



ADVOCATE



Welcome Back!

The leadership of the WTEA would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and successful school year. As public school employees, the summer is usually a chance for us to recharge our batteries and put aside the stress, anxiety, and pressure associated with our jobs. We hope everyone is feeling refreshed and ready to take on the challenges that lie ahead.

One of the most important challenges that lie ahead is obtaining a new all-inclusive collective bargaining agreement for our members. As most of you are aware, our current agreement runs through June 30, 2018. In preparation, your WTEA Negotiations Team has met several times this summer to begin this formal process. We are proud to announce the 2017-2018 WTEA Negotiation Team:

- Brian Geoffroy (Chief Negotiator)
- Sean Cuffe
- Cathy Frieder
- John Galvin
- Kerstin Hartlieb
- Bill Leahy
- Mary Ann Miller
- Tom Pasko
- Allison White
- Nancy Grbelja – NJEA
- Toyce Collins – WTEA

Later this month, each member will receive a negotiations survey, which will be used to assess our members' priorities. Please take time to complete the survey, especially with regard to recording your subjective responses. We take a great deal of time to read every response. Please return your completed negotiation survey to your Association Rep as soon as possible.

Rest assured that our number one priority this school year is delivering a fair agreement to our members by this time next year.

Another challenge that lies ahead is electing a new governor. After eight years of Chris Christie, it is important that we elect a governor that supports public employees and public schools; who will protect and fund our pensions; who will work to provide relief from Chapter 78; who understands that a child is more than a test score. As a result, NJEA PAC has endorsed Ambassador Phil Murphy for Governor. Ambassador Murphy believes in funding our pension, legislative relief for chapter 78, and ending PARCC testing in New Jersey. He values the work we do and understands the importance of providing a high-quality education to every public school student in New Jersey. Throughout the election campaign this fall, please join NJEA's effort to support and elect Ambassador Murphy.

Finally, we must remember that all politics start at the local level. There are currently four candidates running for three seats on the Woodbridge Township Board of Education this November. The WTEA has been proactive in reaching out to the candidates to set up a screening for the beginning of September. If there is any recommendation from the screening committee, it will be presented to the WTEA Representative Council later in September.

We will continue to keep you updated on these and all-important issues throughout the year.

Your WTEA Officers

Brian Geoffroy, Bill Leahy, Sean Cuffe, Cathy Frieder, John Galvin, Kerstin Hartlieb, Mary Ann Miller, Tom Pasko, & Janna Perry

September 6, 2017