Negotiations and the Superintendent’s New Propaganda Campaign

By Richard Stutman, BTU President

A s you know, we have been meeting regularly in negotiations. 24 sessions in all, since last June. We have made a little progress, but not as much as we would like. Negotiations will continue until our negotiating team has a package we can fully recommend to our membership. We are confident that we will achieve an agreement that is good for schools, good for students, and fair to our membership. We seek no more and will settle for no less. If you go over as few broad, non-inclusive, areas in our contract where we are seeking change and improvement, no particular order:

• How to strengthen professional development and provide leadership opportunities or a career ladder for all teachers and staff
• How to provide necessary staff resources and support to schools on the verge of becoming level 4 schools
• How to make the teacher evaluation process stronger and fairer; how to improve the teacher and paraprofessional assignment process to make it fairer for all
• How to compensate an extended school workday or year; how to fairly and appropriately compensate staff with a cost of living adjustment
• How to improve assistance and training to new teachers and paraprofessionals as well as veteran teachers who undergo curriculum changes
• How to ensure that the revamping of SPED services meets student needs

We understand that the city will have to commit some additional resources (1) to our schools if we expect them to be able to respond to the 21st Century needs of our students. Business interests – not educational interests – have gained the greatest currency in today’s educational debate, and some of what we wish to do, such as fixing the performance evaluation process, might well be taken out of our hands by the legislature. But on the vast bulk of the above items, we look forward to working out our differences with the school department through the collective bargaining process and making real progress. We will keep you informed.

On Negotiations: Superintendent Takes to Email, Twice, to Promote Own Cause

You may have noticed that the superintendent and her staff have begun an email campaign to influence negotiations by spreading misinformation. The week before spring break the superintendent’s staff sent out an announcement in her Connections Monthly Staff Newsletter, and then sent the same announcement (continued on page 3)

AFT Local 66, AFL-CIO
Democracy in Education
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Boston Teachers Union Hall.

Every two years the Boston Teachers Union holds elections to choose the leaders of the union. These positions include President, Vice-President, Secretary Treasurer, Secondary Field Representative, Elementary Field Representative, Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Field Representative, and Political Director. In addition to staff positions, 12 members will be elected to the Executive Board and 9 members will be elected to the Paraprofessional Council. Finally delegates will be elected to represent the BTU at meetings and conventions convened by the American Federation of Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts, the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, and the Greater Boston Labor Council. The election will be held the first Wednesday in June at the Boston Teachers Union Hall.

Participation is Key in Any Democracy

Our union is a democratic institution. As is true with any democratic institution, participation is vital to the health of that organization. Participation starts with being informed. On pages 5-9 of this Boston Union Teacher you will find statements from the candidates. Read them. If you would like to know more seek out the candidates and ask those questions. The future of public education and the challenges facing our members are always important. This is all the more true given the economic crisis facing our country.

Participation does not end with being informed. Your vote is important. On June 1st come to the Union Hall. Bring a colleague. A large turnout at the voting booth insures that those elected to lead our union will have the strength of our union behind them as we move forward.

Voting is a Responsibility

A union is not an insurance policy. There is no guarantee that what we have today will be there tomorrow. Unions, whether they were formed by carpenters, coal miners, secretaries or teachers are a result of workers coming together to have a say in the conditions of their work. It is not THE union. It is OUR union.

When you exercise your democratic responsibility to participate in elections you become part of the long history of solidarity that marks the union movement. On June 1st we will elect the leaders who will help guide our union for the next two years. Make sure that your voice is added to the voices of others who proudly work in the Boston Public Schools. VOTE!

- Michael Maguire and Garrett Vireckick, Editors, Boston Union Teacher
Unions Under Attack and What To Do About It: A Conversation with AFT President Randi Weingarten

(continued from page 1)

...are pinned between fear and hope. People are in such a space that they [the ‘right’] are polarizing - dividing us. They ask - “Why should a regular Joe get a pension and you not have one?” They want to bring everyone down. They are racing to extin- guish our voice. Labor unions show how to have a voice for the middle class eco- nomically and politically. The ‘right’ is racing to eliminate this voice. Michelle Rhee does so and dresses it up as so-called Ed reform – not what it is – just a part of the ‘right’s’ social agenda. “We can turn this around”, asserted Weingarten. “Our work is not just political. We [members of public employee unions] don’t have the density to rely just on political action given only 7% of the total work force and 12% of the public sector are unionized. As a result, there is a limit to what we can do. Even if we mobilize everyone we represent and they all went to the polls, we do not have enough density to win.”

“We have to look at other ways to move the needle” of public opinion. Other than politics, what are the other links – knowledge, ideas, community and communications? Let’s look at community. If we and parents are ‘one’ – who will or can divide us? Ideologues say, “I’m about the kids – Unions are about the adult’s”. It’s a message about dividing folks. There isn’t an alignment between what unions want and kids. If we have mobilizations and the community with us – we have density. We move the needle; we can’t just go to parents when we are about to bargain. If parents are willing to give us a second look, they will see we are about the kids, in that we are dealing with issues such as poverty, wrap around services, kids needing a level playing field, lowering class size, and differentiated instruction. It is a knowledge economy – that’s the easy stuff. The harder stuff is parents wanting to see their kids go to a neighbor- hood school and have a notion of choice like the rich do. The ‘right’ has been smart with that notion. These parents want to know their neighborhood school is good and safe. They want to send their neighborhood school and have a notion of choice. These parents are willing to give us a second chance. They want to bring their kids – Unions are about the adults’. It’s a knowledge economy. The harder stuff is parents wanting to know their neighborhood school and have a notion of choice. These parents are willing to give us a second chance. They want to bring their kids – Unions are about the adults’. It’s a knowledge economy. The harder stuff is parents wanting to know their neighborhood school and have a notion of choice. These parents are willing to give us a second chance. They want to bring their kids – Unions are about the adults’. It’s a knowledge economy. The harder stuff is parents wanting to know their neighborhood school and have a notion of choice. These parents are willing to give us a second chance. They want to bring their kids – Unions are about the adults’. It’s a knowledge economy.
Negotiations and the Superintendent's New Propaganda Campaign

(continued from page 1)

ment in BHS This Week last Monday with a helpful hint: “We wanted to make sure you saw the column Dr. Carol Johnson shared with all BHS staff in our monthly newsletter. Here is a summary of what we saw.” The first version was a distortion of the facts, and the second version was identical.

Two Key Distortions

In particular, in the superintendent’s column we pointed to two of her statements, which, she said, the leadership of the BTU didn’t support: 1. linking teacher evaluations to student test scores; and 2. developing an alternate system of compensation for new hires (optional for current employees) that would link employee’s pay, prima-

rily, to administrator approval and recommendation.

On issue #1: The use of teacher test score data, even via the Value Added Model, is an unproven indicator of teacher effectiveness. A study funded by Gates (2) shows support for this practice, but other studies, in fact the overwhelming majority of research (3), Jesse Rothstein (4), andults, What’s more, only 16-17% of the teachers in Mass. teach subjects that are tested in consecutive years by the MCAS. What about the ‘process’ test of our students? The AFT supports a system of evaluation that includes (but is not rigidly dictated by) multiple student assessments that are both reliable and valid. Dr. Johnson’s negotiating team proposes that growth in MCAS scores – and MCAS scores alone – be given an absolute 40% weighting in deciding teacher evaluations for a small portion of our membership. Long story short, Dr. Johnson’s proposal isn’t multi-

ple.

And to make matters worse, Dr. Johnson implies that AFT President Randi Weingarten would agree (with the above proposal) and cites what the superintendent said: “...the leader-

ship from major national unions, including American Federation of Teach-

ers President Randi Weingarten, agree that student data should play an impor-

tant role in evaluation.” Truth, that’s what Weingarten said but the school depart-

ment’s actual proposal is so far removed from what Pres. Weingarten said, it’s all-

laughable. The Differences: The school department’s proposal is a fixed measure, not multiple measures; it mandates stu-

dent test data as a fixed percentage not as a ‘general’ contributor that informs teacher effectiveness; and it’s not fair, inasmuch as only 16 or 17% of teachers fall under it. When Weingarten said tests can inform professional practice, she was not envisioning the school department’s rigid formulaic approach. To compare the school department’s proposal to Presi-

dent Weingarten’s proposal is nonsense.

The Mass DESE Evaluation task force, a group of 40+ educators and others has proposed that among other contributing factors, student test score data be linked, but only as one of multiple measures and even then, not as a fixed percentage.

On issue #2, Let us summarize Dr. Johnson’s salary proposal. Some staff, upon approval by the school administrator, will get an undetermined salary increase. Maybe. And then again, maybe not.

The department’s proposal to develop a ‘professional path’ is a good idea – in fact, the BTU proposed it first. But our professional path comes with guarantees, not promises and ‘maybes.’ The super-

intendent says salary step increases are motivated by her goal to streamline salary and lower costs because the current system of providing regular salary steps, the superin-


tendent says, is financially ‘unsustain-

able.’ Our proposal is designed to pro-

 mote and reward good and effective work and including increased pay for experi-

ence is part of it.

We Will Do What’s Right and What’s Fair

The BTU negotiating team will do what’s right by our students and what’s fair to our members. We will not, however, buy a pig in a poke. And we certainly don’t need to be told what the AFT president thinks. We already knew what President Weingarten thinks about the superintendent’s proposals.

Lastly, the superintendent’s bulletin implied it is a lack of faith in our members (not has led the BTU to reject both of its proposals. Here’s what her memo said:

“We are confident in our teachers’ ca-

pacity to educate and be accountable for all students. We would expect the BTU to share that same level of confidence in its members.

We respect the accusation. We have tremendous faith and confidence in our members – a lot more in fact than we have in the central administration.

Trust and Collaboration are Required, Yet Lacking

For fourteen times in the last four years we have taken the school depart-

ment’s central office to the Mass. Commonwealth Employment Relations Board (CERB) to force it to produce public records and public information – on the school budget, the Teach for America contract, the Unlocking Potential (Gavin School Horace Mann Charter) contract, the withholding of student witness names, and so on. Fourteen times we have won (not has the CERB dropped the case upon receipt of the information requested). That’s 14

times too many. Actually, that’s 17 times too many. These are public documents! If we cannot trust the school department to follow the law in providing basic, public information requests, how can we expect them to take on more subjective tasks fairly and honestly? The answer is, we can’t.

We are also currently challenging at the CERB the department’s decision to eliminate the position of EIT even as we are negotiating about the issue. The school department is showing bad faith in the col-

lection bargaining process as well as lack of faith in its EIT professional work force.

We’re not looking to pick a fight, and we didn’t start this fight. But we are not going to allow distortions from the superintendent’s office to go unanswered. To paraphrase President Weingarten accu-

rately, there must be a climate of trust and collaboration to make real progress. In order for us to settle this contract so that it meets the needs of our students while being fair to our members, the school department, among other things, needs to reexamine the way it communicat-

es with our teachers.
The 18/24 hours of professional development beyond the regular school day hours must be scheduled each year. The configuration of how the hours are to be scheduled is to be done with a secret ballot vote with five days notice of the faculty conducted by the BTU Representatives prior to the end of the school year. The schedule is determined by a majority vote of the faculty and the approval of the administrator. The vote can be done by subject area, grade level, or other groupings of educational interest. The content of the professional development is determined by the school administration to reflect each individual school’s Whole School Improvement Plan.

The contract states, “If the administrator and faculty fail to agree on a professional development schedule, three six-hour professional development days shall be added to the end of the school year. Teachers shall be required to participate in 18 (24) hours of professional development plus one full day of professional development on the work day following the Christmas vacation or the April vacation, at the discretion of management.” This full day of professional development may be converted to professional development hours by a majority vote of the faculty. The professional development schedule for school year shall be finalized before the end of the previous school year and the schedule shall be distributed to the staff. In the event that more than 25% of the staff is new to the building the following September, the faculty may re-vote. [Vote to be conducted by secret ballot with five days notice to all faculty by the BTU Reps, which must be completed by 12/15].

When an 18 (24) hour professional development activity is scheduled after regular school hours to take place for two hours or less, if a person is out sick or has a personal day, they do not have to make that time up. However, if the professional development activity is scheduled for more than a two hour block, the time does have to be made up by the faculty member or they are subject to loss of wages for that time. Paraprofessionals vote on the professional development hours only if such a vote entails the conversion of or breaking up of an entire day into hours.

What kind of vote do we take to change next year’s school class schedule?

The contract reads, “Whatever master schedule (e.g., six period day, seven period day, block schedule) is in effect in a middle or high school…shall remain in effect in subsequent years unless a new type of schedule is approved through the waiver provisions under school-based management by a vote of 2/3 of the BTU staff.”

If there will be a change in ‘work conditions’ – such as exceeding the maximum teaching time at the secondary level of 240 minutes per day, requiring teachers to teach more than 160 minutes in a row without a lunch break, planning and development period, or an administrative duty, or not providing a minimum of 240 minutes of planning and development time each week; then the waiver process under School Site Council (contract pages 24-26) needs to be followed. The BTU allows portions of the standard contract to be altered this very specific process. Waiving (giving up or modifying) hard fought collective bargaining rights should not be entered into lightly or in an unformed manner.

Briefly put, in order to waive work conditions as stated above; the School Site Council must approve the waiver, the Principal must approve the waiver, at least 2/3 of the members of the eligible BTU members affected who are present and voting must approve the waiver; such a vote to be conducted by the Union Representatives using a secret ballot after five (5) days’ notice to all those eligible to vote. If and when such a waiver vote is taken and passes all of the steps, “The Steering Committee shall be notified in writing of all waivers within five (5) days of their adoption.” Please notify the BTU Field Representatives in writing of a successful waiver vote as well.

The contract also provides, “If a teacher at a school waiving a provision of this contract as described [in the contract in detail] objects to the impact of that waiver on his or her job responsibilities, he or she shall be afforded an opportunity to transfer to another position in the system without loss of seniority or benefits. The implementation of any such waiver shall be delayed until such transfer opportunity has been provided or the impact of the waiver on this teacher has been eliminated. Any dispute arising out of the provisions of this paragraph shall be referred to the Steering Committee for resolution and shall not be arbitrable, provided that the Steering Committee reaches a decision on the matter within 30 days.” The Steering Committee is a joint labor-management committee co-chaired by the BTU President and the BPS Superintendent, comprised of an equal number of BTU and Management selected members.

When is the last date I can receive a Year-End Overall Performance Evaluation?

The management/labor agreement, better known as the contract, states; “All staff shall be formally evaluated using factors reasonably related to a teacher’s professional responsibilities and a) performance for each factor and an overall rating. Overall rating can be: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory [Meet Expectations or Does Not Meet Expectations] and shall be transmitted to teachers prior to May 15.” "Overall Year-End formal performance evaluations must be completed, with the possible exception of the first year staff, by the BTU President and the BPS Superintendents, comprised of an equal number of BTU and Management selected members.

The “prior to May 15” date is hard and fast and can NOT be ‘pushed back’ by administrators who have not adhered to the contract or who were not organized enough to perform their professional responsibilities in a timely fashion. At the end of the contract, if a teacher has not received an Overall Year-End performance evaluation without having received two (2) ‘unsatisfactory’ formal interim performance evaluations in the same academic year. The contract details; “Within (10) ten school working days following the last day the teacher is present following any evaluation visit [observation], regardless of the rating mark, the responsible administrator or designee shall meet with the teacher for the purposes of discussing the evaluation. At this meeting the teacher will be given two (2) copies of the written evaluation, signed and dated by the responsible administrator. The teacher shall sign and return one (1) copy to indicate having received it, but not to indicate agreement or disagreement. No teacher shall be asked to sign an incomplete evaluation.”

Know Your Rights: Caren Carew, BTU Secondary Field Representative

Who determines the content of and when the 18/24 hours of professional development are scheduled?

By Jennifer Fitzgerald, Para/Sub Field Representative

April 9, 2011 was the day for the Statewide Para/Sub Conference, held at the BJCC.

The doors opened at 8:15 a.m., and we were off and running with registration, coffee and danish.

At 9:00 we started our Plenary Session. Our Keynote speaker was Bryant Duncan, President of the Lynn Teachers Union, and paraprofessionals from Boston, Lawrence, North Reading, New Bedford and Chelmsford.

In the spirit of getting down to business, we started off with an Open Session. Then our guest speaker, John Brouder, gave an excellent presentation on Health and Safety in the classroom. This was followed by a well received workshop on Bullying, presented by Ed Donnelly. You may re- know your rights, Caren Carew, BTU Secondary Field Representative of this paragraph shall be referred to the Steering Committee for resolution and shall not be arbitrable, provided that the Steering Committee reaches a decision on the matter within 30 days.” The Steering Committee is a joint labor-management committee co-chaired by the BTU President and the BPS Superintendent, comprised of an equal number of BTU and Management selected members.

Paras Hold 25th Annual Statewide Conference at BTU Hall

John Brouder addresses the 25th Annual Statewide Conference of Paraprofessionals.

Paraprofessionals from across the state gathered at BTU Hall for their Annual Conference on Saturday, April 9th. — Photos by Michael J. Maguire

John Brouder addresses the 25th Annual Statewide Conference of Paraprofessionals.

member Ed as the headmaster of Brook Field Academy and his assistant-head- master of West Roxbury High. Paraprofessional training will be offered by Paraprofessional Training Points.

The time had arrived for our sumptuous lunch of roast stuffed chicken, followed by the prizes we gave away that day. We offersed to our guests to order their favorite restaurant or to order a gift for a friend from our gift basket filled with $20 gift certificates from local stores

Everyone had a wonderful time and agreed that the paraprofessionals were saying, “Wait until next year!”

Paras Hold 25th Annual Statewide Conference at BTU Hall

John Brouder addresses the 25th Annual Statewide Conference of Paraprofessionals.
Ideas on Teacher Contract Shared

By James Liou

During a late afternoon on Wednesday, April 6th, 2011, a large group of people gathered and milled about in a packed conference room of the 12th Baptist Church in Roxbury. The pastor started with a welcoming message and opening benediction to the crowd, which had gathered at the invitation of Boston United for Students—a coalition of nearly fifty community-based organizations, including representation from the ministerial community, parent organizing groups and youth advocacy organizations. The individuals who filled the room—parents, students, teachers, political representatives and other community members—respectfully quieted down. Plastic forks passed over plates of food, the shuffle of papers from informational packets slowed and parents busied the kids who accompanied them.

And then the conversation on the BPS-BTU contract began. As described in their website (www.bostonuniformteachers.org), Boston United for Students (BUS) is an umbrella advocacy group that is committed to improving the quality of the educational experience for all Boston students and teachers, specifically naming the teachers’ contract as fundamental to creating and developing relationships and operational flexibility for student success. Beyond the contract, BUS also focuses on addressing issues related to improving administrative leadership in the district and encouraging steady implementation of contract reform initiatives.

For this particular event, moderators Melissa Luna and Nathalie Soto from Sociedad Latina specified four areas of identified improvement related to the BPS-BTU contract. These areas related to 1) timely and effective teacher evaluation, 2) flexibility in teacher hiring and reassignment, 3) increased and strengthened parent and student voice in school-based decision making and 4) an extended school day to engage students and ensure teacher availability, planning and related professional development. The panelists invited to speak in those issues included Ayan Hassan (student at Edward M. Kennedy Health Careers and president of Boston Student Advisory Council), Mary Monteiro (parent and committee member with Boston Housing and the Dearborn middle school), Superintendent Carol Johnson and BTU president Richard Stutman.

As each panelist spoke to the issues related to contract, a common message emerged. While there were some disagreements about the mechanisms of implementation, none disagreed about the fundamentals wanting to do the best for the Boston Public Schools, to close the achievement gap, and to be responsive to parents, community advocates and to the students themselves. Each also explicitly agreed to all of the BUS priorities.

The distinction between each representative on the panel, however, emerged in the responses to audience questions after the general presentations. The challenge in making reform real was in the details, and as such, no less significant than if the fundamental agreements did not exist. In what ways did the school district, union and community advocates characterize each other’s positions and opinions regarding principles? President Stutman responded to one question with the applause-generating statement that he didn’t accept the Superintendent’s idea that closing schools was the way to create reform. How were those characteristics communicated, perceived and interpreted? Superintendent Johnson associated the teacher excess process in the negative, stating that the process is inherently oppositional to the importance of needing to allow principals to pick a quality “starting line.” What detail of the reform agenda should be emphasized to bring about the most effective change? Ayan Hassan discussed the importance of her fellow students not just relying on others, but “also fighting for themselves,” a focus on advocacy also echoed by parent Mary Monteiro, who described the importance of parents needing guidance and leadership regarding ways to effectively participate. And ultimately, there was one question that remained unspoken: what would the follow through be?

It is perhaps a question to be asked for a later time. But for the time being, the core premises that were spoken that late afternoon did fall on an approving audience. From Superintendent Johnson: “We can’t do the same things in the same way and expect different results.” From BTU President Stutman: “I do see the future of a school system and schools with democratically created input…for teachers [parents, students and community members] to sit with the principal[s] to figure out priorities.”

Boston does need to be united for its students.

(James Liou is a Peer Assistant for the Boston Public Schools.)
We’re Learning Here
A project by Amika Kemmler Ernst, Ed.D.

NEWCOMERS ACADEMY

Newcomers Academy is a program of Boston International High School for up to 250 newly-arrived immigrants of high school age who do not speak English, especially those with gaps in their schooling. I met students from Vietnam, Rwanda, Iran, Cape Verde, Haiti and the Dominican Republic during my visit. Eric Johnson, a former friend and current director of the program, explained that students may attend Newcomers Academy for one semester or up to two calendar years, depending on the academic need. Additional support is available on Saturdays, during the summer, and even after they’ve left the program for a regular high school.

Classes are spread out on every floor of the building and I was grateful for the guidance of Edson Soares da Rosa, a youth worker who knew every student by name and had an “app” which facilitated conversation in a number of different languages! I visited right after MEPA testing and our first stop was in a classroom where everyone was “circled up” to debrief the testing experience, sharing challenges and learning from one another as well as from their teacher. I later noticed a hallway display entitled, “Moving to the Next Level” that shared school-wide data and explained the different levels of English Language Development.

In every classroom I saw evidence of the focus on language learning strategies; word walls were ubiquitous, even in science and math classrooms. I enjoyed watching a science class where students used hand motions to illustrate and “feel” the meaning of conduction, convection & radiation as they learned about forms of heat transfer. In one language class, students were preparing to play a homonym game to practice new vocabulary. In others, students were using their limited English to share their personal stories with one another and role-playing an encounter while taking public transportation around Boston.

Much of what works for English Language Learners is simply good practice! Since so many of our students struggle with academic English, even if they’re not newcomers, I can only hope that these and other strategies are being implemented more widely throughout the system.

I know there is learning going on in every school: please invite me to visit yours!

We were talking about the MEPA test in ESL class. I am learning English because it is important for my future. Reading is easier for me than speaking or writing.

– Marie Florence Jules

I was using a computer program called “Open Book”. Ms. Farrah was helping me. In this class I’m learning to read, write and speak English.

– Parsa Farhadi

This is in our speech and drama class, where we were asking for and answering directions. We are learning how to pronounce English words by role playing.

– Jennifer Hernandez & Jefferson Rodriguez

We were talking about MEPA after taking the test. It was difficult for most of us. We are learning to speak, write, and read English.

– Manuel De La Rosa

We were using our hands to show how heat transfers by convection. Using our hands helps us remember better! In science this year we have also learned the difference between kinetic and potential energy. Physics is interesting!

– Dunia Andrade & Juliette Nzaramba

I was doing a math assignment. I’ve learned how to understand functions and how to graph them.

– Quynh Anh

I was writing an equation on the board in math class. I have learned how to make a graph from these equations, and how to get equations from the graph.

– Ildo Pires

I was writing about myself. I am learning to use verbs correctly in English sentences.

– Maria Cardoso

We are talking about MEPA after taking the test. It was difficult for most of us. We are learning to speak, write, and read English.

– Manuel De La Rosa

I was doing a math assignment. I’ve learned how to understand functions and how to graph them.

– Quynh Anh

(Amika Kemmler Ernst is a recently retired BPS New Teacher Developer with extensive experience as a classroom teacher, curriculum developer, and graphic artist. Her “We’re Learning Here” Project features images of everyday learning in our public schools, along with the words of the students pictured.)
You must bring your BTU Membership Card and a Picture ID in order to vote!

Paraprofessional/Substitute Field Representative

6. Carla M. Johnson Edison Parks ES
9. Jenna Fitzgerald BTU Office

Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies

Executive Board

1. Richard F. Stutman BTU Office
2. Patrick Connolly BTU Office
3. Charles R. Johnson Madison Park TVHS
4. Angela Cristiano Psychological Services
5. Brian Vonnes Urban Science Academy
6. Jessica Tang Young Achievers-K
7. Laura cereal Hills
8. Robert P. Carroll Sumner ES
9. Eileen A. Weir Madison Park TVHS
10. Karen Wood-Hocker Holmes ES
11. Sterling Ritchie Blackstone ES
12. Alice Yong Murphy ES
13. Cheryl Kelly, R.N. Stephen U / Edwards MS
14. Tricia Melanson Madison Park TVHS
15. Thomas J. Gosnell BTU Office
16. Jessica Tang Young Achievers-K
17. Robert P. Carroll Sumner ES
18. Christine Choukas BTU Office
19. Michelle Forristal – Retired
20. Margaret Leary Blackstone ES
21. Paul Tenney – Retired
22. Mary Ann Urban Madison Park TVHS
23. Robert P. Carroll Sumner ES
24. Christine Buttiglieri – Retired
25. Eileen A. Weir Madison Park TVHS
27. Sterling Ritchie Blackstone ES
28. Alice Yong Murphy ES
29. Cheryl Kelly, R.N. Stephen U / Edwards MS
30. Christine Battiglieri Umana MS
31. Lyndie Harrell Holmes ES
32. Adrienne Jordan Eisenhower ES
33. Josephina Lascano Eisenhower ES
34. CasSandra Samuel Eisenhower ES
35. Maureen Sutherland Gore MS
36. Debra Brown Sumner ES
37. Sharon Abraham – Brighton HS
38. Martha Sgier – Occupational Therapist
39. John Allocca – Alternate Education
40. Patricia Jembrick – BTU Office
41. Rose Moore – Umana MS
42. Sandra Buler-Segal – Retired
43. David Barry – O’Byrann HS
44. Ronald L. Bennett – Engineering School #1 HPEC
45. Erik R. Parker – Retired
46. Jane Broder – Retired
47. Sean Brooks – Dever ES
48. Debra Brown – Sumner ES
49. Nia A. Burke – Agosta ES
50. Christine Buttiglieri – Umana MS
51. Corinna “Connie” Cahalan – Retired
52. Karen Carey – King MS
53. Robert P. Carroll – Summer ES
54. Ted Chambers – Edwards MS
55. Brenda Chaney – O’Byrann HS
56. Christine Choukas – Retired
57. Patrick Connolly – BTU Office
58. Martha Cotton – Taylor ES
59. Sarah C. Cooper – Blackstone ES
60. Michael Drum – Career & Technical Education
61. Angela Gravitz – Psychological Services
62. Marjorie Grooby – Occupational/ Physical Therapy
63. Ed Drizd – AFT Massachusetts
64. Allison Doherty-LaCasse – Urban Science Academy
65. David Donovan – Retired
66. John Enright – Madison Park TVHS
67. Martha Johnson Faldale – Roswell ES
68. Jenna Bieler – BTU Office
69. Jerry Frank – Retired
70. Mary Gaughin – Retired
71. Heather German – Blackstone ES
72. Christine Gorman-Arnold – Summer ES
73. Thomas J. Goodell – AFT Massachusetts
74. Adam Gray – Monument ES
75. Keith Gayle – Donovan HS
76. John Herold – Madison Park TVHS
77. Karen Jean Frazer – Timothy MS
78. Tom Hockm – Boston Latin Academy
79. Carla M. Johnson
80. Corinna “Connie” Cahalan – Retired
81. Mary Ann Urban Madison Park TVHS
82. Andrew J. Jordan – Eisenhower ES
83. Cheryl Kelly, RN – Alkherfi/Edward MS
84. Karen Kilmain-Patrick – Summer ES
85. Josephina Lascano Eisenhower ES
86. Barry Luntion East Boston HS
87. Lisa Marie Young O’Bryan HS
88. Lisa Marie Young O’Bryan HS
89. Lisa Marie Young O’Bryan HS
90. Gayle Marrow – Malden HS
91. Karen L. McCarthy – Brighton HS
92. Johnny McNichols – BTU Pilot School
93. Richard F. Stutman – BTU Office
94. Emily McNeely – Hubrecht ES
95. Tracy Melanson – Madison Park TVHS
96. Walter Mitchell – Brighton HS
97. Masouda Meghrag – Madison Park TVHS
98. Carole Pacheco – Retired
99. Sherry Pacheco Malden HS
100. Seth Peterson – Snowden HS
101. James (Tim) Phillips – Brighton HS
102. Kristen W. Pinto – Umana MS
103. Declan J. Powers – Counseling & Intervention Center
104. Gilberto River – Eisenhower ES
105. Ivelisse Santos-Rodriguez – Boston Latin Academy
106. Sterling Scott – Blackstone ES
107. Marc Seiden – Boston Arts Academy
108. John Simonetti – Holland HS
109. Linda Simonetti – Retired
110. Richard F. Stutman – O’Bryan HS
111. Jessica Tang – Young Achievers-K
112. Paul Tenney – Retired
113. Mary Ann Urban – Retired
114. Garret Vercich – Brighton HS
115. Brenda F. Webster – Retired
116. Eileen A. Weir – Madison Park TVHS
117. Lisanne White – Lee Academy
118. Karen Wood-Hocker – Holmes ES
119. Alice M. Yong – Murphy ES

Candidate Statements

Richard F. Stutman BTU Office

Thank you very much for the opportunity to lead this great organization and its wonderful, hardworking members for the next two years. Every day I embrace the opportunity to represent you. I am proud of our schools as I know you are, and I am proud to represent you, who make our schools successful places to learn.

We understand that our schools must continue to improve, but we insist we be part of the improvement plan—not merely an afterthought.

Look at the many opportunities lost, where our input has been overlooked or worse—unasked for: curriculum decisions, school closings, and how best to manage our precious instructional time. Imagine how much better our schools would be if we be part of the improvement plan—not merely an afterthought.

We hope over the next few years to gain more control over the daily decision-making process as we work with the school department to improve our schools. We know there is nothing mutually exclusive about having a contract that is both good for our students and fair to our members. That’s what we’re striving for. And that’s what we’ll accomplish: a contract that is good for our students, good for our schools, and fair to our members.

Thank you for your support, and thank you for participating in the election process. Please research the candidates, and vote on Wednesday, June 1, for people to lead us over the next two years.

(continued on next page)
Executive Vice-President

Patrick J. Connolly BTU Officer

Lately the tone of public comment and published opinion has been hostile to public education and public service in general and the BTU in particular. Demands for more charter schools and concessions from public employee unions have increased daily. As Vice President I have opposed these proposals and others to remove work from our bargaining unit. As school budgets are cut it is important to enforce hard won contractual mandates on issues such as class size, planning and development periods, and administrative duties. The next round of contract negotiations will be more difficult given current economic conditions. I will be there to support you and to protect your rights and benefits.

I am proud to serve you and the BTU as Executive Vice President. I would appreciate and honor your continued support.

Secretary-Treasurer

Charles R. Johnson Madison Park HS

The last few years forced us to change. The economic decline and the attack on public employees has reduced the operation of our union. These forced changes have not come easily and will require continued vigilance. I am positioned to make those changes as needed and will continue to adapt to our general work to keep us financially stable and equipped to serve the entire membership. This commitment to you is central to the position I hold as Secretary-Treasurer. I seek your support and your vote for re-election. On June 1, 2011, please vote to re-elect Charles R. Johnson.

Political Director

Patricia Armstrong BTU Officer

As the BTU Political Director for the past twelve years, and as Political Organizer for twenty years previously, I have learned the importance of a strong political action program. I believe in the power of the people, in the current climate, with serious attacks on health care, pensions, and collective bargaining rights, political action is more important than ever.

The BTU needs a Political Director who is experienced, dedicated and respected by both political leaders and organized labor. I serve as COPE chair for the BTU and the AFT Massachusetts. I am Vice-President of the Greater Boston Labor Council and am its Political Action Committee Chair. For the past five years I have served as President of the Mass Alliance, a coalition of twenty non-profit organizations and unions that support progressive candidates. I have been a labor member of the Massachusetts State Committee for over twenty years, and have been elected to the last four National Democratic Conventions as a Clinton Gore slate (2000), Gore (2000), Kerry (2004) and Obama (2008) delegate.

In 2000, I was elected to be a member of the Electoral College, at which time I had the honor of nominating Al Gore for President. I have coordinated bus trips to New Hampshire to help the Mass AFL-CIO and the New Hampshire AFL-CIO turn out a record vote. As Political Director, I work hard to see that our endorsed candidates are elected — through letters to targeted voters, media buys, phone banks, flyers to schools, and announcements in the BUT.

I am your Political Director and would like to continue to be — please vote for me on Wednesday, June 1.

Political Director

Angela Cristiani Psychological Services

I am the candidate for Political Director. I ask for your support. It is a difficult time for union members from Massachusetts to New York and across the country. I believe we can and must do more. Using a grassroots approach to strengthen and move the BTU UP as a union I will involve active and retired members in every aspect of the BTU political landscape. We will work collaboratively.

Endorsements, work on behalf of candidates at election time and attending fundraisers are important, but so is non-election season political action. We will solidify the relationships between elected officials and our members. Membership policy requiring house parties with elected officials will occur. I will invite you to local events with your legislators and set up issue forums. We will rally with other unions and community members.

I will keep you informed about public education, health care, and pension legislation using all means of communication, including the Boston Union Teacher, internet, and social media. My experience on political campaigns, BTU Executive Board, and COPE Committee is complemented by my serving as Government Relations Co-Chair and AFTMA Liaison to Mass. School Psychologists Association, AFTMA Representative on Mass. Task Force on Behavioral Health & Public Schools, and Democratic State Committee and 10th Congressional District Women’s Advisory Board member. As a School Psychologist with a public speaking background and established political skills networking, as well as a union activist since 1994, I know unions, government and the political process.

Respect for political diversity is key for a productive political environment. Your opinion and involvement is critical.

You are the face and voice of this Union. Changing political times call for energy, fresh ideas, vision, and leadership. I am eager to work with you and for you!

I ask for your vote on June 1st. Thank you.

Secondary Field Representative

Caren M. Carew Key MI

I am a crossroads in public education. As a member of public sector unions, our frequent representation is characterized as public enemy #1. We must work together with each other and the public in order to represent our collective actions on the continued pursuit of excellence for all of the children we educate. Our work conditions are the children’s learning conditions. Maintaining and strengthening our voice in collective bargaining only enriches our professional life. I am proud to be a part of the Boston Public Schools I am a teacher. Our work is challenging and essential.

In these times, proven extensive union experience coupled with being a strong and effective teacher in challenging schools has provided the leadership necessary for me to be your strongvigilant advocate as Secondary Field Representative. As such, I provide pro-active representation through listening to members’ concerns and expeditiously addressing them. I work for and with you on a daily basis providing enforcement of the contract, speaking up on behalf of the membership while effectively dealing with challenging administrators, protecting grievances, testifying at arbitrations, providing representation at hearings, negotiating with management, promptly returning calls/emails, addressing changes in work conditions, initiating & expanding SSL, training, activating new members, resolving conflicts, initiating BTU member to BTU member mediation, providing ongoing support for well as meeting with members at schools, and thinking outside the box in these unprecedented and changing times. I’ve developed a wealth of first-hand, in-depth knowledge in order to get the job done while fighting for the respect we deserve. It is my honor to be your advocate.

I am fighting for you. Let’s stand together – BTU unite – with your vote for your consideration and vote.

Elementary Field Representative

Michael W. McLaughlin BTU Officer

It’s an honor and privilege to run for you and the BTU as the Elementary Field Representative. Once again, I aspire to serve the BTU as your Elementary Field Representative. Every day in this position brings new challenges, especially in these trying times. By facing these challenges head on, we gain knowledge and experience that makes the BTU stronger and helps me to serve you more effectively. Please vote to re-elect me as the Elementary Field Representative.

My goal as the Elementary Field Representative requires the same, broadening the legacy of this office through strong advocacy and representation. As the rep, I will continue to uphold your rights and enforce the contract. I will continue the practice of staying in touch with you in the field, before and after school hours if necessary. I will do my best to actively communicate with you. As your BTU representative serving on committees is not only by the voice of the BTU, but to be your voice and your advocate. I will continue to return your calls, respond to your emails and work hard to assist you in taking advantage of our union’s resources. Thank you for your consideration and your vote to re-elect me to the Elementary Field Representative.

Paraprofessional/Substitute Field Representative

Carla M. Johnsoin Elmston Park ES

I am prepared to serve you as a Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Representative of the Boston Teachers Union. As a paraprofessional and graduate of the Boston Public Schools I am aware of the importance of public education. Our work is challenging and essential.

Given the opportunity, I will work tirelessly to advocate for all of us.

I have represented you as a building representative, on the Collective Bargaining and New Member Recruitment Committee and as a member of the AFT Massachusetts bodies. I am proud to be a paraprofessional, and will continue to work to support a strong union.

Thank you for your support and your vote on June 1st.

Jenna Fitzgerald BTU Officer

My name is Jenna Fitzgerald and I am running for the office of Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Field Representative.

I believe my role as an advocate for all staff and paraprofessionals has gained for them the recognition and respect they so rightly deserve. I am proud of our accomplishments and of how far we have come in our Union.

In these troublous times of diminishing funding, possible lay-offs and a new contract to negotiate, it is necessary that we continue to demand an active membership within the BTU. Tough times demand experience and leadership.

As the BTU Democratic Delegate, I have been elected to the State and National Conventions; and I serve on the Collective Bargaining & Cope Committees. I am proud to be a paraprofessional, and I am running for the office of Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Field Representative.

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(continued on next page)
...and Executive Board

I am proud to say I have been endorsed by: Thomas Gonnell, President AFT-MA; Richard Stutman, Past President AFT-MA; Patricia Armstrong, Political Director BTU; Kathy Kelley, Past President MFT/BTU; Edward Doherty, Past President BPU.

Thank you for your support and encouragement over the years. I would appreciate your vote on June 1st as the Past President Executive Field Representative and Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies.

Executive Board

John Allocca alternate election candidate

We are in a time of economic crisis in which we and the communities that we serve are facing unprecedented economic consequences. Our struggle to pay the bill. Now more than ever, we need to implement a vision of social justice and educational equity that will provide solutions to our economic crisis.

I believe that the BTU is a vehicle to advance the vision of social justice and educational equity that we can provide our students. Our students should have access to a quality education in order to have a better life. As a member of the Executive Board I promise to work hard for all the members of the BTU. I ask for your support June 1st.

Michael J. Maguire Boston Latin Academy

As educators, our concerns are often ignored. This needs to change, but it will not be easy. We need to reach out to our younger colleagues and list to their ideas, and bring them into our fold. We need to stand with our retired members who fought hard for a strong teaching profession and continue to work to work in the Boston Public Schools this fall.

Eileen A. Weir

As many of you know, I am a mid-career changer who practiced law for fifteen years and for the past 11 years taught English language arts at the Timilty Middle School. I have been an active union member, and served on the BTU’s Collective Bargaining Committee, and the Professional Issues Committee. I am also a Teach Fair Policy Fellow. As such, I co-wrote a policy proposal to reform teacher evaluations while working through our union to increase teacher voice in decision-making at all levels, to create our own solutions to current problems in our work and diligence of the members of the Boston Teachers Union.

Boston Public education and unions has been under attack in the past years and more than ever our unemployed and underemployed public education and unions in general have come from all parts of society.

Karen Wood-Hocker

As I reflect on how teaching has changed since I began 32 years ago and how successful our students are, I have been active in the labor movement for over 20 years. I have been a teacher for over 20 years. I have been a union activist for many years and recently earned National Board Certification. I have been a representative, as a union activist in the BTU and in other unions, as a volunteer advocate for social justice unionism and building mutually beneficial alliances with other unions and with other communities.

Karen L. McCarthy

I have been a teacher for over 29 years and I have been an active union member for many years. I have been a member of the Boston Teachers Union. I am a mid-career changer who practiced law for fifteen years and for the past 11 years taught English language arts at the Timilty Middle School. I have been an active union member, and served on the BTU’s Collective Bargaining Committee, and the Professional Issues Committee. I am also a Teach Fair Policy Fellow. As such, I co-wrote a policy proposal to reform teacher evaluations while working through our union to increase teacher voice in decision-making at all levels, to create our own solutions to current problems in our work and diligence of the members of the Boston Teachers Union.

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Karen Wood-Hocker

As a candidate for election to the Executive Board and Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies, I stand in front of you seeking your vote and support.

For years, the tone of public comment and public affairs has been one of sexualization of education and public service. Merit pay, charter schools and reduced budgets are only a few of the issues that have garnered headlines.

As an elected teacher leader of the Boston Teachers Union; I have advocated for real teaching and learning as opposed to the mindless rote memorization that has come to dominate our schools. As a member of the negotiating team I have helped to collectively bargain a contract that brings positive changes for our students and our schools.

As a member of your Executive Board, I will advocate for our union to join with other unions and community organizations in the fight for social justice and educational equity.

Pursuant to new membership policy, election as a delegate does not guarantee participation in future AFT Teach Conferences (formerly called AFT QuEST).

Karene-Sean Hines

My passion is life is to teach, but it is becoming harder when politicians try to rob us of the tools we need to make the chance for real change in public education. That’s why I feel it is important for all of us to stand together and speak for the silent majority, the progressive teachers, in order to be successful.

As a member of the Executive Board I promise to work hard for all the members of the BTU. I will work hard for all the members of the BTU.

Sterling Scott

As a candidate for the Executive Board, I promise to work hard for all the members of the BTU. I will work hard for all the members of the BTU.

Finally, as an American, it is important that you come out and vote. This is your chance to make a difference. I ask for your vote on Wednesday, June 1. Thank you.
Mary Ann Urban

It’s that time of year when many candidates are asking you to think about the people you want to go to the BTU for the next 2 years. It’s that time of year when teachers, paras, nurses, and substitutes and retirees must work together to achieve this goal. We must stay united and insist on the BTU to repel the attacks of people who tell us that we are too little, have extraneous health benefits and have the audacity to collect a paycheck. We must stay united when the people who attack us say that it is all right for CEO’s to get million dollar paychecks because their contracts were signed during different economic times. Our contracts and benefits were not negotiated during different economic times. We did not demand our pay and benefits, we collectively negotiated them with the school department. We must stay united and must continue to organize and commit our efforts to save collective bargaining.

My name is Mary Ann Urban and I am the only retiree running for the board. I have been on the board longer than any other elected member. When I was an active teacher I was a member of the negotiating team. I am still a member of COPE and a member of the Retirees Legislative Committee. I occasionally sub, work to help in the Homework Help Program and work as needed for the AFTMA. I asked for your vote on June 1, 2011, for executive board and delegate.

Michael Craig

My name is Michael Craig and I am asking you to ask me to support me in my candidacy for Executive Board with your vote on June 1. There is more need now than ever for strong union leadership. We are trained professionals who work for the students of our community. Yet we are under constant attack in the media as the root of a wide range of society’s problems from the school voucher programs to budget shortfalls. We must be diligent in informing the public and our elected officials of the importance of education that we have taken on as our own career. We must continue to fight for our collective bargaining rights such as health care and full COLA raises for retirees. We need to educate the public that our working conditions are our students’ learning conditions. Lower class size translates into more time to teach each student. Through my participation in the Collective Bargaining Team, I ensured that the unique supply needs of the Early Childhood Special Education Classes were included in our contract as a Building Representative and union activist I have served on numerous committees for the AFT, AFT Mass, and BTU including the COPE Committees and New Member Recruitment Committee. I have lobbied on our behalf in Washington and testified at the State House in support of education. I have proudly marched with you at rallies and on picket lines. With a great respect for the work of our community members and a desire to increase our efforts, especially during these tumultuous times, I ask that you vote and elect me to the Executive Board and as a Delegate. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tricia Melanson

Brothers and Sisters of the BTU, we are facing some tough issues as a collective bargaining unit. Day in and day out we are facing our contractual rights under attack at a local and state level. The time is now to unite and fight together to retain the rights we have. AAs a member of the Faculty Senate, I met with administrators monthly to find a quick resolution to issues. I have proudly marched with you at rallies and on picket lines. With a great respect for the work of our community members and a desire to increase our efforts, especially during these tumultuous times, I ask that you vote and elect me to the Executive Board and as a Delegate. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Christine Buttigliari

I am proud to be a Boston Public School teacher and a member of the Executive Board. I am committed to being a voice for all of our members and to work diligently to provide a quality education for Boston’s young students. I will continue to oppose the efforts of those who derogate the competence, professionalism, and dedication of our teachers, nurses, librarians, para-professionals, and substitutes who labor for the Boston Public Schools. “Fixing the teacher” should not be the focus of efforts to reform education.

I pledge to continue to raise your voice in support of all of us and against those who demean us – and like William Lloyd Garrison, “I will be heard.”

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Honoring the USS Massachusetts on 150th Anniversary of the Civil War

By Michael J. Maguire

In recognition of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War here is a short story of the USS Massachusetts as found in the Dictionary of the American Naval Fighting Ships.

The second Massachusetts, an iron screw steamer built at Boston in 1860, was purchased by the Navy 3 May 1861 from the Boston & Southern Steamship Co., and commissioned 24 May 1861 at Boston, Commander Melancton Smith in command.

Assigned to the Gulf Blockading Squadron, Massachusetts steamed south 10 May 1861 to anchor off Key West, departing there 8 June for Pensacola. The next day she took her first prize, British ship Perthshire, near Pensacola. She captured Achilles 17 June and two days later took Naham Stetson off Pass a l’Outre, Louisiana, and on the 23rd captured the Mexican schooner Trois Freres, Olive Branch, Fanny, and Basile in the Gulf of Mexico.

While Massachusetts was absent, the South had fortified Ship Island, and the batteries fired on her when she returned from Pensacola. She engaged the Confederate guns until she ran out of ammunition. On 13 July, she seized schooner Hiland near Ship Island, and on the next day engaged the steamers Arrow and Oregon off Chandeleur Island, forcing them to withdraw. Massachusetts captured the blockade-running sloop Charles Henry near Ship Island on 7 August and gained information on Fort Pike, which guarded the entrance to Lake Pontchartrain for the South.

After repairs in early September, Massachusetts fortified Chandeleur Island and set up a light there 15 September. A landing party from the ship took possession of Ship Island 17 September, thereby providing the Union Navy with a valuable shelter during storms and the base from which Farragut would launch his attack on New Orleans. Returning to Ship Island 20 September, Massachusetts attacked, causing the South to burn the barracks and desert Ship Island passage.

Massachusetts operated near strategically important Ship Island through the remainder of the year. She thwarted Confederate efforts to transport freight through the passage, captured a small fishing boat, and turned back Oregon, Pamlico, Gray Cloud, and Florida at Mississippi Sound. Early in 1862 Massachusetts steamed northward to be decommissioned in New York on 28 February. Pitted out as a transport and supply ship, she was recommissioned 16 April and operated along the Atlantic coast until decommissioning in New York on 3 December.

Massachusetts was recommissioned on 10 March 1863 and served the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. She captured sloop Paris in Wassaw Sound on 12 March and with Commodore Perry captured blockade-runner Caledonia on 30 May 1864 south of Cape Fear after a 2-hour chase. In August she aided steamers Gettysburg and Keystone State in the capture of Confederate steamer Lilian.

On 19 March 1865, in Charleston Harbor, Massachusetts struck a torpedo (mine), which failed to explode. She decommissioned 22 September 1865 at New York and was sold there at public auction on 1 October 1867. Documented on 11 February 1868 as Crescent City, she served American commerce until 1872.

The above can be found at www.history.navy.mil/danfs/m6/massachusetts-ii.htm

Scenes from the TURN Conference

AFT President Randi Weingarten addresses the TURN Conference.

Adam Urbanski of the Rochester, NY Federation of Teachers addresses the TURN Conference.

Ted Chambers listens as AFT President Randi Weingarten talks about attacks on teachers.

Photos by Garret Virchick
Commentary: Ricardo Vega

The Upcoming Millennium

In their plans, the others have no voice, at least not a real one. They have no voice when the plan is for the benefit of the children. Opposing it only proves the malice of those individuals who usually try to argue that the plan would be the end of the creating process, something that they see as a central characteristic in the mutualistic way of the next generation. But this is just a cheap shot. All the needed creative spirit is in need of a framework to check through the pages and the chapters of the plans and you will see how it answers all situations.

In their plans, the adversary is nothing but frustrated attempts by the others to impair the plan. The others need to go. Unprepared teachers, lazy teachers, nasty teachers, unruly teachers, teachers that are too fat, or too skinny, and any other teacher’s category that disinterests them will have to go, and since the plan was created as a response to an emergency, a crisis, the others cannot undo the outcome of the others need to go quickly. Otherwise, all the goodness that the plan guarantees will be delayed, and no more than this. If the results are the same. Some are older, detached, and even sick. These are the others of the new generation taking over from the old.

Youth and freshness ought to be the central quality for the ones implementing the plan. The eagerness and willingness to go the extra mile and work the extra hour, for free is necessary, a quality that the others of the human species have lost long ago. Knowledge and understanding in this is all we have left. It is not too late. These are the same. Some are older, detached, and even sick. These are the others of the new generation taking over from the old.

In the meantime, and while research- ers and politicians of the next generation, the children cannot wait and school ad- ministrators, as depositaries of the master plan, have the responsibility to act. They need to change the attitude of the schools, by making attendance, tests, and graduation rates, together with the virtual elimina- tion of the drop-out rate can only be good news for teachers when all these efforts are compensated by substantial amounts of cash. The availability of this money can also be considered a gift. The past has taught us very well and when it comes to future monetary commitments to public employees, the part of the government, the courts, our administrators of education are guaranteed to always be protected by the insatiable thirst for justice and fairness always displayed by our officials.

In a country where not even the Presi- dent can get his way without checking with Congress and the oval office of the courts, our administrators of education have shown solid character and determination when deciding to do away with this injustice. It is time to add the schools as their little fiefs where their sovereignty cannot be questioned. These administrators have clearly understood the insatiable thirst for justice and fairness and taken a page from the effective- ness of communist China, which will not be one heartbeat away from world domin- ation. They have shown a clear message that will remain as untouchable and sacred as church donations. I don’t know what the future will bring. All we know is that I cannot wait for the good times to start. The ripple effects of effective schools will go far.

Being a teacher will be finally put on the pedestal it belongs all society. Students will again respect all teachers since we have earned back the title of second parents. Parents will again hold the word of the teacher in high and unquestionable regard. Things will be so different. We will be back to the days of second parents. Parents will again hold the word of the teacher in high and unquestionable regard. Things will be so different. We will be back to the days of second parents. Parents will again hold the word of the teacher in high and unquestionable regard. Things will be so different. We will be back to the days of second parents.

In Memoriam

Lisa Osborn-Kelley, a paraprofessional at the Holland School, passed away on Monday, April 25, 2011. Lisa was a member of the Paraprofessional Council and also an appointed trustee of the Paraprofessional Health & Welfare Committee. The AFT she was a trained instructor to run workshops to help paras get their Paraprofessional Training Points in order to satisfy the requirements of the “No Child Left Behind Act.”

Any paraprofessional who attended the Paraprofessional Statewide Conference on April 9th had the privilege of seeing Lisa in action. Lisa, at the opening of our conference, took the mike and sang a lively song to invite all paras to join her in a workshop at the Holland School. Lisa will long be remembered for her shining smile, happy attitude, and our fun.

May you rest in peace my dear friend; you will never be forgotten.

-Jenna Fitzgerald

Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Field Representative

Condolence cards can be sent to Lisa’s mother:
Lucille Osborn, 12 Thetford Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02124

Paraprofessional/Substitute Teacher Field Representative

The Psychological Services Department held professional development on Saturday, April 9th at BTU Hall. Photo by Michael J. Maguire

12 ❯ BOSTON UNION TEACHER ❯ May 2011
On Thursday, March 31, approximately a hundred teachers sought the strange springtime snow to learn the many ways that teachers can achieve their travel dreams, and just why it’s so important.

“Teaching Traveling Inspiration Night, 2011” was organized by a team of experienced “Traveler-Teachers,” including Lillie Marshall of Boston Latin Acad- emy, and Bethany Wood, BPS Director of International Programs. The event’s aim is to provide Traveler-Teachers with concrete information to fulfill their travel dreams, with or without student groups, for any desired struc- ture, destination, and length of time. As the panelists explained, teachers who have been able to travel often return to their classrooms with renewed energy, per- spective, and curricular resources.

During the first portion of the evening, attendees browsed informational hand- outs and displays put together by the numerous partner organizations present, including Boston Fund for Teachers, EF Tours, the BPS Office of International Programs, FTA Travel, Limitless Horizons Guatemala, Global Exploration for Educators, Meet Plan Go, World Teach, GO Tours, America’s Compete International Education, Reach to Teach, and the Fullbright Teacher Exchange.

After the initial mingling time, the heart of the evening began: a nine-person panel discussion from a diverse array of expert Traveler-Teachers. BPS members on this panel provided attendees with highly useful and inspirational tips about how to find time, money, and opportunities to go abroad, with or without students.

The panel kicked off with Charlestown High School Terri Wellner, who described how she was able to spend a year Leave of Absence to travel around the world. The panel continued with inspirational tips about how to find time, money and study guidebooks. Boston Latin Academy Teacher Michael Maguire detailed the process of leading numerous groups of students abroad through EF Tours, and gave advice for planning over a year ahead with students. Another panelist, Brenda Malanga, explained methods of fundraising for teacher organized student tours of Europe, taking into account the financial constraints of many BPS students.

Boston Latin Academy Teacher Lillie Marshall explained how taking a year Leave of Absence to travel around the world was not only far cheaper than she expected, but provided her with renewed energy and resources after re- turning to BPS. Henderson Elementary School Inclusion Teachers Terri Wellner and Danielle Merdin, wowed the crowd with videos and stories from their Fundraising for Teachers project: an ongoing, multi- million dollar partnership with an Inclusion school in Kenya.

Also in attendance was Charlestown High graduate ShihShi King, who just returned from Cairo, Egypt, and discussed her experiences on the political protests there first-hand, and returned from Egypt and witnessed the natural progression of events when they started this whole process back in November.

Did they say to themselves, “Look, this idea will work but only for about three months and then the attitude of “Teaching Traveling Inspiration Night” walked away with hundreds of concrete ways to travel, regardless of costs, time, or money. As the panelists asked the crowd: “If we are telling students to follow their dreams... shouldn’t WE do what it takes to follow our own travel dreams as well?”

Lillian Marshall of Boston Latin Academy addresses the crowd at the Teaching Traveling Night. (Photos by Michael J. Maguire)

If you are interested in learning more about the many teacher travel opportuni- ties available to you, with or without stu- dents, contact Bethany Wood at bwood@boston.k12.ma.us, or Lillie Marshall at LMarshall@BHSALatin.org.

BOSTON UNION TEACHER | May, 2011 | 13

Commentary: John Enright

It always kills me when I read about someone who has no regrets. It’s as if every decision they ever made in life was good or they learned a valuable lesson that made them a much better person. Please. You don’t have anything on your ledger that you would do differ- ently if you had the chance? You’re not perfect.

I always think, “Who are these people? Are there aliens living among us? And if so, why are they not working on their alleged infinite intelligence, or developing a remote that works on every electronic device that we own and is easy to operate?”

I guess the real answer is this: they’re floats. I mean really float somewhere that Sting made this kind of remark. For those of you who don’t know him, he once wrote “The front man for the 1980s band called The Police. Upon further review he does have an ex-wife and once wrote, “Do the Do Do Do, De Da Da De Da Da.”

So much for living without re- grets.

I guess I’m much different. My favor- ute electronic device is the undo button on Microsoft Word. I wish I could use that thing on every thing else in my life. It would be nice to undo an action that I disposed of everything that I ever re- gretted from me right now the only thing left would be my wristwatch (which I would then undo too). I would love to do the same thing with the social issues in our society.

Unfortunately, given the current po- litical climate, there are many political fig- ures who are living life on the edge and don’t think they will lamen the day they voted for the proposal to dismantle the public education. Wow. They say that ignorance is bliss but, as a clever billboard I once saw cautioned, “It won’t stand up in court.”

Our state congress passed a mea- sure in January, 2010 that will devastate our public schools. The worst thing about this is it happened here in Massa- chusetts “the birthplace of public education.” The three state officials who named the puritans felt that this would be the natural progression of events when they started this whole process back in 1635-2010 R.I.P.

Let’s face it, our democracy is much younger than our public schools. Should we get rid of that too? Do we move on to a 21st century education system? What I have heard from the puritans is that if we did that, they would find some way to do it. They would find some thing to do that would be similar. If we start this over, we would then have to start over.

With the advent of cell phones, the Internet, and news agencies like CNN, social historians have aptly named this era as the Communication Age. For the first time in the history of the nation’s capital Secretary of Educa- tion Arne Duncan wore an AFT “With Us, Not to Us” button. Then, less than six months later, the educational czar and his boss praised the Central Falls Superintendent when she terminated the entire staff from the Rhode Island high school. Talk about sticking to “it to us”!

It should be noted that they are not the only elected officials that have taken this tack, but their endorsement of this action is the most glaring. With all the statistics and data available that sup- posedly drives educational initiatives they have elected to overlook the most significant indicator of student success: parental involvement. An administra- tion that ignores this and chooses in- stead to lay the blame at the feet of hard working teachers can only be catego- rized as disgraceful.

In closing I think it’s important to point out that there are several converg- ing dynamics at work here: falling scores, political opportunism, and a budgetary crisis the likes of which has not been seen since before the Second World War. Baste these forces together and you have the recipe that promotes the current dismantling of the public school system. As devastating as it is for our union brothers and sisters who have lost their jobs due to the current political climate, the heartbreak does not end there.

As Oscar Wilde once said “There are two kinds of tragedies: one where you don’t get what you want and the other where you do.” The sad thing is our legislature, mayor, and governor have received exactly what they asked for and unfortunately it has come off the backs of us: the teachers, our students, and a historical precedent that made it possible for kids to enjoy the benefits of a public education.

(John Enright teaches at the Madison Park Vocational Technical High School.)
February 7, 2011

Members present: Anne Marie Adduci; Marie Broderick; Mary Cahalane; Sandy Carle; Dave Donovan, Chairman; Eileen Ganley; Donna Cooley-Hilton; Ruthanne Kennedy; Leonard Miraglia, Secretary; Leonard Miraglia, Vice Chairman; Mary Jo Murphy; and Paul Tenney.

Excused: Bonnie Mitten, Phil Fasano, Anne Broder, Larry Connolly, Linda McNamee.

Chair called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.

Secretary: Minutes were read and accepted.

Treasurer: No report.

Chairman: Chairman received the go ahead from Gene Pastore for the April 7th Business Meeting. Chair mentioned that he may decline to serve for the National Council for Retirees.

Vice Chair: We have more applications pending. Report Accepted.

Benefits: New rates have been set. Report Accepted.

Remembrance: No Report.

Scholarship: Committee have attended scholarship fair on Saturday. Committee will be reimbursed for the display board that they had purchased. Report Accepted.

Social: Preparing for the June luncheon. Report Accepted.

Travel: The Committee is in the process of rescheduling a meeting to plan for spring and fall trips for RTC. Due to inclement weather 2 previous meetings were cancelled. Report Accepted.

Richard Stutman asked to speak to the Board regarding the BTU’s Executive Board’s vote on QuEST Conferences and RTC members’ participation. He stated that a vote was taken and defeated to make QuEST attendees and not elected. The issue will be brought to the membership for a vote at their next meeting. Report Accepted.

Legislative: The Committee submitted the following: Many retirees feel frustrated, confused and overwhelmed when trying to select appropriate health care coverage. It has been the experience of several of us that the answers to many of our questions vary according to who is providing the answer, vendors, Group Health/Medicare representatives, etc. We thought it would be very helpful if the retirees could attend an informational session on April 7, 2011. We would be willing to assist in the planning of such seminar, but we are unable to shoulder the burden. Individual members may be able to provide limited assistance.

Motion to Process: Newsletter update. Discussion regarding the Newsletter was placed under New Business. Report Accepted.

Membership: We have 2,778 members; there are a few waiting for numbers. Report Accepted.

Old Business: None.

New Business: The discussion about the newsletter and its content resulted in the following motion submitted by the Legislative Committee: that the RTC chairperson is hereby directed to correct immediately the erroneous information which was sent out in the RTC Newsletter of February 3, 2011. An informational seminar was in the discussion stage by the Legislative Committee pending approval of the Executive Board of the RTC but we are unable to do the health forum at this time. The motion was accepted.

Motion to Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 12:09 P.M. – Marilyn Marion, Secretary

March 7, 2011

Members present: Anne Marie Adduci; Marie Broderick; Mary Cahalane; Sandy Carle; Dave Donovan, Chairman; Eileen Ganley; Donna Cooley-Hilton; Ruthanne Kennedy; Leonard Miraglia, Vice Chairman; Mary Jo Murphy; and Paul Tenney; Linda McNamee.

Excused: Bonnie Mitten, Phil Fasano, Marilyn Marion, Larry Connolly

Chairman opened the meeting at 10:30 am.

Secretary: Absent – Minutes taken by Marilyn McNamee - February 7 minutes were not accepted and asked for revisions and explanation.

Treasurer’s Report: Money owed for luncheon and trips. Scholarship committee members were reimbursed for poster board used for the scholarship fair. Report Accepted.

Chairman’s report: Chairman contacted insurance speakers for the April 7 business meeting, which will begin at 11 a.m. Chairman is not traveling for National Council of Retirees. Open enrollment: April 7 to first week in May. Report Accepted.

Chairman welcomed Richard Stutman came to give the following report on the health care issue: All city employees except police have formed a position on health care. Some collective bargaining; otherwise, it is either GIC or something similar. Meeting is scheduled for March 8 at the State House. He stated that prospects are gloomy that the health care legislation will pass.

Vice Chairman: There are 953 singles and 446 doubles. There are 17 new applications in progress. Report Accepted.

Benefits: No report.

Remembrance: Cards were sent to the following deceased members’ families: Myrtil A. Freeman, Mary Kettak, Jeanette Latimer, Paul E. Mahoney, Robert L. Major, Marilyn C. Murphy, Edward R. Sullivan, Vincent J. Hawley, Joyce B. Parker, Marie B. Riccio, Dorothea G. Saulnier, Daniel J. Shea, Ruth V. Tobin.

Report Accepted.

Travel: The Committee met with Sue Anderson, of Yankee Travel, on February 10 and planned the trips for 2011. Due to the weather, they are a month late in getting the Tours at a Glance and the spring flyers to our members. They hope to get a mailing out soon. They will meet with Pam Stroud, of Collette, to discuss 2 possible trips for 2011 and 2 trips in 2012. Trips being discussed are for travel in the United States and Eastern Canada. No trips to Europe will be discussed or planned.

Legislative: Committee will keep an eye on the Health Care Legislation and be ready to assist the BTU when needed.

Social: Business meeting is April 7 at 11. The food was ordered and the room was booked. Three hundred are expected to attend.

Data Processing: Revisions are being made and a meeting is set for March 10 with Jonathan, the IT person. Report Accepted.

Membership: There are 2,781 members. Report Accepted.

New Business: An Edible Arrangement was sent to Larry.

Old Business: Nomination papers are due on March 9 to the Election Committee. Anne Marie Adduci was nominated as the liaison to Election Committee.

Motion accepted to adjourn at 12:12 p.m.

– Marilyn Marion, Secretary

BTU Seeks New National Board Certified Teachers

As you know, the BPS, and BTU are committed to increasing the capactiy of our teachers, and National Board Certification is one route to achieve this goal. We seek to recruit a cohort of 12-15 teachers who are willing to pursue National Board Certification, during the 2011-2012 academic year. Contact Maggie Hoyt at mhoyt@boston.k12.ma.us

Newly-pinned National Board Certified Teachers share a laugh at the recent recognition ceremony.

BTU Retired Teachers Chapter News

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Eileen Ganley is RTC Membership Chairperson.

INFORMATION FOR NEW RETIREES

When you retire, you are no longer a member of the Union because you no longer pay dues. And, you are no longer a member of the Health and Welfare Fund, which means you no longer have dental coverage and eyeglass coverage. If you wish to continue your connection to the Union, you can join the Retired Teachers Chapter (RTC). The dues will be taken from your retirement check each month ($5 for teachers, $2.50 for paras). The RTC offers a dental insurance benefit to its members for a fee each month. Our Dental Plan covers members only and their spouse. You can also avail yourself of COBRA coverage through Health and Welfare for 18 months after retirement. For info on COBRA, call 1-617-876-0500.

FILL IN THE COUPON AND RETURN TO THE RTC TO RECEIVE A PACKET OF INFORMATION ON THE RTC. Hopefully, after reading the info, you will fill in the blue card and return it to us.

(Eileen Ganley is RTC Membership Chairperson.)
“WE ARE ONE” Rally Targets Republican Headquarters on April 4th

G

ood afternoon brothers and sisters! My name is Seth Peterson. I have been a Boston Public School Teacher and a proud member of Local 66 for the past 16 years. I am honored to stand here with you today. On this date in our history, an assassin tried to kill the dream of equality by murdering the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But that act only proved that the dream could not be killed. It has endured. Martin Luther King redefined the American Dream for generations, allowing what is best about this great nation to move into a more modern, supposedly more civilized age. And yet, today, Republican leaders have utterly lost sight of that dream... or worse, sold it out to feed their own greed. We live in a scary time when the wealthy few can sandbag so many people into believing there is a financial crisis. This is not a crisis of finances, it is a crisis of values. Dark days indeed, when elected officials will band together to vilify the people who make this country great – the workers: those who literally build our nation – the carpenters, pipe-fitters, electricians, and construction workers as well as those who build the nation by keeping us all safe – the nurses, the police and fire departments, the sanitation workers who do the dirty work of bringing us clean steps up to do... and of course, the bus drivers, custodians, and school teachers who keep our children safe, off the streets, and in school, giving them knowledge and therefore hope for a brighter future. These are crazy times, when the bankers and investors, the very people who caused this supposed crisis in the first place, are bailed out by working people and then tapped by politicians for advice on how to fix education, health care, state and municipal budgets. These people were so inept and corrupt they couldn’t keep their own houses in order. They failed in their own fields and now corporate-owned politicians want to crown them experts on your healthcare, your pension, and your children’s education. These are troubling times when the already dubious GOP would so publicly and so brazenly trade in the concept of a “Grand Old Party” to stand for nothing but Greed, Opaqueness, and Profiteering. As scary as all of this sounds, I am hopeful today because, in the words of Dr. King, "Something is happening in our world. The masses of people are rising up." We saw it in Egypt and across the Middle East; we saw it in Greece when pensions were threatened; and we see it now in Wisconsin, in Missouri, in Kentucky, and right here in Massachusetts. They are afraid when we rise up because, inside this building behind me, in those offices, deep down in those selfish bones, they know we are the people. And, ultimately, this is still a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. So I am hopeful today and not fearing the corrupt power of money. The tide is turning and something is happening.

Inside that building, they fear our movement because, unlike theirs, ours is a unifying force in America. Under the union banner of solidarity, we bring together all races, all languages, all faiths, and orientations. We represent the people. And the people united will never be defeated. The Republican Congress is pushing through anti-woman, anti-immigrant, anti-gay, anti-Muslim, and anti-artistic legislation under the guise of budget cuts and phony accountability. The GOP and sadly many democrats as well, call for more charter schools when they know full well that, since their inception, charter schools have discriminated against students with special needs and English language learners. Republican policies and platforms are built on exclusion and division because they represent the interests of a tiny, wealthy minority. This is why they fear class warfare and attempt to demonize the phrase even while they engage in it. They accuse us of stirring up class warfare when CEOs are making two and three hundred times what their employees earn. They accuse us of class warfare, yet they give massive tax breaks to the wealthy, allow companies like Exxon and GE to pay nothing in federal taxes, and give their CEOs 100% raises in these supposedly tight times. You have billionaires on TV, sneering and gloating about the benefits public employees receive, begrudging us decent healthcare and a reasonable retirement. And yet, when we dare begin to see these same barriers of capital, their billions, their obscene bonuses, their junkets and golden parachutes, then we are accused of engaging in class warfare. No, it is those who control 90% of the wealth in this country: if it really comes down to class warfare, you’ll know it. There will be no mistak-
Labor and Community Activists Take Aim at Financial Greed on April 14th

Rally Speech by Garret Virchick

As Boston teachers we are no strangers to economic hardship. We’ve always worked with students from families who have lost their homes, can’t find work, or have lost jobs. But since the economic collapse things have gotten worse. A lot worse.

But instead of getting help in our schools to deal with this crisis... the teachers of Boston, like so many teachers around the country, are being TARGETED as the problem. These financial “misleaders” bankrupt the country, take the bailout money, lay off workers to help THEIR bottom line, then give themselves bonuses for raising profits... and teachers are the problem? Too many of our students now can’t get enough to eat... and teachers are the problem? These masters of the universe are cashing out on America, and running off to their gated communities far away from the poverty that defines the lives of the children in our schools. And we are the problem?

While their high paid lobbyists paid off Congress to keep the Bush tax cuts... their newspapers pointed at teachers and other public workers. To keep the focus off them... they’ve pointed to us. We need to flip the script. As many of my students say, “This is real talk.”

(Garret Virchick teaches at Brighton High School.)

School Nurse Cheryl Kelly at the “We Are One” rally.

Bob Blackler from the Snowden International High School rallying in the rain at Republican Headquarters.

Allison Doherty-LaCasse from the Greater Boston Labor Council Futures Committee joins others at the April 4th rally.

Labor mobilizes to restore the American Dream and a Fair Economy for Working Families.

The SEIU was out in force targeting the big bucks!

Photos by Garret Virchick