

**MTA**

The voice of  
our retired  
members

# REPORTER



## HEALTH CARE

Fighting to Keep  
Costs Down

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

APRIL 2026

**On the Cover:** Bill Forster, a retired member, created an email list of Cambridge Education Association members and their spouses that helped secure a union health care victory.

### 3 IN BRIEF

Message From the Co-Chairs

### 5 GOVERNANCE REPORT

Executive Committee / Board

### 7 ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT

Retired Members Organize for Health Care

### 8 ANNUAL MEETING

AND PRECONVENTION INFORMATION

### 9 RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

### 10 ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT

Pensions, PRIM and Problems: An Election is Coming!

### 12 Retiree Speaker Series

### 15 MTA BENEFITS

Spring Travel Discounts with MTA Benefits

### 16 RETIRED MEMBERSHIP

## 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?

SCAN FOR  
NOMINATION  
FORM



Nominations are being accepted 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.

For more information, visit <https://l.ead.me/bgfkQ9>

## MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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Ora Gladstone, Boston  
Brenda Johnson,\*\*\*\* Weymouth  
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- \* Elected by the Board
- \*\* MTA Board of Directors
- \*\*\* President's Designee
- \*\*\*\* Appointed Active Member



# Message from the Co-Chairs

Kathy Greeley and Rick Last

As we witness ongoing attacks on education and democracy, many of us feel pulled between despair and hope. The despair comes from watching cruelty upend lives — from job and food insecurity to the trauma inflicted by immigration enforcement actions that harm good people in our communities. Yet, alongside that despair, there is hope. Across the country and here in Massachusetts, people are resisting. People are organizing. People are showing up.

Here we are — a group of retirees in Massachusetts — doing what we can.

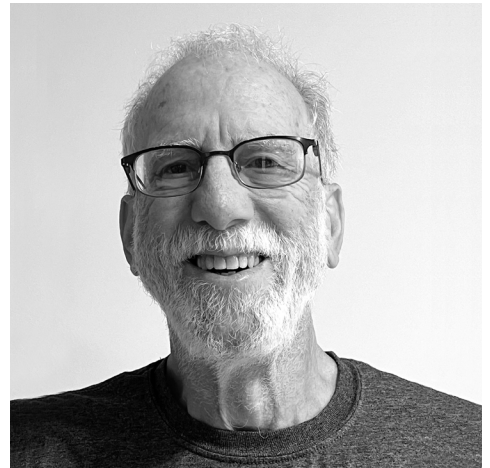
We are fortunate to be part of a powerful union, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, an organization of more than 100,000 members with the collective strength to push back against the daily harms affecting our schools, our communities and our democracy.

The Retired Members Committee believes we have an important role to play in challenging this destructive trajectory. Each of us has our own way of refusing to be silenced. The RMC seeks to provide structure, connection and meaningful opportunities for action. Many parts make the whole — and every contribution matters.

## How Retired Members Are Taking Action

### Supporting Immigration Justice Efforts

Retired members are actively engaged in the MTA's statewide immigration committee, helping locals and



districts develop preparation plans and protocols related to immigration enforcement. If you would like to join this work, please contact MTA staff member Brenda Quintana at [BQuintana@massteacher.org](mailto:BQuintana@massteacher.org).

### Protecting a Dignified Retirement

We remain deeply engaged in issues central to retirees — including pensions and health care. Protecting a dignified retirement is ongoing work. To get involved, please contact Bob Miller at [brookline.teacher@gmail.com](mailto:brookline.teacher@gmail.com).

### First Wednesday Monthly Speakers Series

We continue to educate ourselves and stay connected through our monthly speakers series for retirees. Topics span a wide range of issues, and each session offers opportunities for discussion, engagement and action.

Visit the MTA Retired Members webpage at [massteacher.org/retired](http://massteacher.org/retired) to register for upcoming events or to view recordings of past programs. We also welcome your ideas for next year's speakers.

### Wisdom Warriors: Showing Up When it Counts

Retirees are encouraged to join the Wisdom Warriors — an active network of members who support local associations in times of need and advance MTA initiatives. Wisdom Warriors have mobilized around key ballot campaigns such as the Fair Share Amendment and Question 2 on graduation requirements. We stand in labor solidarity with other unions, participate in demonstrations and receive training around immigration enforcement monitoring.

Participation is simple: Join the list and show up when you can. To become a Wisdom Warrior, email [mtawisdomwarriors@gmail.com](mailto:mtawisdomwarriors@gmail.com).

### Mentorship for Educators of Color

In partnership with the New Member Committee, our mentorship program supports new educators of color by pairing them with retired educators of color. This intergenerational

*continued on pg 4*

## IN BRIEF

*continued from pg 3*

connection strengthens our profession and builds community. For more information, contact Phyllis Neufeld at [pbneufeld@gmail.com](mailto:pbneufeld@gmail.com).

### Retirees Against High-Stakes Testing

Our High-Stakes Testing group — instrumental in the passage of Question 2 — continues to work in coalition with statewide partners to promote positive, effective approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. The group is actively responding to new recommendations from the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding graduation requirements. For more

information, contact Kathy Greeley at [kegreeley@gmail.com](mailto:kegreeley@gmail.com).

### Growing Retired Membership

We are collaborating with the MTA membership team to analyze the current state of retired membership and develop strategies to grow and strengthen our ranks. For more information, please contact Ora Gladstone at [oragladstone@gmail.com](mailto:oragladstone@gmail.com).

### ESP Retiree Organizing

A newer group is focused specifically on Education Support Professional retirees and is preparing programming for the upcoming ESP Conference. Contact Rick Last at [ricklewislast@gmail.com](mailto:ricklewislast@gmail.com).

### Get Involved

This work is not limited to RMC members. We welcome all retired members to join our committees and initiatives. You can sign up through the Retired members' webpage, and someone will follow up with you.

### Mark Your Calendar

- The Retired Members Breakfast at the MTA Annual Meeting (Friday, May 8).
- New this year: Retired members workshops and a social hour will be featured at Summer Conference (July 26-29).

More specific details will be shared soon — we hope you'll join us!

### Building Our Collective Power

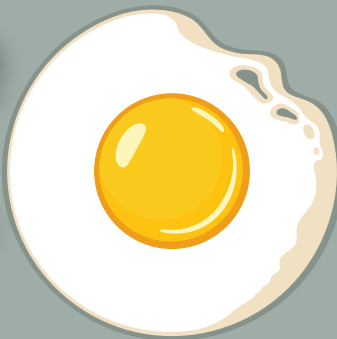
We are committed to building a strong, connected cohort of retirees — advocates for our own well-being and a force for justice when it is needed most. Retirement does not mean stepping back. It means bringing our experience, wisdom and solidarity to the work ahead.

Together, we continue to show up. ■

Contact Kathy Greeley at [kegreeley@gmail.com](mailto:kegreeley@gmail.com). Contact Rick Last at [ricklewislast@gmail.com](mailto:ricklewislast@gmail.com).

# ANNUAL MEETING

# Retiree Breakfast



## FOR RETIRED DELEGATES

**FRIDAY, MAY 8  
9:30 – 11:00 A.M.**

ROOM 302 OF THE  
HYNES CONVENTION  
CENTER, BOSTON

Come hear from candidates for retired offices, including for four seats on the Retired Members Committee and one seat on the Executive Committee. Listen to updates on issues of concern to retired members, while having some breakfast!

*Note: The candidates' speeches will not be broadcast for remote delegates, but the Annual Meeting website will include short videos from candidates for office.*

For more information on the 2026 Annual Meeting of Delegates, please visit [massteacher.org/annualmeeting](https://massteacher.org/annualmeeting).



### IF YOU HAVE SOME NEWS

from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send it to Jessica Wender-Shubow at [jwendershubow@massteacher.org](mailto:jwendershubow@massteacher.org).

### IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR NEWS,

make sure to visit and bookmark [massteacher.org/retired](https://massteacher.org/retired).

# Executive Committee / Board Report

Andrei Joseph



**O**ur union is a powerful beast. We operate as a Hydra. Power, including decisions about how our money is spent, how staff time is allocated, which campaigns to embrace, is located within multiple structures. Local presidents battle to enforce contracts and gain wages and benefits. Our field staff leads organizing efforts. Executive Director-Treasurer Mike Fadel manages hundreds of staff members. The Executive Committee and Board of Directors influence policies. Our Annual Meeting of Delegates passes a budget and considers new business. All the while, our president and vice president present a public face, leading a complicated, sometimes contradictory, confederation.

There is a lot going on. The campaign to increase statewide membership continues. As part of this effort, the Retired Members Committee brought a proposal to the Advisory Budget Committee in January to offer a first

year of retired membership, at no cost, to all retiring MTA members. Our hope is that when retirees see the benefits of engaging with our union that they will continue their membership. For now, this idea has been incorporated into the draft budget for FY 2027 that is making its way through the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, and will be determined, ultimately, by the Annual Meeting in May.

The RMC also has submitted two proposals to the Bylaws and Rules Committee, each also to be determined by Annual Meeting. Our first proposal would increase MTA annual retired dues from \$30 to \$35 for classroom teachers, while reducing dues for retired Education Support Professionals from \$30 to \$25. Retired member dues have not changed for 19 years. These different dues levels are a step toward equity, as well as a parallel to similar differentiation at the NEA. Our second proposal would make it simpler to qualify for retired membership. Currently, regulations require that a potential retiree has paid active member dues for their last five years of employment. Our proposal would amend that to any five years of employment.

To date, the Board of Directors has made the decision to oppose two onerous tax ballot initiatives of wealthy business owners that would reduce the state income tax from 5 percent to 4 percent. The resulting

loss of billions of dollars would be ruinous to public education. We voted to endorse the ballot initiatives that would provide rent control and more transparency to public records. Future meetings will determine whether we choose to back up our statements with actual expenditures. That would likely involve spending some of our reserves, which currently stand in the neighborhood of \$66 million.

We continue to battle for our legislative priorities, especially adequate — indeed robust — funding for public education at all levels. The governor and some legislators appear determined to reimpose MCAS or its equivalent as “end-of-course assessments.” We point to the will of the voters as expressed in our recent successful campaign that ended MCAS as a graduation requirement. Our attention continues to be drawn to living wage legislation, RetirementPlus (H.4361), COLA improvement, extending Paid Family Medical Leave to educators and developments at the Group Insurance Commission.

About 30,000 MTA members belong to the GIC. As of this writing, a massive statewide lobbying campaign has pressured the governor to withdraw burdensome proposals to increase copays and premiums. Whatever happens with the GIC will have a broader impact on all of our health care costs, regardless of where

*continued on pg 6*

# GOVERNANCE REPORT

*continued from pg 5*

we receive them. We have prevailed in the short run but remain in a long-term struggle for affordable health care for all.

Organizing to protect vulnerable communities from the violence of ICE continues across the state. Schools are developing individual plans specific to their circumstances. Rapid response networks are forming. Volunteers provide everything from legal advice to transportation. The Board supported these efforts by voting to end contracts with the Hilton hotel chain, unless they refuse to provide housing for ICE agents.

More than 250 union members and community organizers from around the country came to a meeting we sponsored at the Boston Teachers Union headquarters to share information regarding progressive tax proposals. National leadership from both the NEA and AFT attended, as we heard from our sisters and brothers from Maryland to Washington state. Most states do not allow ballot initiatives such as we have in Massachusetts. But this is not preventing each state from attempting imaginative applications of tax justice. Tax the billionaires in California! A coalition is forming here in Massachusetts to examine and plan a wealth tax campaign in the coming years.

## Also of note:

- We approved logical rules for our upcoming hybrid Annual Meeting, which is May 8-9 in Boston.
- The amount available for reimbursement for retired delegates to Annual Meeting, to cover costs, was increased to \$650 whenever we meet in Boston.
- Summer Conference returns to Amherst from Sunday, July 26, through Wednesday, July 29. The Retired Members Committee is planning a full day of workshops for retirees.
- The Board voted to join the organizing committee of the Working Families Party.
- We now have 13 retirement consultants at the MTA. More people are choosing to consider their wisdom and advice.
- A committee has been formed to consider simplifying our statewide dues structure. We have the most complicated palette in the nation, with more than 30 dues levels reflecting the range of our membership. Might we just charge everyone 1 percent of their pay?
- We changed the date of our June Board meeting to avoid conflict with the June 6 Boston Pride for the People March. Save that date! And please accept encouragement to join the MTA contingent. You will be bathed in colorful appreciation. ■

## EVENTS AHEAD

### MTA Annual Meeting

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

### Boston Pride

June 6

### Juneteenth Celebration

June 20  
Location coming soon

### Summer Conference

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

### EMAC Conference

Dec. 4-5  
Renaissance Framingham Hotel  
& Conference Center

### IF YOU HAVE SOME NEWS

from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send it to Jessica Wender-Shubow at [jwendershubow@massteacher.org](mailto:jwendershubow@massteacher.org).

**IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR NEWS**, make sure to visit and bookmark [massteacher.org/retired](https://www.massteacher.org/retired).

# Retired Members Organize for **HEALTH CARE**

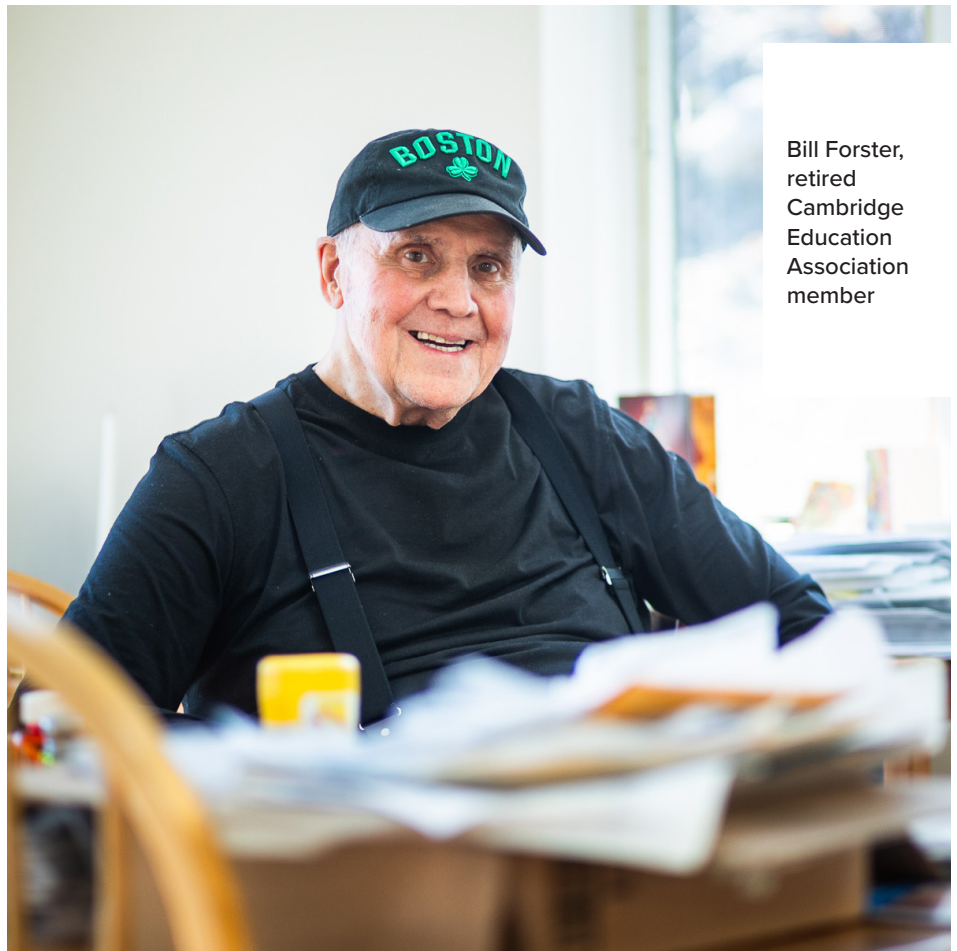
Mary MacDonald Photographs by Eric Haynes

**B**ill Forster, a retired Cambridge Education Association member, created an email list of retirees and their spouses several years ago, thinking of keeping everyone connected to matters concerning public education. The power of that political network came into focus this winter as the Massachusetts Teachers Association fought changes to public employees' health care sought by Governor Healey.

The 480-member list created by Forster helped propel retired member activism against cuts and cost increases proposed by Healey for the Group Insurance Commission. Proposed cost increases, including substantial hikes in copays and deductibles, were abandoned by the GIC after a month of statewide pressure from public employees.

Some cuts remain – including removing coverage for GLP-1 medications for weight management alone – but the commission board in its Feb. 26 meeting didn't take up proposed increases in cost sharing that would have surged copays and deductibles.

Ten commissioners voted to stop GLP-1 coverage for weight loss, while seven members voted against it,



Bill Forster,  
retired  
Cambridge  
Education  
Association  
member

according to the State House News Service. The changes had been recommended by GIC staff after Governor Healey proposed \$100 million in cuts.

The GIC provides health care plans

for nearly 500,000 public employees in the state, including 30,000 MTA members working in higher education and in public preK-12 districts. Its policy changes are often

*continued on pg 8*

## ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT

*continued from pg 7*

used as a benchmark by cities and towns, which meant that any change adopted by the GIC would likely be replicated in other plans.

Forster, who retired after a 34-year career, estimates that 200 people in his Cambridge Public Schools Retired Network sent emails or called the governor and commission chair. “I got some information from the MTA, made it easy, and gave them the phone number they had to call,” Forster said. “Some people emailed; some people wrote personal letters; some people did it all. We tied up their phone lines. People on our side would call and say they couldn’t get through.”

Forster is not insured through the GIC, but he worried that his insurance would be impacted by the decisions the commission makes. “We know whatever happens with the GIC will happen in Cambridge.”

MTA leaders urged every union member to join the fight to have the state fully fund the GIC. Members throughout the state called and emailed GIC commission members and the governor’s office. MTA President Max Page said the union recognizes the state has budget strains, “But the governor cannot balance the state budget on the backs of dedicated public employees by forcing them to pay significantly more for their health care.”

The MTA is developing an organizing campaign aimed at getting insurers to cover all uses of GLP-1 medications, without driving up premiums for all plan subscribers.

Unfortunately, health care costs rise as people age. It’s not uncommon for retired educators to have to budget tightly to cover their health care expenses. Forster and other retired members were worried for

themselves and for their colleagues about the proposed health care increases.

“A lot of my retirees are hurting,” Forster said, in particular single or widowed educators who have one income. “They don’t have a big backup or are getting that extra income to supplement their pension. They’re hurting.”

Scott McLennan, an MTA communications specialist, contributed to this article.

For more information on advocacy for members’ health care, please visit [massteacher.org/advocating-for-change/action-center](https://massteacher.org/advocating-for-change/action-center). ■

## Annual Meeting and Preconvention Information

Each year, Annual Meeting delegates receive information and materials at preconvention sessions that are critical to their decision-making on organizational matters at the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

This year’s preconvention meetings will be held virtually on Tuesday, April 14, and Wednesday, April 15, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., in advance of the 2026 Annual Meeting of Delegates.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, May 8, and Saturday, May 9, at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Delegates should refer to the email they received to register to attend a preconvention meeting and follow the instructions and link to pre-register for the Annual Meeting.

For information on the Annual Meeting, please visit [massteacher.org/annualmeeting](https://massteacher.org/annualmeeting).

# RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

The Retired Members Committee is described in Article X, Section 9 of the MTA Bylaws.

Eight members are elected from the Statewide Retired District membership. Four terms expire each year. This election takes place at the MTA Annual Meeting among the delegates representing the Statewide Retired District. Those elected to the committee may serve up to three consecutive, two-year terms.

Retired members may self-nominate for this committee. Nominations were due by March 6. The election is conducted by the Credentials and Ballot Committee, which also conducts a lottery to determine the order of names on the ballot.

Those on the ballot in 2026 for the four open committee seats are listed below (in ballot order):

**Rick Last**  
*Northampton*

I am the co-chair of the Retired Members Committee. I live in Northampton. I retired after 28 years from Holyoke and Amherst. Retirees have a lot to offer. I am committed to supporting democracy and transparency at all levels in our union, with a racial and social justice lens.

**Kathy Greeley**  
*Cambridge*

As the co-chair of the RMC, I have helped to organize and empower retirees in many different ways over



the past four years. Retirees play a critical role in our union in fighting for the rights of our educators and protecting our public schools, the foundation of our democracy.

**Rafael Moure-Eraso**  
*Medford*

I am running for my third term as committee member. I represent the RMC at the MTA EH&S Committee, and I am a mentor in the RMC mentorship program. I also participate in Wisdom Warriors activities.

**Ora Gladstone**  
*Jamaica Plain*

I hope to be elected to the RMC for a second term. I'm eager to continue working on the Racial and Social Justice mentoring program, and on the Website, Honor Our Own and Speakers' Series committees. I've also spearheaded the recently formed Membership Committee (making strides toward increased retiree membership).

**Tracey Pratt**  
*Somerville*

Fellow retirees, I'm asking for your vote. I'd be honored to serve on the Retired Members Committee. I love the MTA and want to serve in some capacity. Diversity matters. I'm a 60-year-old Black woman with much to offer. We need differing perspectives on this committee.

**Edward C. Nelson**  
*Worcester*

I have been a member of the MTA since 1961 and in 1967 became a life member when it was offered. Until this year I was an MTA retirement consultant for 21 years and was not allowed to be on the retired committee without giving up the retirement consulting.

**Mersh Lubel Kanis**  
*Brewster*

I taught in Massachusetts public schools for 28 years. I have attended events for retired members and would welcome the opportunity to serve on the Retired Members Committee. ■

# Pensions, PRIM and Problems: An Election is Coming!

By Arthur MacEwan



**A**re Massachusetts pension funds for public sector employees poorly managed? Evidence points toward “yes.” A firm answer, however, depends on meaningful transparency by the manager of the funds’ reserves.

The current reserves of the Massachusetts public sector pension systems are about \$120 billion. These reserves, important for the long-run viability of the pension systems, are managed by the Pension Reserves Investment Management Board.

## Some problems to consider:

**Risk.** A substantial portion of PRIM’s holdings, perhaps as much as \$30 billion, are in so-called “alternative investments,” which are lightly

regulated. Investments in private equity firms make up a large segment of these “alternatives.” Because of the light regulation, private equity firms are able to undertake activities that are relatively risky, and what’s more, they can shift much of the risk onto creditors and outside investors (e.g., PRIM). Thus, investments in private equity are, by their very nature, relatively risky for a pension fund.

**Returns.** In the last few years, financial markets have risen a great deal, and PRIM appears to have gone along with the market — but not as well as several commercial funds. If, for example, over the past decade PRIM had done as well as a balanced Vanguard index fund (with a mix of 60 percent equities; 40 percent bonds), there would be about \$9 billion more in the reserves, without incurring more risk.

**Fees.** Moreover, last year PRIM paid out about \$500 million in fees associated with its investments, while Vanguard fees would have amounted to less than 10 percent of that. It appears that PRIM was paying more for getting less.

**Social Damage.** Associated with its considerable investment in private equity, some of PRIM’s investments may be socially damaging. A

private equity firm was behind the debacle of the Steward hospitals in Massachusetts, and there are numerous further examples around the country where private equity firms have done severe damage. PRIM does not appear to have been invested in the private equity firm associated with Steward hospitals. PRIM, however, has invested in private equity firms that have generated social damage, but we do not know whether PRIM was connected to the damaging projects of those firms. Nevertheless, the basic nature of private equity and PRIM’s extensive involvement with it raise concerns.

**Climate Change.** Simply from the perspective of investing to obtain maximum long-run returns, it is necessary for PRIM to have a strategy to deal with climate change. Yet, in response to formal record requests for information about its climate change strategy, PRIM has not been forthcoming. And, of course, returns aside, abetting climate change would count as a most severe sort of social damage.

**Lack of Transparency.** Perhaps there are things about PRIM that those of us concerned with its operations do not know or understand, things that would address some of these problems.

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But PRIM has refused to provide information — either through informal discussions or in response to formal public record requests — that would respond to the problems that appear to exist.

So, what to do? PRIM's operations are overseen by the nine-member PRIM Board, and two of the positions on this board are elected by the members of the pension systems. The election will take place this spring. One position is elected by members of the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System and one by members of the Massachusetts State Employees Retirement System. The MTA Board of Directors has approved endorsements for a candidate for each position: Matthew Scheffler, a Framingham high school teacher, for the MTRS position; and Lenore Palladino, a professor of

economics and public policy at UMass Amherst, for the MSERS position.

Ballots will be mailed in late March to MTA members, both actively employed and retired, and votes by regular mail or online must be in by late May. Please watch your mail for the envelopes, and please vote for the MTA-endorsed candidate.

If we get Scheffler and Palladino on the PRIM Board, we should be able to get the information we need and might positively affect the management of our pension systems.

Arthur MacEwan is a professor emeritus of economics at UMass Boston and the chair of the MTA Pension Task Force. ■

## Get Involved!

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

**JOIN TODAY**



[massteacher.org/join-retired-member-subcommittee](https://massteacher.org/join-retired-member-subcommittee)

## Write for the MTA Reporter

The Reporter is the Massachusetts Teachers Association's publication that is mailed to our Retired members four times a year. We have a unique audience and want to encourage more people to share their insights and interests with fellow retired members.

We invite Retired members to submit first-person or reported articles or perspectives on issues relating to public education, labor issues and the interests of retirees. This is a broad range, and we are happy to consider multiple topics, but we do have some ground rules.

To be considered for publication, the writing must be the original work of the author. The author must be a current member of the MTA. Because the Reporter is a print publication, we are limited as to length. Please, no more than 1,000 words.

A photograph of the author, and/or a photograph that matches the subject matter, will be required. MTA staff can schedule that at the convenience of the writer.

We reserve the right to edit all submissions, including for clarity, length and style. The editor will work with writers who submit their work for publication. Not all submissions will be accepted.

If you are interested in submitting a perspective piece or article, please submit your work, as well as contact information, to Mary MacDonald, MTA editor-writer, at [mmacdonald@massteacher.org](mailto:mmacdonald@massteacher.org).

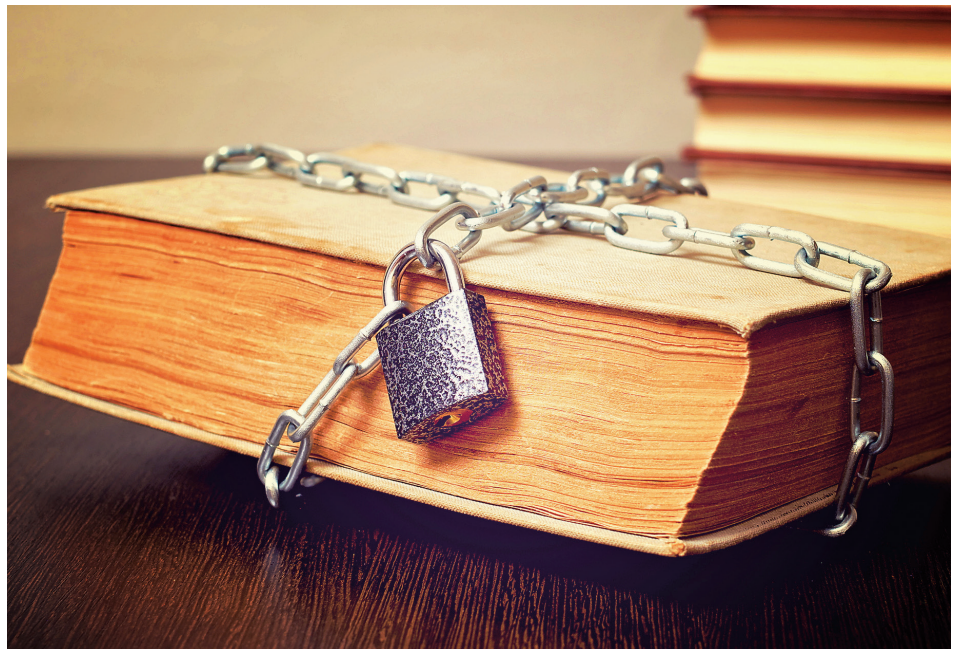
# RMC Speaker Series: Federal attacks on education rights, the reading wars and legislative transparency

by Dale Melcher and Amy Wolpin



The First Wednesday Speaker Series continues to offer informative, stimulating and compelling talks on a range of topics of interest to our retired members. The December session brought back the always engaging Jennifer Berkshire, journalist, podcaster and author of several excellent books on public education including her latest, “The Education Wars: A Citizen’s Guide and Defense Manual.”

Jennifer updated us on the constantly changing landscape of public education under the Trump administration’s Department of Education and the ways that public education is being undermined, underfunded and under attack. The beginnings of the DOE go back to the post-Civil War era and the attempt to address the need for literacy education for newly freed slaves and poor whites – an effort that failed, as politicians pushed back against educating former slaves. But the belief that we can make America more equal through education persists. Current changes, including the dismantling of the DOE and attacks on the right of students with disabilities to a free education, are a reaction to this idea,



including claims that efforts to achieve equality through public education have gone too far. This is the big picture we need to pay attention to and not get lost in the weeds of education policy.

January’s topic, “The Reading Wars Are Back!” continued our examination of how public policy impacts our public schools, this time on the state level. Rachael Gabriel, Ph.D., professor of literacy education at the University of Connecticut, and Sara Calleja, K-5 ELA & Literacy Department head at the Lexington Public Schools, led us through an examination of state Senate bill S2855: *An Act promoting high-quality comprehensive literacy instruction in all Massachusetts schools*. With a sense of déjà vu, Gabriel and

Calleja reviewed and critiqued the bill, which gives new powers to DESE to evaluate compliance and implement new, “evidenced-based” curricula. They challenged the quality of state-sanctioned curricula and the state’s increased ability to control what texts, tools and approaches are accessible to students and teachers. Of particular concern, they said, is the absence of attention to writing skills in the five research-based areas of reading instruction emphasized in the bill. MTA staff members Beth Tripathi and Noah Berger ended the program with a look at how the MTA is fighting back through educating legislators and providing an action alert to allow educators to give their input to Senate decision-makers. To sign

*continued on pg 14*

**FIRST  
WEDNESDAY**

# RETIREE SPEAKER SERIES



All events are virtual,  
on Zoom.  
**3 - 4:00 p.m.**  
Registration is  
required. Zoom link  
will be sent a few days  
before the event.

**MAY 6** **Community Schools: A Whole Child, Whole-School Transformation Strategy**  
**3:00 PM-4:00 PM**

Community schools are public schools that partner with families and community organizations to support the whole child and family — academically, socially, emotionally and physically. They are guided by shared leadership, bringing together families, educators, students and community partners to shape priorities and solutions.

The MTA has launched an initiative to support the development of community schools in target districts across the state. Join us to hear how one school in Framingham is piloting this holistic approach to address root causes of absenteeism and underperformance and create a sustainable model for equity-driven school improvement.

**JUNE 3** **MTA Retirees Statewide Organizing Gathering**  
**3:00 PM-4:00 PM**

As our 2025–2026 speaker series wraps up, this workshop is both a reflection and a launchpad. We'll share highlights from this year's work, then turn the conversation to you — how retirees can support one another and help move the MTA forward. Members of the Retired Members Committee will briefly report out, followed by an interactive discussion to gather ideas, feedback and priorities as we shape goals for the year ahead.

**STAY TUNED FOR  
UPCOMING SESSIONS!**

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

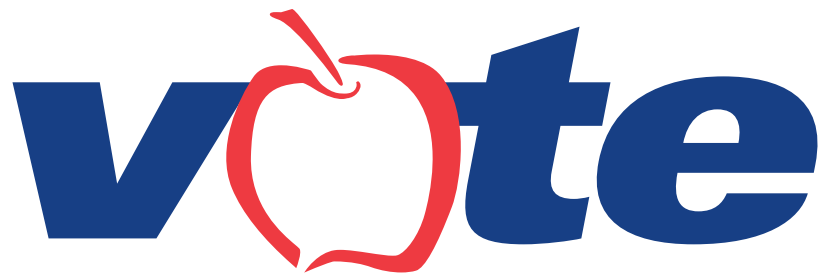


continued from pg 12

up, visit [actionnetwork.org/groups/Massachusetts-teachers-association](http://actionnetwork.org/groups/Massachusetts-teachers-association).

In February, Scotia Hille, executive director of Act on Mass, presented on the topic of “Legislative Transparency in Massachusetts.” Hille’s presentation was a model civics lesson for the RMC participants. Informative slides helped to explain how a bill can become a law in Massachusetts and reasons why new laws often are delayed. Many bills get bogged down in committees before they ever get to a floor vote. The implementation of ballot measures is often delayed, too. The Legislature is organized on a two-year legislative process that slows down the passage of new bills. Hille offered us many resources to further our understanding of the Legislature, including the Act on Mass website: [actonmass.org](http://actonmass.org), where there is the link to sign up for their weekly newsletter at [bit.ly/saturday-scoop](http://bit.ly/saturday-scoop). Act on Mass offers State House tutorials on YouTube at [youtube.com/@ActonMass](http://youtube.com/@ActonMass).

There was so much more information in these speaker events than this article can cover. We are always interested in hearing your suggestions about future topics. Email [Daleannmelcher@gmail.com](mailto:Daleannmelcher@gmail.com) with your ideas. ■



## 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.



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.

[massteacher.org/votepac](http://massteacher.org/votepac)

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.



# Spring Travel Discounts with MTA Benefits

by Diamond Coleman

Spring is the perfect time to get away, explore somewhere new, or revisit a favorite destination. As the days grow longer and the weather warms up, it's also a great time to plan a trip to somewhere where you can relax, be adventurous, or spend quality time with loved ones. This season, our discount partner, Access Nationwide Discounts, is making it even easier to turn those plans into reality with exclusive savings on a wide range of travel experiences.

Through this special spring promotion, members can save up to 50 percent on hotels, flights, cruises, car rentals and major attractions. Whether you're dreaming of a weekend road trip, a beachside escape, or a cruise to a tropical destination, these deals help stretch

your travel budget further while still enjoying memorable experiences.

One of the biggest advantages of booking through Access is the variety of options available in one convenient place. Travelers can compare hotels in destinations around the world, find discounted airfare, reserve rental cars, or explore deals on cruises and theme park tickets. Planning everything through one platform helps simplify the process, making it easy to organize an entire trip in just a few clicks.

For those who like flexibility when planning a trip, there are also features such as free cancellation and book-now, pay-later pricing. That means you can secure great rates while keeping your plans

flexible if schedules change. In addition, customer support is available around the clock, providing extra peace of mind before and during your trip.

Spring is also an ideal time to book early. Popular destinations and cruises often fill quickly, and booking ahead can help you lock in the best availability and the biggest savings. Early planners can often take advantage of the deepest discounts on hotels, flights, and more.

Whether you're planning a quick getaway or finally taking that long-awaited vacation, these spring travel deals make it easier to explore more while spending less. To start planning your next adventure and take advantage of these exclusive savings, visit [mtabenefits.com/access-travel](https://mtabenefits.com/access-travel). ■





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



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[massteacher.org/retired](https://massteacher.org/retired)

