goal of attending college.

**Advocate:** The push seems to deal most with early childhood education and higher education. What happens in the middle? Do we not need to stay with students throughout their careers?

**Commissioner Freeland:** The Governor has recommended a comprehensive set of investments that will support students from birth through higher education. In the K-12 sector, the Governor has proposed an increase of \$226 million for Chapter 70 funding for school districts, and has also proposed an increase in funding to extend the length of the school day and year espe-

cially in our middle schools. We know that some schools need additional resources to provide students with more time for learning, and the Governor’s proposal will give educators new opportunities to provide targeted support to students. That said, it is also true that in recent years the k-12 system has been a higher priority for state funding than our public colleges and universities, so I believe it is important to make major investments in higher education to enable us to achieve the kind of national leadership in higher education that we have accomplished in K-12.

**Advocate:** How can we assure that more of these graduates and more intellectual capital stay in the Commonwealth?

**Commissioner Freeland:** Massachusetts public college and university students are from here and are staying here. One year after graduation, 9 out of every 10 of our students remains in state, contributing to our innovation economy and/or pursuing further studies. When we invest in their education, we invest in our future citizens and workers.

**Advocate:** How can we promote our public schools of higher education and let the world know that there is more to the region than the Ivies and MIT?

**Commissioner Freeland:** In my opinion, Massachusetts has not histori-

## SENIOR SEMINARS

Preparing for Retirement  
by Marie Ardito

Thursday March 7, 2013, 3:45-5:45  
Relief In (Formerly K of C )  
1 Market Street, Lawrence

Thursday April 4, 2013, 3:30-5:30  
Methuen Educational Association  
Union Office - 184 Pleasant Valley  
Street, Suite 1-204, Methuen

Wednesday April 24, 2013, 3-5  
Lynn Teachers’ Union  
679 Western Avenue, Lynn

How to Protect Your Nest Egg and  
Plan for Your Family  
by Elder Law Attorney Mary Howie.

Saturday March 23, 2013, 10-Noon  
314 Main Street, Unit 105,  
Wilmington

Saturday April 27, 2013, 10-Noon  
314 Main Street, Unit 105,  
Wilmington

All Seminars are free to participants and to the district. Register by emailing mardito@retireesunited.org or calling 617-482-1568 Please give your name, the number attending and the seminar for which you are registering. No follow-up phone call will occur unless you ask a question.

instances went the extra mile. And for this they are entitled to live their senior years without the fear of losing what they have earned. They are entitled to respect for what they have accomplished without being labeled greedy! ■

cally believed that we needed to make the kinds of investments in our public campuses that states like California, Texas, Ohio and Wisconsin have made because we have so many terrific private colleges and universities. We need to disenthral ourselves of this idea. We have become the primary educators of the state’s future citizenry and workforce. The Governor has recognized that and that is why he is calling for major investments in public higher education.

We are also working hard to get the word out that our public colleges offer a very solid educational value right now. Our public institutions are providing students with affordable access to excellent academic and research opportunities, a wide range of extracurricular activities, and professional training for future careers. These students are our best ambassadors.

**Advocate:** How can we support those public schools in making their own marks on the academic world?

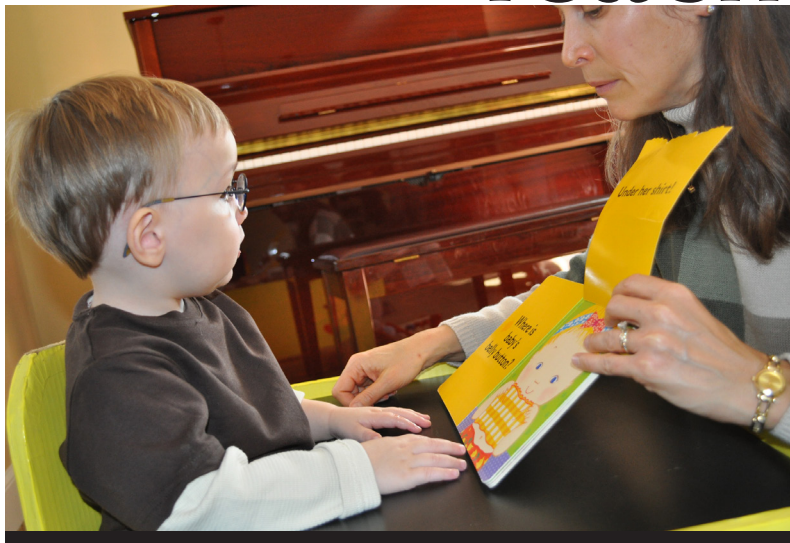
**Commissioner Freeland:** Through the Vision Project, we’re working to become national leaders in public higher education. It will take time to reach our goal, and additional funding for the system will be essential. But I’m confident that we can produce the best educated citizenry and workforce in the nation. ■





Resources for teachers of  
students who are blind  
or visually impaired

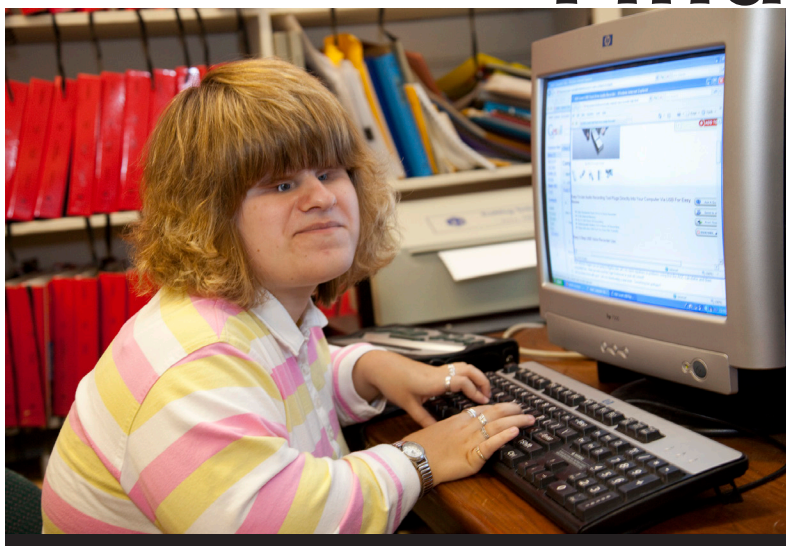
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