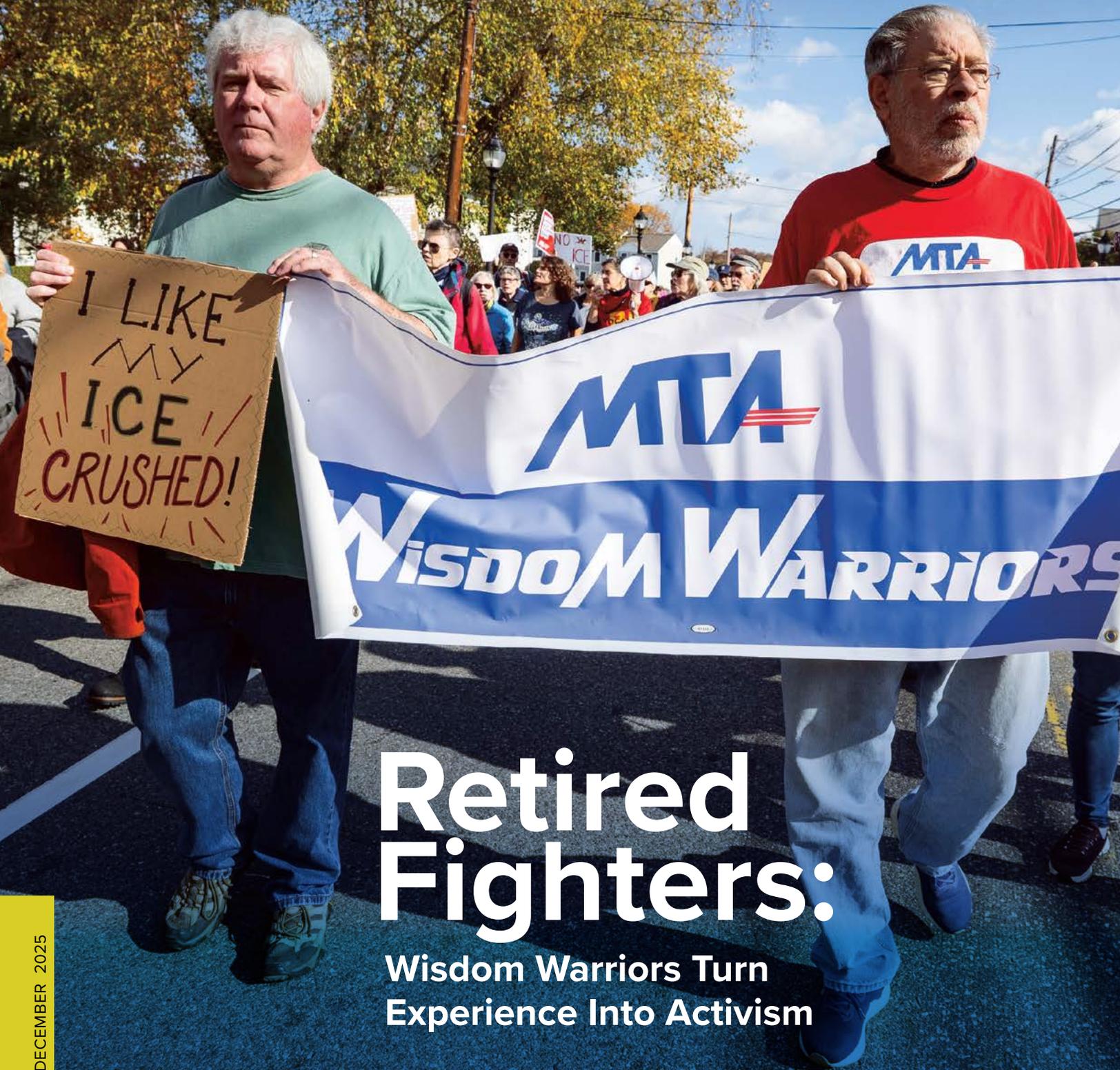


MTA

The voice of
our retired
members

REPORTER



Retired Fighters:

Wisdom Warriors Turn
Experience Into Activism

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DECEMBER 2025

On the Cover Wisdom Warriors, including Jim Murphy and Andrei Joseph, carry the banner for the group at a Fuerza Waltham demonstration in November.

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

MTA A DIVERSE UNION of EDUCATION WORKERS **nea**

SAVE THE DATE ESP CONFERENCE

April 10 - 11
Hyannis, MA

Retired Education Support Professionals and soon-to-be retired ESPs, be sure to join us at the MTA ESP Conference! Programming will include sessions aimed specifically at our needs and interests.

MORE INFORMATION

massteacher.org/esconference



Message from the Co-Chairs

Kathy Greeley and Rick Last

Where do we begin? We certainly are facing unprecedented times. But the Retired Members Committee has been working hard. We had a wonderful luncheon in Sturbridge to celebrate Chandler Creedon Jr. as the 2025 recipient of our Honor Our Own Award. We recently launched our third year of our First Wednesday Speaker Series. The Wisdom Warriors are continuing to show up around the state to support our MTA locals and other union sisters and brothers in various contract fights, and more recently have started turning folks out to help protect immigrants' rights. We have been working on our MTA website page (massteacher.org/retirees) to make it more accessible and informative. We have expanded our Mentors of Color program, which is entering its third year, which provides critical supports to our new teachers and Education Support Professionals of color.

We also have launched two new subcommittees. The first is focusing on dignified retirement, with the goal of supporting legislation that directly impacts us as retirees, including raising the COLA. The second new subcommittee is working on including more retired ESPs in our work and expanding support for the MTA PreK-12 ESP Bill of Rights. We recognize what an important part ESPs play in providing high-quality education to our public schools.



Our Retirees Against High-Stakes Testing subcommittee has been particularly active. After working hard to end MCAS as a high school graduation requirement last year, we now are focused on engaging public voices in shaping the Commonwealth's new graduation requirements.

Working with Citizens for Public Schools and many local co-sponsors, we have held People's Forums that have brought hundreds of parents, educators, students and other community members together to discuss these three questions:

- What should students know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school?
- How should students demonstrate their readiness to graduate?
- How can schools, pre-K to 12, support these goals?

MTA retirees have helped to organize People's Forums in New Bedford/Fall River, Cambridge/Somerville, Boston, Lowell, Salisbury, Worcester, Springfield, and a Zoom forum for

folks in western Massachusetts. Overwhelmingly, forum participants expressed the desire for schools to focus on teaching higher order skills, including critical thinking, effective communication skills, the ability to collaborate and problem solve, along with more focus on real world skills, such as financial and digital literacy. They recognize that standardized tests do not measure these kinds of skills, and in fact actively work against them!

IN BRIEF

In addition to sharing the results of these forums with all attendees, summaries and data from each session has been sent to the Legislature's Joint Committee on Education, the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Governor's Council on Graduation Requirements, Education Secretary Patrick Tutwiler and Gov. Maura Healey.

On Oct. 20, we held a press conference at the State House releasing the data from our forums. The 35-minute video is available for viewing on the Citizens for Public Schools YouTube channel, at [youtube.com/watch?v=H1aS_uGsvQM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1aS_uGsvQM).

We Still Need Your Help

In spite of overwhelming demand for more authentic forms of assessment, the state is pushing through reforms that look suspiciously like a new form of the MCAS. Specifically, Tutwiler is calling for state-designed and state-scored "end of course" exams. The MTA and retired members strongly oppose these.

What Do We Want?

1. We believe districts should develop their own assessments that are based on statewide curriculum standards and the goals we all agree to for a graduate. These may include portfolios, performance assessments and capstone projects.
2. We want multiple pathways to end in a high school diploma.

3. We support some requirements for core courses, but there must be flexibility in defining them.

What Can You Do?

1. Share a summary of the People's Forums with as many people as you can, including your local School Committee members and other elected officials. The summary information is available at citizensforpublicschools.org.
2. Write to your state representative and senator and encourage them to reject DESE's "back to the future" plan.
3. If you have models of portfolios, capstone projects and other more authentic assessments of student work, share them with us! Contact us by sending an email to Lisa Lemieux, the Retired members organizer, at llemieux@massteacher.org.
4. Start a conversation in your own community about what folks in your town or city really want for our public school students. ■

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

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

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

Get Involved!

The Retired Members Committee has several subcommittees that are looking for members who want to make a difference.

JOIN TODAY



massteacher.org/retired

Executive Committee / Board Report

Andrei Joseph



The actions of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors at recent meetings both document and enable the power of the MTA as we advocate for our members, our communities and public education itself.

The largest division in the MTA is Field and Organizing. Over the past year we have added 12 new field staff to address the needs of our locals, in prekindergarten through higher education. Beyond simply processing grievances, we have encouraged members to be active and increase their power both within their locals and relative to their school committees and state government. Field staff have encouraged locals to adopt an “open bargaining” approach. Eschewing the traditional form of remote, secret negotiations, the MTA is advocating that all members, and in some cases, the community itself, be present at bargaining sessions. With this model, there remains a limited number of representatives who speak, but having the broader membership simply witness the all-too-frequent

disrespect of the administration affirms the creative and transparent approach of our union. Across the Commonwealth, over two-thirds of MTA locals have adopted this approach.

We are engaged in a robust membership drive across all levels. This is designed to meet both short-term budgetary needs (more members equal more dues collected) as well as longer range political challenges from the right. Extreme anti-union legislation is being contemplated at the federal level. Proposals include attacking payroll dues deduction, repeal of the tax-exempt status of the NEA, requiring that union officers be American citizens and eliminating the federal charter of the NEA, our parent organization. This is essentially the playbook of Project 2025. While we insist these policies are unconstitutional, our goal to increase membership density in every local anticipates the upcoming moment when we may be called upon to directly collect union dues.

The Executive Committee is proposing the creation of our own independent political action committee, or PAC, to enable directed, local electoral campaigns. Recent efforts have already proven very successful. In 19 municipalities, we were involved in 78 races and successful in 54, a rate of nearly 70 percent. Four MTA members were elected to local office. Two of our political enemies, the chair of the Beverly School Committee and the Gloucester mayor, were ousted from office.

Statewide, in the field, our staff report that the main issues facing our members are health insurance, paid family medical leave, living wages for Education Support Professionals, safe schools, prep time in elementary schools and layoffs in higher ed from federal cuts. The large health insurance increases being experienced throughout the state have led us to create a task force to collect data and develop strategies to mitigate the worst impacts. In the long run, this will require adoption of a single-payer health care system.

The MTA is involved both internally through political education and externally through coalition building. Internally, there are multiple conferences and workshops: regional and statewide meetings for local presidents, a winter conference to build union skills, an Ethnically Marginalized Affairs Committee Conference to be held at the Sheraton Framingham in December, as well as a Solidarity School, providing training and popular education in racial, social and economic justice initiatives. More information about each of these is available on our website, massteacher.org.

Externally, we are playing leading roles in coalitions designed to protect our most vulnerable students, families and members. We continue to offer trainings in how to respond to ICE when its agents appear to be threatening our communities. Yet another coalition involves a sub-committee of the Retired Members Committee joining efforts with Citizens for Public Schools as the battle continues over graduation

GOVERNANCE REPORT

requirements. Despite our victory eliminating MCAS as an obstacle to graduation, new, nefarious, substitute legislation is likely to be introduced.

While the MTA itself is not forwarding any ballot initiative in 2026, there are multiple proposals from other organizations and coalitions. Representatives from these organizations addressed the Board and asked for our endorsement. We agreed to support ballot questions supporting rent control, correcting the provision of legislative stipends and ensuring safe schools in the face of gun violence, while opposing reactionary tax proposals. Board approval in these cases indicates that, as of now, proponents of these measures can use our name to rally supporters, not that the MTA committed any funds. I voted with the majority on each of these questions.

In developments specific to retirees, four of our retirement consultants retired. (Oh, the irony!) We are on boarding new hires and a full roster should once again be in place by December. Wisdom Warriors has been active in both the east and the west, supporting members in Belmont, dining hall workers at Mt. Holyoke and Smith colleges, as well as joining anti-ICE demonstrations in Waltham and Burlington. Twenty-five retirees were among the 900 attendees at this past Summer Conference at UMass Amherst. The conference included 111 different sessions, and several hundred members were first-time attendees. My motion to increase reimbursement stipends for retired delegates to Annual

Meeting, when it is held in Boston, will receive a second reading at our December Board meeting. As our policies are currently written, if passed, this would also increase the stipends for ethnically marginalized representatives.

We received an audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. We are in good shape. There was no finding of fraud, illegal acts or “material weaknesses.” We have \$66 million in reserves; this number fluctuates with investment values. We approved capital requests to allow a regional office in Holyoke to move to West Springfield, to pay for new video equipment for our Communications Division and to replace worn furniture.

Also noted:

- Ricardo Rosa was promoted from director of the Training and Professional Learning Division to deputy executive-director.
- We now have an online store if you want to order swag: raygununion.com/collections/massachusetts-teachers-association.
- MTA Board members Bobby Travers, Chris Mulrone and Bonnie Page were elected to two-year terms on the MTA Benefits Board. Will Karvouniaris and I were elected to one-year terms.
- The MTA will host a nationwide meeting of educator unions in Boston on January 28-29, 2026, to share information and explore strategies about the possibility of a campaign for a wealth tax. If

interested in participating, contact President Max Page at mpage@massteacher.org.

- Several executive sessions concerned hiring and personnel matters. ■

Contact Andrei Joseph at ajoseph@rcn.com.

GET READY FOR 2026 CONFERENCES!

Winter Union Skills Conference

Saturday, January 24
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Location: Sheraton Boston

Early Career Educator Conference

Saturday, February 28
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Location: Worcester State University

MTA Annual Meeting

Friday, May 8
Saturday, May 9
Location: Hynes Convention Center, Boston, MA

Summer Conference

Sunday, July 26 through
Wednesday, July 29.
Location: UMass Amherst

Why Mentorship Matters

Marguerite Foster Franklin

I can't begin to talk about mentorship unless I talk about my experience as a new teacher. Teaching just felt right for me since the sixth grade. But the real influence on me was my kindergarten teacher, Amelia Harrell. She was both my kindergarten teacher and later my mentor teacher when I was going through my practicum.

She wasn't easy on me at all.

I knew she had high expectations of me that helped shape me into a better teacher. I was nervous on my first day. I wanted to make my former teacher proud of me. Looking back over my career, I think I have. She taught me so much. I learned from her that your voice matters. Certain teaching protocols have to be respected including, "Be on time. Be an advocate for your students and yourself and know your curriculum." She was inspiring to me. Her classroom was filled with science-related items, which I loved. Fish tanks, animals stored in jars with formaldehyde, pictures of weather systems. I did my best to soak in as much as I could from her. She showed me how important centers are for children to learn, not only for themselves, but to work with others. Another asset is that knowing the neighborhood helps you when speaking with parents of children in your classroom. The big one was practical: that it was easier to bring your own lunch because you didn't have time to go out for lunch. When it was my time to graduate from student teaching, with my degree, it was her classroom I took over as she retired



Marguerite Foster Franklin, a retired Springfield educator, was appointed to the Retired Members Committee in 2025.

from teaching. I was so honored to have done that from a former mentor and make her proud because she had such high expectations of me.

When it became time for me to become the teacher, as I began to make my classroom reflect me, I realized I had a lot to learn and give of myself. I had to learn to present the curriculum not only to help the children understand it, but to present it in my own way. I had to understand and set expectations from the very beginning and learn how to assess students using a hand-written report card. I had to understand where the kids started out at the beginning of the school year and where they should be at the end of the year. That first year didn't really go all that well. One of the reasons was the teachers' union went on strike for about two-to-three weeks. I was a union member.

Because I was newly hired, I decided I was going to do work to rule. I wanted to make sure that my colleagues knew that I supported them. So, I checked on them on the picket line daily. It was a hostile strike for the city that year. Thankfully, not at my school. But many teachers were arrested for striking. I didn't have students for a while that first year, because many students didn't come to school. As a result, I didn't learn what it was like to have a complete classroom of students. After the strike ended, I wasn't at the school long because it closed because of Proposition 2½, and I lost my job. The staff fought so hard for the school to stay open, but the community ultimately, I feel, didn't fight hard enough to keep it open. So, I went into substitute teaching for about six years, alternating between middle and high school.

“ I always felt I had to prove myself but it didn’t bother me because I knew my principal believed in me. I learned that first grade is one of the toughest grades to teach. It carries a lot of expectations.” Marguerite Foster Franklin

When I finally landed a permanent teaching position again, it was at Talmadge Elementary School as a first grade teacher. I started the day before school was scheduled to start. I was there for about 10 years. I had a tough principal my first year – Harding Stewart. He was hard on the staff, but he was fair. He was the one who prepped me to always make sure my lesson plans were done and ready. He would walk in every classroom, every Monday, and check on lesson plans. He was very helpful to me in my first year, because I didn’t really get as much help or guidance as I thought I should have from the other staff. I was the only teacher of color, and I felt I always had to prove myself more than everybody else. I felt very alone that year. But I also proved a lot of others wrong about me. I had teachers who would stop by my class and give me different pamphlets with no explanation of how things work, or who to speak to. I was just figuring things out by myself. I would have loved to have had colleagues listen to me and not just give me something but give me something of themselves. Everything I learned that year, I learned from my principal, because I couldn’t get the help I needed from the other staff. While many of the students were bused from the surrounding urban neighborhoods, I was really the only staff member who could relate to the parents and children being a person of color.

The lack of support I needed made me feel isolated. I even once was accused of doing something to a child that I didn’t do. Thankfully, the child recanted when approached with the parent present. That was when I learned that when something

happens in the classroom, always let the parent know right away. It took a while, but I finally gained respect from the other teachers and staff. I think it was because I started to speak up about certain issues, especially during my second year, when we were asked by the principal to collaborate on a program for the parents. That’s when I started gaining some respect from my colleagues. I always felt I had to prove myself, but it didn’t bother me because I knew my principal believed in me. I learned that first grade is one of the toughest grades to teach. It carries a lot of expectations.

As years went by, other teachers of color came to teach at the school, but they didn’t stay. I think that had to do with the staff giving them the impression that they didn’t have enough value to add to the school. I did my best to help them, and be supportive, because I knew what it was like. But it wasn’t enough to make them keep teaching at the school. Those years at Talmadge, and my first years as a kindergarten teacher afterward, really showed me that a supportive mentor among teachers, especially teachers of color, matters.

When it was my turn to act as a mentor for a practicum student teacher, it was important to me to really get to know the student teachers for who they are. It was important for me to be really honest with them, be sensitive to certain things and give them the opportunity to let them express their views. Then I would tell them, “Show me what you got.” When you are new, no one really gets to know who you are. They say, “Oh, welcome to the school,” then tell you the expectations and

due dates, but no one really asks you anything. “How do you feel?” “Are you nervous?” Because of this, I always have felt strongly about new teachers and current teacher mentorship programs. I know what it’s like as a new teacher in a school, especially being a new teacher of color. Most times, new teachers are approached with condescending mannerisms and spoken to with a lot of prejudice before people get to know the person who chose to go into this great profession. It’s like taking someone on a field trip without explaining anything or showing them where the bathrooms are.

I loved my time as a teacher and still miss my time in the classroom, to this day. Though I am now retired, my knowledge and experience are still there. That gives me the benefit of seeing what new educators are experiencing in their career. Everyone deserves support and acknowledgment, no matter who they are or where they come from.

“The best teachers are those that show you where to look but don’t tell you what to see.” – Alexandra K. Trenfor. ■

Marguerite Foster Franklin, a lifelong resident of Springfield, is a retired educator who taught for more than 42 years. She is a mentor in the MTA Retired Educator of Color Mentor-Mentee program.

Editor’s note: This is the fifth in a series of commentaries by Retired members of color, reflecting on their personal experiences in public education.

Education, Organizing and Activism for COLA Improvements, Immigrant Rights

Dale Melcher

The initial event in our third year of the First Wednesday Retiree Speaker Series led us on a deep dive into the history of the public employee pension COLA and various efforts to increase it, as well as forces working against any such increases.

Sean King, an MTA government relations specialist, joined the virtual conversation Oct. 8 about current efforts to increase our retirement benefit. We learned that the state’s Special COLA Commission, a nine-member panel that will review possible increases to the COLA base for the State and Teachers’ Retirement Systems, is focused on the creation of a new enhanced or “senior” benefit that would be paid to long-term retirees in addition to the traditional COLA. Frank Valeri, a commission member and president of the Mass Retirees Association, pointed out that the longer someone has been retired, the harder they have been hit by inflation.

The commission is mandated to explore increasing the COLA base for members of State and Teachers’ Retirement Systems, which has been set at \$13,000 since 2012. Any recommendations coming from the commission will have to go through the legislative process, so be prepared to lobby!

The Nov. 5 Speaker Series program focused on the impact of immigration raids and aggressive ICE enforcement on our schools,



communities and college campuses, and explored the various ways communities are pushing back. Brenda Quintana, an MTA field staff member, invited representatives of groups from Worcester, Chelsea, Waltham and the Metrowest area, who are organizing to expose ICE activities and protect our immigrant neighbors, to share their experiences and strategies.

A video of our Oct. 8 event, “Dignified Retirement and the History and Future of the COLA,” as well as sessions over the past year, are available on the MTA Retired webpage at **massteacher.org/retired**.

Look for the date of the video to make sure you are clicking on the correct one. We encourage you to listen to any you missed.

An updated list of future Speaker Series events, scheduled through March 2026, is available on Page 13 of this edition of the Reporter. ■

In addition, we would love to hear from you about any topics you would like to see addressed in the future. Email your suggestions to Dale Melcher at **daleannmelcher@gmail.com**.

WISDOM WARRIORS IN ACTION

Educators are Showing Their Commitment to Education Values Long After Retirement

By Rick Last

Wisdom Warriors is an organization of Retired MTA members, who assemble as needed to support active members in contract fights, in standouts, and as support for community issues.

Recent months have seen an increased response to varied needs.

In October, the Wisdom Warriors appeared in Belmont, where they participated in a rally supporting the Belmont Education Association in its ongoing fight for a fair contract against a resistant school committee.

In November, the members proudly stood and marched with community members at the ICE Out of Waltham Rally, organized by Fuerza Waltham, demanding dignity and justice for all. The “Wisdom Warriors” banner was among the signs in a demonstration from the courthouse to the city center. More than 300 people participated in the event.

Jim Murphy, a retired social studies educator who worked most of his career in Weston, held up one end as he marched down Main Street with RMC member Andrei Joseph.

For the past several months, Murphy has been attending regular standouts protesting aggressive



Jim Murphy said he can see a direct link between social activism and change. He is active in demonstrations against ICE enforcement.

ICE immigration enforcement in Newton. He’s been active since his retirement from teaching.

The immigration tactics are an educational issue because they’re frightening students and families and having a direct impact on other students, Murphy said. “Kids are scared they might not come home to parents and that has an impact on them,” Murphy said. “Their anxiety, their absences have an impact on their classmates. That becomes an educational issue very specifically.”

Rallies such as the one in Waltham make a difference, he said. “It historically has and it will continue to have an influence. It may not be obvious at first, but this is exactly how change happens.”

Joseph, who retired from teaching in Concord-Carlisle, said the activism of Wisdom Warriors appeals to members who are interested in different activities. “We’ve retired



Wisdom Warriors gathered in Northampton to show support for SEIU members.



Members gathered in Easthampton this fall for a standstill.

from the classroom, but we haven't retired from caring about public education or caring about our students. We haven't retired from the mission of the MTA. We haven't retired from the idea of building a better world. That includes a better world for our children and grandchildren."

Other Wisdom Warriors actions this fall included in Burlington, where the Warriors joined Bearing Witness @ICE, a group dedicated to peaceful, nonviolent protest, holding standouts in front of the ICE Field Office in Burlington to call for humane immigration policies.

In South Hadley and Northampton, on the Mt. Holyoke College and Smith College campuses, the Warriors also joined forces with other unions to support the Service Employees International Union as it fought for a fair contract for 32BJ members.

Rich Olszewski, director of higher ed and bargaining for SEIU, said: "After a one-day strike — and with powerful community support from Wisdom Warriors and others — the 170 hardworking facilities and dining



Members of the Wisdom Warriors turned out in Holyoke for a Labor Day action organized by a coalition of labor unions.

“ Kids are scared they might not come home to parents and that has an impact on them. That becomes an educational issue very specifically.”

JIM MURPHY, WISDOM WARRIOR MEMBER

members of 32BJ secured two strong contracts, overwhelmingly ratified by members. These agreements include breakthrough improvements like an employer-paid legal fund, stronger job protections for immigrant members, and substantial pay increases for the lowest-paid workers — bringing

them closer to a true living wage. The incredible turnout from Wisdom Warriors lifted everyone's spirits and showed the college that the community stands firmly with its workers!" ■

Mary MacDonald contributed to this article.

Join the Retired Wisdom Warriors

Are you ready to keep making a difference? Become part of the Retired Wisdom Warriors — a dynamic group of MTA retirees who are putting their experience and passion to work for our communities, our union, and the broader labor movement.

Our motto says it all: “We Show Up!” Together, we support:

- Locals in need
- MTA initiatives
- Other unions in their struggles
- Efforts to respond to the immigration enforcement crisis

As a statewide program of the MTA Retired Members Committee, the Wisdom Warriors has regional coordinators across Massachusetts, ready to connect you with meaningful action in your area. Joining is easy — and every bit of support helps. ■

To sign up, send an email to mtawisdomwarriors@gmail.com with your contact information and where you live. You'll be added to our email and text list, so you'll know when opportunities arise to stand in solidarity.



Whether you can attend an event or simply spread the word, your voice matters. Let's continue to lead, inspire, and show up — together!

WEP-GPO Repeal, One Year Later: Share your story with MTA!

A year ago on Jan. 5, after decades of efforts by MTA members and activists in the labor movement, President Joe Biden signed into law a repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. The two laws, which dated to the 1980s, unfairly took Social Security benefits from Massachusetts educators and other workers who had worked in both the public and private sector before they retired.

The repeal put thousands of dollars back into the accounts of public service retirees who had worked in Massachusetts, including firefighters, police and educators.

To celebrate this victory for unions, the MTA is collecting stories from members about what the repeal meant to them. Please share your story by filling out some brief information on the form at massteacher.org/wepgpo.

FIRST
WEDNESDAY

RETIREE SPEAKER SERIES



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

JANUARY 6 **The Reading Wars Are Back!!**

A wave of legislation has been sweeping the country calling for mandating literacy curricula based on the “Science of Reading.” Massachusetts is about to pass its own version. But what is “Science of Reading” and who is behind this movement? Is there really a “reading crisis?” Is the “Mississippi Miracle” really a miracle? How are these new curricula changing teaching and student learning? Join us to hear some experts who have looked behind the curtain of this next “silver bullet” coming at public education

FEBRUARY 4 **Legislative Transparency in Massachusetts**

Massachusetts voters passed a referendum calling for greater transparency in state government. Our Legislature has been ranked as one of the least transparent in the country. Join us to get answers to questions including, “How does the legislative process work?” “What are the issues regarding legislative transparency?” and “How do ballot initiatives represent a failure of the legislative process?”

MARCH 4 **Artificial Intelligence: In our lives and in our schools**

Whether we like it or not, Artificial Intelligence tools are becoming a presence in our lives and in our schools, colleges and universities. Join us to discuss the impact on how we live our lives and the educational, policy, and contractual implications of these tools for our students, staff, and faculty. We will also explore ideas for future advocacy efforts and opportunities MTA members can take at the local level needed to ensure AI use meets the needs of our communities, not the needs of AI companies.

**STAY TUNED FOR UPCOMING
SESSIONS!**

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



Election Opportunities for MTA Retired Members

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

The election and nomination process for the seats described here are subject to MTA Bylaws and to MTA Policy/Procedures for Nominations and Elections, all of which are available upon request from the MTA Division of Governance.

Statewide Retired Executive Committee Member

The Executive Committee seat representing the Statewide Retired Region will be up for election. The Executive Committee, along with the Board, is a governing body of the MTA, with various responsibilities including real estate, finance and personnel oversight and decision making. Executive Committee members automatically also serve on the MTA Board of Directors, which has control of the affairs of the association, except when the delegates are in session. The term is for three years, beginning July 1, 2026. Candidates must be retired members of the MTA and NEA. The election will take place at the 2026 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates, voted on by the retired delegates.

Those wishing to run for this seat should submit a self-nominating letter no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, March 6, 2026, specifying the candidate's name and address and the office

being sought. The letter should be addressed to Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, or sent via email to MTAGovernance@massteacher.org.

MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

The 2026 NEA Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) is scheduled for July 3 through July 7, in Denver. This meeting of representatives from all NEA state associations is the world's largest democratic deliberative assembly! At the RA, delegates debate the vital issues that impact American public education and set association policy and activities for the year ahead. It is an opportunity for democratic engagement and making national connections to build our movement and strength.

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

hotel and meal expenses for those attending this meeting.

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

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

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 9, 2026, at 5 p.m.

AVAILABLE OPPORTUNITIES for MTA Retired Members

- Statewide Retired Executive Committee Member.
- MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly.
- Statewide Retired District and Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting.
- MTA Retired Members Committee.

Nomination forms available online at massteacher.org/nomform.

RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2026 NOMINATION FORM

This nomination form must be received by 5 PM on Friday, **MARCH 6, 2026**, regardless of postmark.

An online self-nomination form is available at **massteacher.org/nomform**.

WE ENCOURAGE CANDIDATES TO UTILIZE THE ONLINE FORM (or this paper form may be submitted).

Additional forms may be requested or this form may be duplicated. Forms may be mailed to the address below.

NAME OF CANDIDATE _____
 MEMBER ID (listed on your MTA ID Card) _____ EMAIL _____
 ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

Please check the appropriate box.

Membership Type:

Retired Retired Life

I hereby declare my candidacy for:

Retired Members Committee

BIO/STATEMENT GRID – PLEASE PRINT – OR TYPE ONTO ONLINE FORM

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **MTA POLICY:** Each candidate may submit a biography/statement grid containing no more than 50 words.
Note: Only the first fifty (50) words will be printed. **The Credentials & Ballot Committee reserves the right to edit the bios.**
2. **WRITE OUT** your statement on a separate piece of paper first, and then fill out the grid.
3. **TYPE OR PRINT** clearly, using both upper and lower-case letters, as you expect your final statement to appear.
4. **INSERT** only **one word** per box.
5. **DO NOT combine words or numbers with hyphens or slashes.**
6. "AN," "A" and "THE" constitute one word.
7. **ACRONYMS** such as "NEA-RA" or "MTA" count as one word.
8. **INSERT PUNCTUATION** in the **same box** immediately after the word you want it to follow.
9. **A DATE** represented as "October 1, 2006" shall constitute three words. A date represented as "10/1/06" is only one word
10. Send this entire nomination form to: MTA, Governance Specialist, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119. This form must be received by **Friday, March 6, 2026, regardless of postmark**, in order for the bio/statement to be published in the April MTA REPORTER.

Please send me a list of Statewide Retired delegates to the **2026** MTA Annual Meeting, which I will use solely for the purpose of publicizing my candidacy for election as a member of the Retired Members Committee.

My qualifications are in compliance with those of the designated position for which I am a candidate.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

GOVERNANCE

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

The 2026 Annual Meeting of Delegates will take place on May 8 and 9 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. In this meeting, delegates from across the state gather to vote on policies and set the direction for the MTA in the year ahead.

Your voice matters.

The Statewide Retired District Delegates will be elected by ballot provided to the retired membership, in conjunction with the NEA delegate elections in February. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. The 2026 allocation of retired delegates seats will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members as of Jan. 15, 2026.

In addition, there is an allocation of two ethnic minority delegate seats for the Statewide Retired District. As with the district seats among the active membership, this allocation is equal to the number of seats per district on the MTA Board of Directors. Election of these seats will be held concurrently with the other retired delegate seats mentioned in this article. Retired members may run for Annual Meeting delegate seats in both categories, and if elected to both, must notify MTA which seat they intend to fill. Retired delegates to the Annual Meeting may apply for reimbursement of certain travel expenses incurred to attend the Annual Meeting, up to \$450.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, Jan. 9, 2026, at 5 p.m.

MTA Retired Members Committee

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by the Statewide Retired District Delegates at the 2026 Annual Meeting. This committee plans the statewide retiree conference and serves as an important voice of retirees within the MTA. The committee seats have terms of two years, starting July 1, 2026.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at massteacher.org/nomform. The nomination deadline is Friday, March 6, 2026, at 5 p.m.

Election Waiver

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

Nomination and Election Details Now on the MTA Website

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

MTA Retired Elections Contact Information

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

The co-chairs of the Retired Members Committee also are available to assist you with information on election opportunities available to retired members and the election process. Committee chairs Kathy Greeley and Rick Last can be reached at kegreeley@gmail.com and ricklewislast@gmail.com.

ELECTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MTA RETIRED MEMBERS

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

MTA BENEFITS



Enjoy the Winter Season and Save

Diamond Coleman

When the temperatures drop and the days get shorter, it can be tempting to settle into full-on hibernation mode. But winter in New England has a magic all its own — it's the perfect time to get out, explore and enjoy new experiences. Whether you're looking for excitement, relaxation or a chance to try something totally different, MTA Benefits offers great ways to make the colder months brighter and more affordable.

Here are some winter-friendly adventures and savings to help you make the most of the season.

Take in the Best Views of Boston

If you're craving one-of-a-kind views, look no further than View Boston, the breathtaking 360-degree observation deck atop the Prudential Tower. From panoramic indoor vistas to the open-air roof deck, every floor offers its own energetic vibe. Sip a cocktail at Stratus, explore a 3D model of the city, and build your next Boston adventure with interactive discovery tools — all at a 25 percent discount for MTA members.

Head for the Mountains at Killington Resort

For those who love a little outdoor adventure, winter is the perfect excuse to escape to Killington, Vermont. MTA members save 10 percent on scenic gondola rides, Adventure Center passes, rentals and mountain biking lift tickets. Whether you're soaking in Vermont's snowy beauty or bringing family along for some mountain fun, Killington lets you enjoy the season without stretching your budget.

Feel the Magic at Disney On Ice at TD Garden

Winter and imagination go hand in hand — and nothing brings out that childlike wonder quite like Disney On Ice. Bring the whole family to see Mickey and friends as they glide through the worlds of "Moana," "Inside Out 2," "Toy Story," "Encanto," and more. It's the perfect way to add a little sparkle and warmth to a chilly day.

Cheer on the Bruins

Hockey season is in full swing, and there's no better time to root for the black and gold. MTA members can

score rare savings on select Boston Bruins games using a special promo code. Whether you're heading into the city for a night out or treating someone to an unforgettable experience, nothing beats the energy of TD Garden.

Get Active at Rt. 12 Pickle

Cold weather doesn't have to mean putting your favorite activities on pause. Stay moving this winter at Rt. 12 Pickle in West Boylston, home to eight climate-controlled, indoor pickleball courts. With a bar, lessons, clinics and leagues, it's the perfect place to keep your game sharp and your spirits high. MTA members can snag an annual membership for just \$359 (regularly \$399).

Relax and Reset at Body & Soul Massage

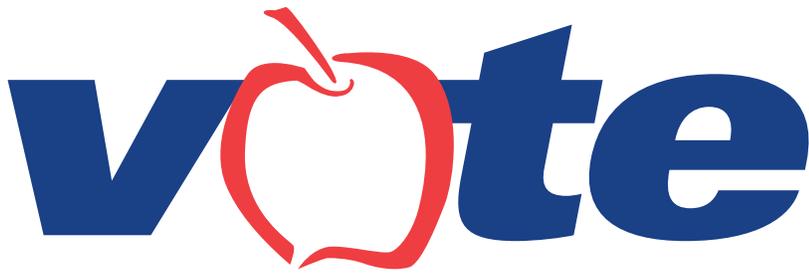
If winter is your time to unwind, treat yourself to some well-deserved stress relief. Body & Soul Massage in Salem specializes in therapeutic treatments designed to ease pain and promote lasting wellness. Show your MTA card to enjoy savings.

Explore History Up Close at the American Heritage Museum

Looking for an enriching indoor outing? The American Heritage Museum in Hudson offers free entry for MTA members (excluding special event weekends). Walk through immersive exhibits spanning from the Revolutionary War to modern conflict, explore historic military technology, and gain a deeper understanding of America's past. It's a meaningful, educational way to spend a winter day and perfect for history lovers of all ages.

Winter is a season full of opportunities to explore, relax, reconnect, and have fun. With MTA Benefits, you can do more of what you love while keeping your budget in check. So, bundle up, grab your MTA card, and let the adventures begin! ■

To discover more winter fun, visit mtabenefits.com.



VOICE OF TEACHERS
for EDUCATION

We Need Real Allies
in Public Office.

VOTE is the MTA's Political Action Committee (PAC). At a time when public education, our democracy and rights are under attack, we need to count on allies in public office for the difficult fights ahead.

Voluntary contributions to VOTE from MTA members make it possible to support pro-public education and pro-union candidates for public office in state and local elections.

Recurring contributions are most helpful for this need.



massteacher.org/votepac

Please consider making a contribution to the VOTE PAC today.

Your generous contribution to the VOTE PAC will help us stand with elected officials who will stand with us.

MTA's VOTE (Voice of Teachers for Education) is the MTA's Political Action Committee and collects voluntary contributions from association members and uses those contributions for political purposes, including but not limited to making contributions to, and expenditures on behalf of, friends of public education who are candidates for state and local office. Contributions to VOTE are voluntary. Making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the association. Members have a right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although MTA's VOTE requests a monthly recurring contribution of \$10, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more, or less, than the suggested amount or may contribute nothing at all. Contributions or gifts to MTA's VOTE are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. The VOTE PAC is not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee. This communication is intended for MTA members only. Any access to this communication outside of MTA membership is unintended and unauthorized by the MTA. Paid for by MTA VOTE PAC.

Honor Our Own Award Nominations

Did you work with someone in public education who was special, who connected with students or colleagues in a way that made them stand out?

Nominations will be accepted soon for the 2026 Honor Our Own Award, which is bestowed annually by the Retired Members Committee. This award is open to educators who have retired from careers in public schools, in preK through higher education.

NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH JULY 1.



For more information, visit massteacher.org/honorourown.



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STAY INVOLVED AND RENEW YOUR RETIRED MEMBERSHIP

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



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massteacher.org/RetiredSignup

