

MAY 16 RALLY AT THE STATE HOUSE



MTA Retired Members Beverly Saccoccia, Julia M. Johnson, Richard Liston at the Fund Our Future rally.

A variety of *Fund Our Future* actions began in the early afternoon and led up to the rally on Boston Common, which began at 5 p.m. The first major event was a People's Hearing moderated by an actor playing Founding Father John Adams. Adams was the primary author of the Massachusetts Constitution, which includes a requirement that the Legislature "cherish" education by supporting publicly funded schools throughout the Commonwealth.

Next was an Interfaith Call to Action during which clergy members from several denominations led a march inside the State House delivering bound volumes of handwritten letters to various legislative leaders. The marchers chanted "fund our future" and other exhortations before each delivery.

Another action was a Playdate Protest at which young children drew pictures and wrote on the sidewalk in chalk.

During the People's Hearing, Kim Gibson, president of the Brockton Education Association, spelled out how budget cuts impact Brockton, a Gateway City with a large and growing number of immigrant and low-income students.

"As a result of five years of this funding, Brockton has lost over 225 teaching positions and administrators and at least 50 paraprofessionals and teaching assistants, custodians and administrative assistants," Gibson said. "Our student population has not decreased over that time but in fact has increased. We now have larger class sizes at every level.

"We struggle to properly staff the special education classrooms with support staff as we have in the past," she continued. "Our science lab

» continued on PG 3

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Jacqueline Gorrie



Left: Timothy Depin from the Attorney General's Office, speaks at a Retired Brunch



Right: Chair Jackie Gorrie with MTA Retired Member Organizer Robert Whalen (left) and Paul McClory, MTA Director of Grassroots Organizing

“Very well organized and important topics”, “You prepare and present excellent material. I learn so much each time that I attend these programs.” “These meetings continue to be valuable to me, a chance to revisit former colleagues, get important data on current issues and ask questions. Thank you!”

This is just a sampling of the positive comments made by our members who attended the Retired Spring Brunches in April and May.

The evaluations of the over 200+ attendees statewide mirrored those testimonials. The format switch to Brunches, the program on *Fund Our Future*, retirees' rights as consumers and MTA's Legislative package were well received. Many members who had not completed our All Member Survey did so by hard copy or on I pads that were

provided at the Brunches. It's not too late to complete the survey — you have until June 30 to do so. It is not too late to have your input counted. Go to massteacher.org/retiredsurvey. Again, retirees demonstrated their commitment to pro-public education politicians by contributing \$1,175.18 to VOTE.

So if you missed this year's Brunches, do plan on attending the Spring 2020 Brunch Series. As one of our retirees commented at the end of the program, “I wasn't going to come because I was afraid that I wouldn't know anyone, but I am happy that I did come because I was welcomed by members of the Retired Members Committee and new friends that made me feel at home and I learned a lot.”

That's what we are, MTA Retired, friendly, welcoming and always learning. So, I'll see you at a Spring Brunch in 2020. ■

MTA RETIRED MEMBERS ATTEND THE MTA HCR EVENT



from left to right:

Silvia Golijov
Jackie Gorrie
Deanna White Hebert
Steve Gorrie
Louise Gaskins
Anne Wass
Helen Dooner
Robyn Smith

MAY 16 RALLY AT THE STATE HOUSE *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

rooms don't have enough seats for the number of students assigned. The technology required in today's world is severely lacking. Teachers are turning to Go Fund Me for basic classroom materials."

Gibson said the lack of resources has been "devastating" for the children in the community.

"We now have seven schools that are in the process of creating turnaround plans," she said. "Brockton has always risen to the occasion and done more with less, but without the proper resources and staffing levels that is near impossible."

Zena Link, a Weston High School teacher who formerly taught in Worcester, said that children and educators in poorly funded schools are blamed when the students flounder.

"Students are accused of being uninterested, unprepared and uninvolved when in fact they are under-resourced, underfunded and underappreciated," she said.

Yahaira Rodriguez, a paraeducator in Worcester, made the point that staff, as well as students, are hurt by the poor funding levels.

"We are the heroes in the back of the classroom," she said, referring to education support professionals. "We only make \$30,000 a year. We can't live on that."

While expectations are growing that a school funding bill could pass this spring, the Legislature has not made a similar commitment to public higher education. So far, leaders on Beacon Hill have not been moved by hard data

showing that state per-student spending on public higher education has dropped by more than 30 percent over the past decade — or by stories of homeless and food-insecure students crushed by debt.

To dramatize their plight, a group of students organized by the Public Higher Education Advocacy Network — PHENOM — began a rotating sit-in near the offices of the Senate president and Speaker of the House. The students said they plan to continue this sit-in through next week.

Rally speaker Erik Plowden, a student at UMass Amherst, explained the reason for the sit-in, saying, "We are going to bring the education crisis to their doorstep because they have ignored it for far too long."

The MTA has pledged to support their effort.

The Boston rally closed with a rousing speech by Graciela Mohamedi, a Brookline High School science teacher.

"We the people — students, parents and teachers — demand that the Legislature 'cherish' our schools!" Mohamedi said. "We are going to speak out, act up and show up until all our schools are fully funded!"

She then kicked off a loud march around the State House, with music by the Second Line Social Aid & Pleasure Society Brass Band. When marchers turned the corner back onto Beacon Street, they tied hundreds of red ribbons to the wrought iron fence in front of the State House. It was a visual reminder that the people's business on behalf of students, educators and communities is far from over. ■



left: MTA members and Fund Our Future coalition partners gather for a day of action at the state house.



center: MTA Retired members meet with legislators to promote the passage of Fund Our Future legislation.



right: Local students lead the march around the state house.

Save the Dates!



September 24-25, 2019

massteacher.org/retired

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24



Becky Pringle, VP, NEA

Becky Pringle is vice president of the National Education Association, the nation's largest labor union and professional association for educators. A middle school science teacher with 31 years of classroom experience, Pringle has distinguished herself as a thoughtful, passionate advocate for educators and students, focusing on issues of educator empowerment and student success, diversity, and developing future leaders.



Dinner and Reception



Keynote Delivered by NEA Vice President, Becky Pringle



Honor Our Own Award Presentation



Workshop Sessions



Returning Favorite Workshop Sessions

Elder Law I, II and III

Genealogy I, II and III

Art for Your Mind: Immigration to America

Art for Your Mind: Native American Journey



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

▶ Breakfast and Lunch

▶ A Panel Discussion with MTA Leadership

Merrie Najimy, President
Max Page, Vice President
Lisa Gallatin, Executive Director-Treasurer

▶ Workshop Sessions

▶ Concluding with a Presentation of Donations to Gardner Education Association



Merrie Najimy,
MTA President



Max Page,
MTA Vice President



Lisa Gallatin,
MTA Executive Director-Treasurer



Brand New Workshop Sessions in 2019

Social Security

Fannie Lou Hamer

GIC 101

China as Everyday Chinese See It

Mary Surratt

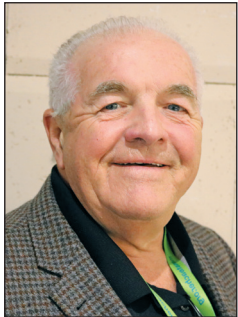
Social Justice/Institutional Racism

Bridging the Divide

Educating/Mobilizing for Climate Change

MTA BOARD REPORT-JUNE 15, 2019

Gerry Ruane



Gerry Ruane, MTA Retired Members Committee

President Najimy opened the meeting at 9:05 AM.

Lisa Gallatin, the new MTA Executive Director-Treasurer, addressed the Board and asked people to introduce themselves. She expressed her appreciation for the welcome she has had from members and staff.

The following retiring Board members were recognized: Mary Cowhey-38A, Tim Dwyer- Executive

Committee Region D, Rebecca Cusick- Executive Committee Region E, Renee Viera-40E, Ruth Allen-12F, Leslie Marsland-48H, Tim Sheehan, NEA Director

Betsey Preval of Cambridge and V.P. Max Page paid tribute to Dan Clawson. Dan was a member of the Executive Committee for 6 years and the founder of Educators for a Democratic Union (EDU). He passed away suddenly after Annual Meeting.

The Board reviewed the New Business Items (NBIs) from Annual Meeting.

- NBI 2 — which called for a survey of local presidents regarding MTA Services.
- NBI 6 — The Board voted to stand in solidarity with all the aid and relief workers working to help refugees at the Texas border.
- NBI 7 — The Board voted to create a committee to plan public action for Annual Meeting.
- NBI 8 — Which called for the MTA to support early voting legislation at the State House — was referred to the Government Relations Committee.
- NBI 9 — Which called for the MTA to support ensuring municipal participation at the widest eligible age — was referred to the Government Relations Committee.
- NBI 10 — Called for MTA to endorse the *Work and Family Mobility Act*, which supports drivers licenses for all. The Board so voted.
- NBI 11 — Called for the MTA and NEA to wait to endorse a candidate in the 2020 Presidential Election until the first 6 Democratic National Committee debates and to urge a one-member, one-vote method of endorsement.

- NBI 12 — The Board voted that the MTA support the lawsuit against the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Administration (ICE), filed by the Suffolk and Middlesex County district attorneys.

- NBI 13 — The Board voted to form a task force to collect data and information from locals on members injured by students.

The Board received a report from the Equal Employment Opportunity Council (EEOC). The EEOC is working on a new plan to give staff members of color more opportunity at MTA. There will be a roll-out of the plan at the August Board Meeting.

The Board passed an NBI requiring that the MTA poll local associations about attendance at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

The Board also passed an NBI to have MTA strongly oppose the following bills: H1249 and S770 establishing a commission to improve utilization of digital learning technology.

Enid Eckstein reported on the success of the Fund Our Future Rally. She talked about the most important time being the next 6 weeks. MTA is urging members to call their legislators to support the *Promise* and *Cherish Acts*. Keep watching your email and the MTA website for more information and instructions on how you can be involved.

The Board elected Tammy Johnson and Ben Eisan to the Committee to Evaluate the Executive Director-Treasurer.

President Najimy reported on the win against the charter school in New Bedford. This was a major victory for parents, the community and the MTA.

Vice President Page reported on the lawsuit that was being filed on behalf of a group of parents from gateway communities around equitable funding. The lawsuit was filed to challenge the current funding mechanism as being racist and it needs to be made equitable for all.

Lisa Gallatin reported that she will be working on membership retention. MTA, so far, has not been adversely affected by *Janus* and the Supreme Court decision. She will continue to get to know the staff and the members and she has enjoyed her beginning time with MTA.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM. ■

NEA RA DELEGATE RESULTS

Many of you participated in the election that would select your retired delegates to the NEA-R Annual Meeting and the NEA-RA in Houston Texas in July. Thank you for exercising one of the benefits that comes with MTA Retired membership, that is your right to vote for your leaders.

This election ran from February 4 through March 8, 2019. Thirty (30) retired members self-nominated for this election. Our allotment of eleven (11) delegates was elected.

Here are the results:

1. Stephen Gorrie
2. Anne Wass
3. Robert Brousseau
4. Jacqueline Gorrie
5. Eileen Cleary
6. Richard Shea
7. Louise Gaskins
8. Dennis Naughton
9. Gerard Ruane
10. Claire Naughton
11. Richard Liston

Congratulations to our retired delegates whose job it now is to represent us all at the NEA-R Annual Meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly. ■



NEW GROUP TRAVEL PLANNER FROM MTAB

MTA Benefits introduces its new Travel Savings Center featuring a group travel planner! The Hotel Planner is your one-stop-shop for all your travel needs. Great hotel rates are just the beginning. Other properties you can book include bed & breakfast inns, resort condos, long-term stay and rental homes.

When your next party, wedding or reunion calls for a block of hotel rooms, turn to the group travel planner. You'll find the automated search tool makes the process simple and

fast while also offering you the best group rates available at hotels and on vacation homes. A personal event planner will also be assigned to your event, free of charge!

That's not all. Complete your arrangements by checking flight, car rental, shuttle service, bus/limo and even function space! That means day trips, parties, weddings, and so much more can be arranged from one website. Start your planning today at www.mtavacations.com. ■

REMINDER: If you have not yet taken the Retired Members Survey, it's not too late! The link will be up and running until June 30, 2019. Your opinion matters to the Retired Members Committee, so please take the time to complete the survey as soon as you are finished reading this edition of the Reporter.

Survey Link: massteacher.org/retiredsurvey

REMINDER: The new retired membership year begins in just a few days, July 1, 2019. If you have not done so already, don't forget to renew your MTA Retired Membership. Just go to massteacher.org/retired and click on the link "How Do I Renew or Purchase an MTA Retired Membership?" If you have any questions, please contact Robert Whalen at 617.878.8206 or rwhalen@massteacher.org.



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