

MTA

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Association

TODAY



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Organizing Against AI in Schools

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Springfield educators fought back against a harmful AI pilot in their schools.

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MTA TODAY

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC HAYNES

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Educators NOT Ed Tech, Schools NOT Screens, Authentic NOT Artificial!



PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC HAYNES

“Over the last 20 years, students’ cognitive abilities have declined for the first time since the introduction of public schooling.”

MATT BACH

General Ned Ludd was the Robin Hood of the early textile workers; a mythological young man who passionately wielded his hammer against the machinery that was meant to speed his production and diminish his craft. The real workers he inspired lived through a turbulent era of political revolution and industrialization of the natural world during the early 19th century. These Luddites, a name used as a pejorative by the merchant class, smashed machines to protect the quality of their craft, but also acted collectively, the foundation of unionism, according to historian E.J. Hobsbawm.

Two hundred years later, turbulence abounds. Over the last 20 years, students’ cognitive abilities have declined for the first time since the introduction of public schooling. Our environment is blistering while data centers suck fresh water away. Student anxiety levels are high, while Meta has been forced to settle in court for pushing addictive social media. Communities throughout the country are rejecting perpetual Flock camera surveillance. In Massachusetts, the Springfield Empowerment Zone attempted an AI instruction experiment on students, which is currently suspended as the union organized an effective response, and the district was ironically shut down due to a cyberattack. Meanwhile, elected officials across the country are scrambling to issue various degrees of moratoriums on Big Tech, while also trying to satiate their tech-bro overlords because they know the overinvestment in AI could devastate the economy at any moment. This, as usual, has intensified the motivation to send excess tech products into the hands of public school students, burdening already austere budgets.

As education workers, we employ the figurative hammer of our imagination and experience, smashing through the illusions and false promises of education technology. As the parents of our students exponentially raise skepticism about AI, we can demystify this moment and contextualize it by including it among the problems of excessive screen time and the online, boxed curriculum we have opposed for the last two decades. What good is a cell phone ban if we continue to put students on Chromebooks for 6 hours a day? Melrose educators this spring said, “Books Not Chromebooks,” and handed out hundreds of free books to enthusiastic parents and students, using a Mass Child grant. Now we could add “Educators NOT Ed Tech, Schools NOT Screens, Authentic NOT Artificial!”

One-quarter of the MTA Board of Directors’ priorities for this coming year are based on a pillar of Deb Gesualdo’s and my campaign platform: building power to secure educator dignity and autonomy/academic freedom, which includes getting back to quality pedagogy that works for our students. The MTA will provide resources to locals for contract language, school committee policy resolutions, and coordinated actions to put the focus back on student well-being, data protection and the human core of our craft. Simultaneously, we will build a statewide campaign to direct politicians to go beyond “guardrails and guidelines,” because they really don’t mean “understanding” tech when they say “AI literacy.” That’s code for more tech subservience. Our public schools are held in common by our communities; they are not private mines for corporate interests to develop their next product. Labor historian Peter Linebaugh slightly modified a poem by William Blake to express our current moment:

*I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my [hammer] sleep in my hand:
Till we occupy the commons,
To green and chill our baked lands. ♣*

Matt Bach, MTA President

EDUCATORS, PARENTS

Oppose an AI Intrusion Into Massachusetts Public Schools

By **Scott McLennan**

Photographs by **Eric Haynes**



Riley Hernandez, president of the Springfield Education Association, helped organize community members after the contract with Alpha Schools came to light.

Malden parent Shaleen Title recalls how, just a year ago, most of the people she spoke to about the use of artificial intelligence products in schools seemed ambivalent.

“People just didn’t seem to know what to think, and some were saying that kids need to know how to use this technology,” Title said. “In the year since, people have been using their common sense and, based on what they are seeing, realize tech companies are targeting students, not helping them.”

Title helped start Reconnect Malden, a community group dedicated to limiting ed tech’s influence in public schools. The group’s work with the Malden school district resulted in students using laptops with AI functions that are disabled in advance.

What educators, families and experts are coming to understand is that ed tech companies are introducing AI programs and products that require students and educators to opt out rather than opt in to their use. AI chatbots and other types of cyber assistance are virtual vacuum cleaners, sucking up whatever student data they can since that information can be used to both shape additional AI tools as well as create digital profiles for other types of research. What makes this even more troubling is that Massachusetts is considered to have very weak privacy

protection provisions and relies only on federal laws that govern the protection of student data.

Until recently, the tech giants have been nibbling around the edges of public schools. Then, in late August, the Springfield Education Association learned that the controversial Alpha Schools was setting up a pilot program in Kiley Prep Middle School. Kiley is part of Springfield’s so-called Empowerment Zone, which is run by co-executive directors who answer to a board of directors largely appointed by the commissioner of the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

On Sept. 21, the Springfield Empowerment Zone announced it would postpone introducing the Alpha pilot program. The announcement followed weeks of community organizing by the SEA members and a cyberattack that closed Springfield Public Schools for a week.

Alpha claims that students using its AI tutors for just two hours a day can learn all of the academic content they need. Alpha Schools do not hire teachers. Instead, they rely on classroom “guides” who make sure students are working and the tech isn’t glitching.

Alpha Schools are, for the most part, private and charge tuition in excess of \$40,000 annually. Several states have

denied applications from Alpha to open publicly funded charter schools, and there is little independent data to back up Alpha's claims of dramatic student success. There is no data to support Alpha's ability to improve student academic performance in a public school setting.

"Alpha wants to conduct an experiment on Springfield children," said Riley Hernandez, president of the SEA. "There has been no transparency or attempt to work with educators, families, students or the community at large before introducing this unproven and controversial learning model into our schools. But it is nothing new to see big corporations prey on Black, brown and economically disadvantaged students under the guise of promising 'innovation'."

Prior to the Empowerment Zone announcing a pause, when confronted by a cease-and-desist order sought by the SEA, the zone directors claimed they would be adapting the

“Right now, it is the private ed tech companies dictating how their products will be used in our public schools.”

MATT BACH
MTA President

Alpha model and still have a licensed teacher in the classroom subjected to the pilot program.

The SEA has organized a community forum, scheduled for Oct. 14, to open a public dialogue about the use of AI in public schools and the planned implementation of the Alpha pilot program at Kiley, which the Empowerment Zone had intended to expand to additional students over the course of the year.

MTA President Matt Bach is urging districts be required to have a one-year moratorium on agreements with AI and ed tech companies, to allow for time to develop the necessary policies and

procedures that protect students and educators.

"Right now, it is the private ed tech companies dictating how their products will be used in our public schools," Bach said. "And from what our members are seeing in the classroom, these are gimmicks and not tools helping students. But more so than previous education cons, the AI and tech scams pose significant risks to social and emotional development and to student privacy."

Alpha's premise of individualized learning also undermines a core mission of public education; teaching students how to participate in groups and share their ideas with others.

The Springfield Education Association Executive Committee spent weeks organizing educators and community members about the Alpha Schools proposal.



ACTIVISM SPOTLIGHT



Shaleen Title, a Malden parent, helped found a community group that is focused on limiting the influence of ed tech in public schools.

As he saw during the years he spent teaching in Andover, prior to taking office as MTA president in July, Bach said the influence of AI and ed tech on students has been largely negative. Students lose cognitive skills when not made to do the nitty-gritty work of finding and assessing information or figuring out problems that chatbots now quickly solve. Student behavior also has deteriorated with the increase of screen time in the classroom.

The MTA also is opposed to the way ed tech companies are targeting low-income communities or “taking advantage of disadvantage,”

Bach said.

“Cities, towns and the state cannot pretend that tech toys are a replacement for fully funded schools staffed by trained educators,” he said.

Title echoes Bach’s sentiment that families know what works in education and should be cautious when entertaining claims being made by ed tech companies.

“Focus on what works — teachers with good training, reading with your kids at home. Stick with those kinds of things,” she said.

Title, who is a lawyer, said that adult consent generally is required before companies can collect data on students younger than 13. And she emphasized the need for communities to get ahead of the fast-moving AI companies. The three steps she urges are first, talk to school district administrators and urge them to make sure student laptops and devices have all AI functions turned off. Second, form a parent-led advocacy group that can have members talk at school committee meetings and other public events. And finally, convince school administrators to convene a working group that includes parents and educators to determine policies and best practices for the use of AI and other technologies in schools.

“The good news is that once communities become proactive, they stay proactive,” she said. ■

Watch MTA President Matt Bach, Shaleen Title of Reconnect Malden and MIT Professor Justin Reich discuss the impact of AI on GBH’s The Curiosity Desk.

MTA President Matt Bach, carrying AI sign, said the state should enact a one-year ban on districts entering into contracts with ed tech or artificial intelligence companies.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY MACDONALD



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FAIR WAGES NOW!

Unites Higher Ed in Statewide Campaign

By **Scott McLennan**

A first-of-its-kind campaign to unite all of the MTA's higher ed local associations and chapters in a demand for fair wages is aiming to knock down the belief that so-called salary parameters set by the governor must limit what can be achieved through bargaining.

The campaign — Fair Wages Now! — is underway at community colleges, state universities and UMass campuses, building power and momentum toward the goal of greater investment in workers who make public higher education possible.

“Management sees parameters as the ceiling; we see it as the floor for bargaining. If they can’t do that, then OK, we’ll take the fight to the governor,” said Chris Weeks, a member of the University Staff Association at UMass Amherst.

Members from the various MTA higher ed affiliates have been laying groundwork for this campaign for months. Following a summit at Summer Conference, leaders from individual unions are now garnering support from their members to endorse the campaign, stage local actions, and make plans to attend a Nov. 20 rally at the State House.

The campaign’s goals are ambitious — 30 percent raises across three-year contracts, structured in a way to provide equitable, real-dollar gains for all workers.

“This is winnable if we are all in it together,” Weeks said. It also has helped

members like himself see what all workers are up against.

In 2024, a study of wages for workers at Massachusetts public colleges and universities showed how much less our members earned in comparison to their peers in other states; in some cases, the gap is as large as \$30,000. The study also noted how wages for faculty and staff have declined since 2016, when adjusted for the rising cost of living.

A regional bargaining council initiated the idea of a statewide campaign to demand greater state investment in public higher education workers. The idea spread and earned the backing of MTA’s Higher Education Leadership Council.

“We were part of the statewide movement that won the Fair Share Amendment and billions of dollars in new investment for public education and transportation,” said Joanna Gonsalves, president of the Massachusetts State College Association, a co-chair of HELC and a professor at Salem State University. “Now we’re building that kind of power again with our higher ed unions to win fair wages for the dedicated faculty and staff who make our public campuses thrive.”

Amanda Achin, a member of the Professional Staff Union at UMass Boston, said the launch of Fair Wages Now! has been energizing, especially seeing workers raising expectations for themselves and tiring

of hearing how they cannot be paid what they need to live.

“More and more, people are realizing that campus by campus and local by local, just focusing on those contracts limits us,” she said. “We need to unite and target where the money is. This is an important step forward for MTA higher ed locals.”

It also is a crucial step for protecting the quality of public higher education. Campus workers point out the rising number of job vacancies and corresponding expanding workloads on employees.

In Achin’s case, she felt the real impact of low wages when she was forced to move from her apartment near UMass Boston and could not find affordable housing. She ended up moving out of state, and the commute was becoming so taxing that she nearly left her job, before landing a position that allowed for remote work.

“We deal with a high turnover rate because of the affordability issue,” she said. “A lot of us can’t live where we work, and that commute to Boston really starts to weigh on people.”

Because salary parameters set by the governor apply to all state workers, MTA’s higher ed locals will be welcoming other unions into the campaign.

Achin said that while the fight will not be easy, conditions may favor the unions.

“Progressive candidates across the country are winning races. Those successful campaigns show a demand for public services and for the public good,” she said. “This is an opportunity for us.” **T**



Learn more about the campaign at massteacher.org/resource-library/fair-wages-now.



Higher ed members at Summer Conference, Summer 2026.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT MCLENNAN

Joanna Gonsalves, president of the Massachusetts State College Association, said higher ed unions are building power for a campaign for fair wages for faculty and staff.





Coaches with Educators Electrify Everything met with staff at East Somerville Elementary School in April 2026.

ENERGY COACHES

Make It Easier To Be Green

By **Susan Hoague**

Educators Electrify Everything is an MTA Climate Action Task Force project that supports school staff who want to take practical steps to decarbonize their homes. The program is designed to save educators time by connecting them with clear information about home weatherization, heat pumps, solar energy, electric vehicles, electric appliances, rebates, financing and resources. Because every home and living situation is different, there is no one-size-fits-all path through the process. EEE energy coaches meet with educators and school and campus staff to learn about their specific needs, answer questions and help create a customized plan.

Meg Rafter, an educator and member of the Beverly Teachers Association, found working with EEE both useful and effective. “During the first information session, the coach was very helpful,” Rafter said. “I received information about getting home insulation at an extreme discount. They also provided me with information on converting to a heat pump

system. They were encouraging and recommended I check in regularly to see what changes to the program have occurred.”

The program not only helps people stop using fossil fuels in their homes; it also helps them find energy savings, whether through lower utility bills, rebates on major purchases, or support for home improvements. Ashley Griggs, a teacher with the Somerville Educators Union, said the coaching process helped her make changes that improved both her home and her budget.

“The coaches at EEE helped me add comfort to my home and save money along the way,” Griggs said. “Throughout my coaching journey, I have taken advantage of rebates that I never knew existed and made many simple modifications to my home that have paid for themselves by way of a lower monthly electric bill.”

EEE energy coaches meet MTA educators and staff where they are, often right in their schools. Staff and coaches host open

meetings, such as early morning coffee conversations, where school employees can ask questions, share contact information, and begin the process of planning more in-depth conversations about their homes.

Educators Electrify Everything gives school staff practical support as they take meaningful climate action at home. By making their own homes more efficient, comfortable and affordable to maintain, educators also can help spark broader conversations about clean energy in their communities.

Are you interested in participating in the program? If so, contact Tom Ehbrecht, EEE program director, at tom.coach.eee@gmail.com. For more information on the program, visit capeannclimatecoalition.org/educators-electrify-everything.

Susan Hoague, a retired member of the MTA, is a former school psychologist and a member of the MTA Climate Action Task Force. **T**



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Andrei Joseph to Receive Honor Our Own Award

Andrei Joseph, the former president of the Concord-Carlisle Teachers Association and a longtime member of the Retired Members Committee, is the 2026 recipient of the Honor Our Own Award.

He will be recognized at a celebration on April 12, 2027, at the Garden at Elm Bank in Wellesley, the RMC announced. Registration information will be announced in early spring.

Joseph, who joined the MTA in 1978, retired after a 33-year teaching career at Concord-Carlisle High School. His unionism in retirement has included serving on the Retired Members Committee and as an elected member of the MTA Executive Committee.

He was instrumental in helping lead the RMC to take on issues confronting the union, including anti-racism and social justice initiatives, which began with the committee having conversations with members of color about what they needed in their union. This led to a mentorship program that pairs retired educators of color with new educators of color. An active member of the Wisdom Warriors, Joseph often can be seen at rallies, State House hearings and supporting local labor actions.

He has long been committed to the MTA as a democratic, member-led union.

“It means creating structures that allow a maximum amount of not just input, but power to members, so that the leadership ends up becoming an expression of the members’ values and interests,” Joseph said in a recent interview.



For more information on the Honor Our Own Award, please visit massteacher.org/honorourown.



2027 MTA ESP of the Year Award

Education Support Professionals are among the most trusted colleagues and educators in a building. They hold positions in preK-12 and higher education that enhance students’ educational experience, provide invaluable support and help keep students healthy and safe. Show them your support by nominating a deserving ESP for the 2027 ESP of the Year Award.

Nominations are due by midnight on Dec. 15, 2026.

Please read about the award and requirements at

massteacher.org/espoftheyear and nominate someone today!

Katherine Monteiro, a registered behavioral technician in Weymouth, was the 2025 MTA ESP of the Year.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY MACDONALD

“Because of an Educator” Ad Campaign Celebrates Educators

The MTA in September launched a digital advertising campaign, “Because of an Educator,” that features the voices and stories of educators, parents, students and graduates who describe the transformative power of public education.

Participants describe educators who helped them find their confidence, develop new skills and see possibilities they hadn’t imagined for themselves.

“An educator’s influence doesn’t end when a student leaves the classroom. It lives on in the careers they pursue, the challenges they overcome and the people they become,” said MTA President Matt Bach.

The campaign was funded through an NEA grant to the MTA.

It will run on digital video, social media and television streaming services through the end of October.

The ads also can be seen on the MTA website at massteacher.org/because-educator.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM GLANZMAN/BOLT CREATIVE GROUP

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Life Insurance Doesn't Have To Be Complicated

By **Diamond Coleman**

For many people, life insurance can seem complicated, so let's break it down. Life insurance can be used to cover your expenses and replace your income in case of death. Two important reasons to purchase life insurance policies are to cover debt, including student loans or a mortgage, or to help you secure your family's financial future without you. The typical recommendation is to cover seven to 10 times your annual income; however, that may vary based on your circumstances.

There are two main kinds of life insurance: permanent and term. Permanent insurance is designed to protect you for your entire life. The types of permanent policies include whole life and universal life.

A whole life policy accumulates cash value, which you can access during your life to help purchase a home or pay for emergency expenses.

Universal life insurance is similar to a whole life policy in that it provides lifetime coverage and can accumulate cash value, but it offers more flexibility with premium payments and plan design.

Term insurance, as long as you pay the premium, remains in effect for a period of time that you select — 10, 15, 20 or 30 years — and pays a death benefit if you die during that term period. Term insurance allows you to buy a lot of coverage for a smaller amount. The drawback is that, more than likely, you'll live longer than the term. Term insurance is temporary coverage. Also, unlike permanent life insurance, term insurance does not accumulate cash value.

What's most important to remember about life insurance is that in the event of your death, you have enough coverage to support your family's lifestyle. There



Term insurance is temporary coverage. Also unlike permanent life insurance, term insurance does not accumulate cash value.

are ways you can achieve that within your budget and your goals.

For example, if you determine you should have \$1 million in life insurance coverage, you might want permanent insurance in place to accumulate cash value and establish some lifetime protection, but purchasing \$1 million in permanent insurance could be expensive. Maybe you can afford a \$250,000 permanent policy and then fill in the remaining gap with term insurance, which has a lower premium. In the future, your financial

situation may be different, and you could then afford more permanent coverage. Another way to protect your family is to opt for a term policy that is guaranteed to be convertible to permanent coverage. Additionally, you could investigate options with universal life for more affordable lifetime protection.

It can take some time to figure out what's right for you and how to protect yourself and your family. MTA members may reach out for guidance to Tom Colbert of Vista Financial at 888-646-1972, ext. 104, or email mta@vistafig.com. **T**

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Lifelong Risks: The Stages of Identity Theft Vulnerability

Identity theft is not a crime that only targets the wealthy or the tech-unsavvy. It affects individuals from all walks of life and at every stage of life, from newborns to centenarians. However, the specific methods fraudsters use — and the personal data they target — shift dramatically as we age.

Understanding how your vulnerability changes over time is the most effective way to protect your personal information throughout your life.

STAGE 1: Childhood (Ages 0–17)

The Blank Slate Target

Children are highly attractive targets because they possess completely clean, unblemished credit histories. Because minors rarely apply for loans or credit cards, child identity theft can go completely unnoticed for well over a decade.

STAGE 2: Young Adulthood (Ages 18–25)

The Digital Footprint Explosion

As young adults move away from home, start college or enter the workforce, their digital footprint expands rapidly. A desire for convenience often overrides strict digital privacy habits.



STAGE 3: Career & Family Years (Ages 26–55)

The High-Value Target

Adults in their peak-earning years are prime targets for sophisticated financial fraud. They typically hold multiple active credit lines, substantial bank balances, mortgages and investment accounts.

STAGE 4: Pre-Retirement & Empty Nesters (Ages 56–65)

The Wealth Transition Phase

Individuals in this bracket are actively planning for retirement and moving large sums of money into accessible retirement vehicles. Scammers target this demographic to intercept these major financial transitions.

STAGE 5: Golden Years (Ages 66–plus)

The Trust & Isolation Target

Older seniors face the highest financial risks from identity theft. Fraudsters capitalize on cognitive decline, social isolation or a general trust in authority figures to manipulate victims.

continued on page 20



Why Working With an Independent Insurance Agent Matters

By Angela Knapton, Educators Insurance Agency



Educators Insurance Agency

Insurance plays an important role in protecting what matters most, from your home and vehicle to your family's financial security. Yet for many people, understanding insurance can feel overwhelming. Policies often contain unfamiliar terms, varying coverage options and pricing structures that can make it difficult to know whether you're making the best decision. This is where an independent insurance agent can provide real value.

Independent agents work with multiple carriers. This gives them the ability to compare coverage options, policy features and pricing from a variety of insurance providers. Rather than trying to fit a customer into a single company's offering, an independent agent can evaluate several solutions and help identify the one that best aligns with a person's unique needs, goals and budget.

Equally important is the consultative role played by an independent agent. Insurance is not a one-size-fits-all product. Two families may have similar homes, vehicles or income levels but require different coverage strategies. An experienced independent agent takes the time to understand a client's individual circumstances and educate them on available options. They can explain the differences between coverage levels, identify potential gaps in protection, and help clients make informed decisions with confidence.

For educators, who often balance demanding professional responsibilities with busy personal lives, having a trusted insurance advisor can be particularly valuable. Instead of spending hours researching products online or navigating multiple company websites, policyholders can rely on an agent to simplify the process and provide clear guidance. A good independent agent serves as a resource who translates complex insurance concepts into understandable

language and helps clients focus on what truly matters: protecting their assets and financial well-being.

The value of an independent agent extends beyond the initial purchase of a policy. Life changes constantly. A new home, a growing family, a child heading to college, or a client approaching retirement all can affect insurance needs. Independent agents conduct periodic reviews and help ensure that coverage keeps pace with life's important milestones. They also can identify opportunities for savings through discounts, policy bundling, or new carrier programs that may not have been available when a policy was originally purchased.

Perhaps most importantly, an independent agent serves as an advocate. When a claim occurs, having a knowledgeable professional to guide you through the process can make a stressful situation significantly easier. Agents can answer questions, provide support, and help clients understand what to expect every step of the way.

Insurance decisions are too important to leave to guesswork. By offering personalized guidance, access to multiple insurance carriers, ongoing education, and dedicated support, Educators Insurance Agency helps MTA members and their families make informed choices and gain greater peace of mind. In a world where insurance products continue to grow more complex, having a trusted advisor in your corner has never been more valuable.

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Editor: **Carolyn Cassiani**

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ever used to market
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Make the Most of Fall with MTA Benefits

By Diamond Coleman

As fall settles in, there are plenty of ways to get out and enjoy New England. From exploring Salem's rich history to experiencing live theater, MTA members can take advantage of exclusive discounts at some of the region's popular fall attractions and entertainment venues. Whether planning a family outing, a day trip or a night out, these member benefits make it easier to enjoy the season while saving along the way.

Explore Art and Culture at the Peabody Essex Museum

A fall trip to Salem is a classic New England outing, and MTA members can make it even more worthwhile with free admission to the Peabody Essex Museum with their MTA card. One of the oldest museums in the country, it brings together art, culture and history from around the world. Spend an afternoon exploring its galleries, discovering fascinating stories and taking in the museum's unique architecture before heading out to enjoy the sights and seasonal charm of downtown Salem. With so much to see and do in the area, the Peabody Essex Museum makes for an enriching addition to a fall day trip.



Get into the Halloween Spirit at the Salem Witch Museum

While you're exploring Salem, make a stop at the Salem Witch Museum, where MTA members also can enjoy free admission with their MTA card. The museum offers visitors a unique look at the events of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials and the lasting impact they've had on the city and American history. It's an especially fitting stop during the fall, when Salem comes alive with Halloween festivities and its unusual history takes center stage. A visit to the museum, followed by a stroll downtown, makes for a quintessential New England fall day.



Step Back in Time at King Richard's Faire

Ready to trade Salem's witches for knights, jousting and medieval fun? MTA members and their families receive \$6 off admission to King Richard's Faire throughout the 2026 season. Running weekends through Oct. 25, King Richard's Faire transforms 200 acres in Carver into an immersive Renaissance kingdom, complete with 11 stages, more than 100 artisans, live entertainment and three daily jousting tournaments. It's the kind of fall day where visitors can watch knights battle on horseback, browse handmade goods, enjoy a turkey leg and catch a show. Guests can spend the day wandering through a world that feels a little outside the ordinary.

continued on page 20



Lifelong Risks: The Stages of Identity Theft Vulnerability

continued from page 17



Visit mtabenefits.securusid.com or scan the QR code to register, view plan options, pricing and enrollment.



Complimentary Identity Recovery Plan for Members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association

MTA Benefits has partnered with Securus ID/Aura to provide MTA members with access to a complimentary Identity Recovery plan.

Members can register for the plan through a dedicated member website and receive plan information via email. In addition, members have access to Aura's award winning, all-in-one protection plans to keep you safe from identity theft, scams and online threats. Enrollment options for members include individual and family plans, all at a 60 percent member discount with simple month-to-month billing and no contract.

Family plans include up to 11 adults and unlimited minors, so you can protect multiple generations for one low cost, including adult children and aging parents.

Make the Most of Fall With MTA Benefits

continued from page 19

Make It a Night at the Theater

Fall also is a perfect time to plan a night out in Boston. Through MTA Benefits, Broadway in Boston offers MTA members discounted rates on select performances and priority ticket access before the general public. This fall's lineup includes the beloved musical "Wicked," running now through Nov. 15, followed by "Operation Mincemeat," a new musical based on an extraordinary World War II deception, running through Oct. 25.

MTA members also can save at the Boch Center Wang and Shubert Theatres, with 10 percent to 30 percent off select tickets. This fall, revisit a beloved classic with "The Sound of Music," running Nov. 17 through 22. With its memorable songs and timeless story, this musical is a great choice for an eventful fall outing.

Whether your ideal fall day involves history, a little Halloween intrigue, Renaissance adventure or a night on the town, your MTA membership can help make it happen — while keeping a little more money in your pocket.



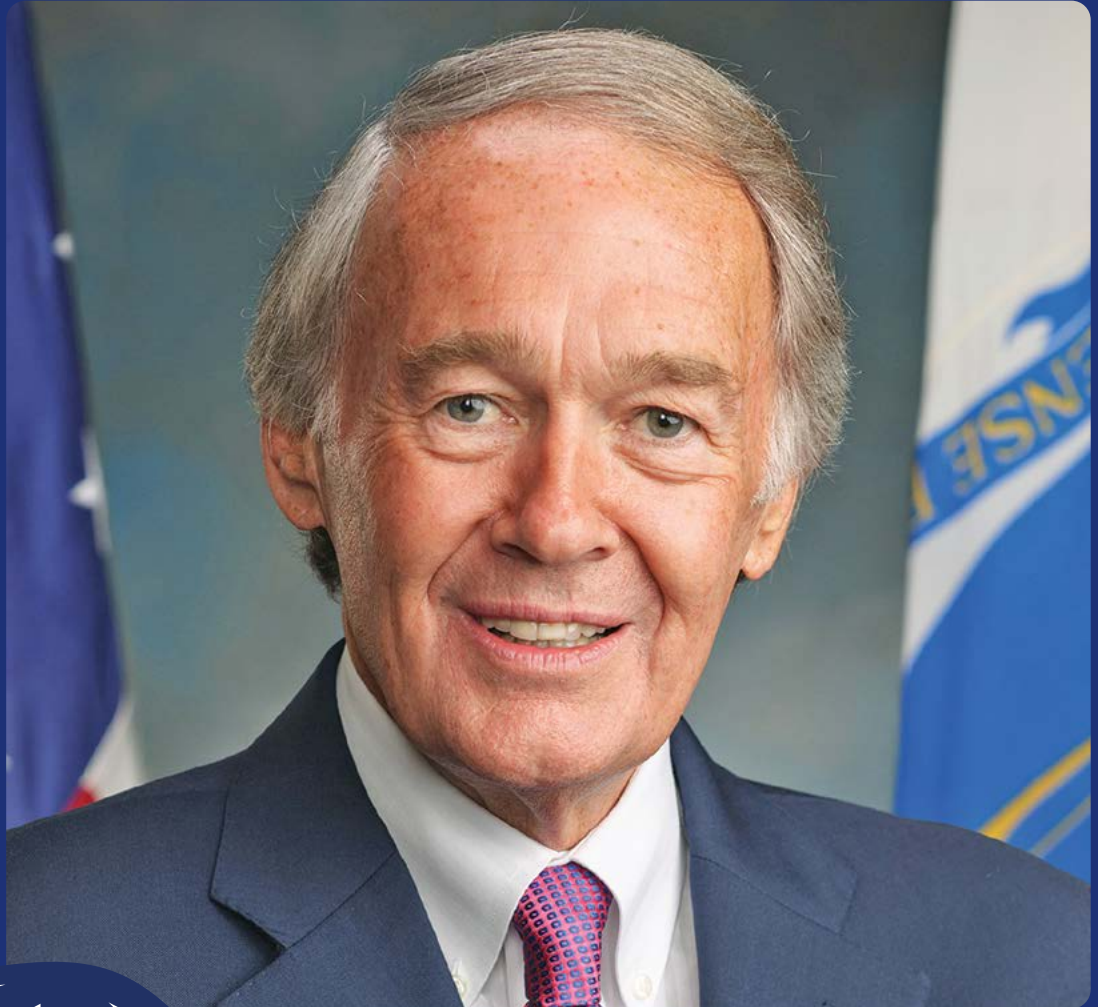
To explore even more discounts this season, visit mtabenefits.com.





★ ★ ★ ★ ★
2026 ELECTION

YOUR VOTE, YOUR VOICE



Ed Markey
U.S. Senator



RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES

The MTA encourages members to support these candidates for U.S. House and Senate, who have been officially recommended by the NEA.

MTA-NEA RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES | U.S. HOUSE AND SENATE



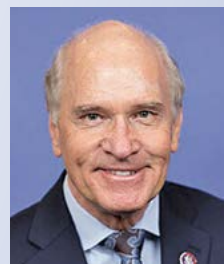
Ed Markey
U.S. Senator



Jim McGovern
U.S. Representative,
Congressional District 3



Ayanna Pressley
U.S. Representative,
Congressional District 7



Bill Keating
U.S. Representative,
Congressional District 9

MTA RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES STATE SENATE



Jamie Eldridge
D-Middlesex &
Worcester District



Erika Uyterhoeven
D-2nd Middlesex
District



Persis Yu
D-Norfolk & Suffolk
District

CRC RECOMMENDED AUDITOR



Diana DiZoglio
State Auditor

*The MTA board will vote on this recommendation on Oct 17.

**DON'T FORGET
TO VOTE BY
TUESDAY,
NOV. 3**

Visit our online
election guide at
massteacher.org/election.

The recommendations in this election guide are for candidates on the state election ballot in 2026.

- Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3. All polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- To participate in this election, you must be registered to vote by Saturday, Oct. 24.
- Applications for mail-in ballots must be turned in by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 27.
- Mail-in ballots returned in person to an election office or by drop box must be delivered by 8 p.m. on Election Day. Mail ballots cannot be dropped off at a polling location.
- Your mailed ballot must reach your local election office or drop box by close of polls on Election Day in order to be counted.
- The in-person, early voting period is October 17-30.

Each city and town chooses its own early voting locations and sets its own schedules within these dates. See all early voting options at www.MassEarlyVote.org.



MTA RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES | STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



Michelle Badger
D-1st Plymouth
District



Lorena Betts
D-16th Middlesex
District



Mike Connolly
D-26th Middlesex
District



John Drinkwater
D-17th Middlesex
District



Ben Ewen-Campen
D-27th Middlesex
District



Krista Ferrante
D-1st Worcester
District



Lisa Field
D-3rd Bristol
District



Dennis Gallagher
D-8th Plymouth
District



Jim Hawkins
D-2nd Bristol
District



**Tom
Hendrickson**
D-3rd Hampden
District



Natalie Higgins
D-4th Worcester
District



Tara Hong
D-18th Middlesex
District



Kristin Kassner
D-2nd Essex
District



Chris Lambton
D-1st Barnstable
District



Kathleen LaNatra
D-12th Plymouth
District



Joe Markey
D-20th Middlesex
District



Will Mbah
D-34th Middlesex
District



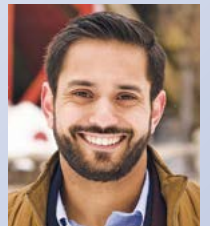
Ed Pacheco
D-9th Bristol
District



Celina Reyes
D-16th Essex
District



**Margaret
Scarsdale**
D-1st Middlesex
District



Ravi Simon
D-13th Middlesex
District



MTA RECOMMENDATIONS | BALLOT QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1:

Government Transparency and Public Records

VOTE YES ☒

The Massachusetts Teachers Association asks you to vote YES on Question 1, which would extend the state's public records law to the Legislature and governor's office. The measure would give the public greater access to government records while maintaining protections for certain confidential communications and policy-development materials. MTA supports greater public access to information about how government operates and how decisions affecting Massachusetts residents are made.

QUESTION 3:

State Primary Elections

VOTE NO ☐

The Massachusetts Teachers Association asks you to vote NO on Question 3, which would eliminate party primaries and replace them with a single primary where all candidates appear on the same ballot, with only the top two advancing to November. This could result in two candidates from the same party advancing while independent and third-party candidates are shut out of the general election.

MTA also is concerned that the system would make campaigns longer and more expensive, creating additional barriers for working-class, first-time and other candidates without access to significant fundraising networks. The Yes campaign has received substantial support from a small number of wealthy, anti-public education donors, including current and former private-equity executives. Massachusetts unenrolled voters already can choose to vote in either party's primary election while remaining unenrolled. MTA urges a NO vote on Question 3.

QUESTION 4:

Election Day Registration

VOTE YES ☒

MTA asks you to vote YES on Question 4, which would allow eligible Massachusetts residents to register to vote or update their address at their polling place on Election Day. Individuals would be required to provide proof of residency and certify their eligibility to vote. Washington, D.C., and 23 states already have adopted this common-sense reform, including our neighbors in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Connecticut.

QUESTION 5:

State Revenue Limit and Rebate

VOTE NO ☐

MTA asks you to vote NO on Question 5, which would create automatic tax cuts that would limit state revenue currently used for important programs such as public education, healthcare, public safety and other essential public services

on which working families depend. The right-wing interest groups and multi-millionaires supporting this ballot question are fine with these devastating cuts because they will have no impact on them.

QUESTION 9:

Firearms Regulation

VOTE YES ☒

MTA asks you to vote YES on Question 9, which would keep Massachusetts' 2024 gun safety law in place. The law includes several protections that directly affect school communities, including allowing school administrators to petition for Extreme Risk Protection Orders when someone poses a danger to themselves or others and prohibiting firearms in schools, with limited exceptions. MTA supports maintaining these protections as part of the Commonwealth's broader efforts to reduce gun violence and protect students, educators and communities. A Yes vote keeps the law in place; a No vote would repeal it.

The Big Money Charter School Funders From Q2 in 2016 Are Bankrolling Q3 in 2026 To Make Elections More About Big Money – **VOTE NO** to Stop Them!

NAME	2026 EMPLOYER	2016 TOTAL	2026 TOTAL
Andrew Balson	Cove Hill Partners	\$500,000	\$790,000
Richard Burnes	Charles River Ventures	\$10,000	\$75,000
Paul Edgerley	Bain Capital	\$1,000,000	\$100,000
Amos Hostetter	Pilot House Assoc	\$2,025,000	\$50,000
Jonathan Jacobson	Retired	\$2,000,000	\$100,000
Charles Ledley	Highfields Capital Mgmt.	\$50,000	\$20,000
Mark Nunnally	Not Employed	\$550,000	\$500,000
Paul Sagan	General Catalyst Partners	\$595,500	\$100,000
TOTALS		\$6,730,000	\$1,835,000



Hit the road for less with **Avis and Budget**.
Massachusetts Teachers Association
members can **save up to 35 percent off***
base rates on every rental.

Reserve with Avis

Book with Budget



*See Terms and Conditions



Save 10 percent with your
MTA member
child care benefit!

Set your child up for success
with KinderCare Learning Centers® and
Champions® before- and after-school programs.

Whether you need full-time or part-time care,
we've got your back!



To learn more about your benefit
and find a location near you, visit
[kindercare.com/MTA](https://www.kindercare.com/MTA)



Nomination Papers Available

Our union is strongest when members step forward to lead. Running for union office is an opportunity to represent your coworkers, bring new ideas to the table and help shape the future of our organization. Whether you are a longtime member or newly involved, your voice, experience and commitment can make a meaningful difference. Consider taking the next step and running for office to help build an even stronger union for all members. Please see below for more details and do not hesitate to reach out to Jim Carvalho or me at MTAGovernance@massteacher.org. Thank you for your activism.

— MTA Director of Governance Jennifer Freeling

MTA members who intend to seek election to MTA office at the 2027 Annual Meeting of Delegates, or to run for NEA Director or Alternate NEA Director, may now request nomination papers.

At the MTA Annual Meeting, May 14-15, 2027, elections will take place for 16 District Director seats on the Board of Directors, and one At-Large seat on the Board of Directors.

Four members of the Retired Members Committee also will be elected at the Annual Meeting.

In addition, two NEA Director seats and up to five Alternate NEA Director seats are up for election, for which online voting instructions will be sent to the active membership in March.

Requests for nomination papers for MTA office must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, or by emailing MTAGovernance@massteacher.org. Although there is no deadline for requesting them, nomination papers for MTA office must be filed with the executive director-treasurer by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 5, 2027, regardless of postmark.

Nomination papers for the NEA Director posts may be requested in the same manner but must be filed no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8, 2027.

No person may be a candidate for more than one office. Each candidate must specify the office sought, their MTA individual membership ID number (which can be found on the MTA membership card), a home address, telephone number, email address and local association affiliation.

All candidates must comply with the nomination and election provisions of the MTA Bylaws and policies, which will be made available to candidates.

District Directors*

Sixteen District Director seats on the MTA Board will be elected at Annual Meeting by the delegates from each respective district. The open districts are 7B, 9B, 10B, 35C, 42C, 14D, 28D, 32D, 30E, 23F, 24F, 25F, 19G, 44H, 46H and 47H. Each candidate must be an active MTA member** and must be employed in education within the electoral district in which the candidate seeks office. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 50 active members from the candidate's district.

At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Members*

The At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Members will be elected by all Annual Meeting delegates. Any active ethnic minority member of the association is eligible to be a candidate for At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Members. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 200 active association members,

TIMELINE

NOMINATION DEADLINE

December 30

Candidate Recommendation Committee

Congressional Districts 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9

NOMINATION DEADLINE

January 8

MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates

- Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates
- Statewide Retired District Delegates

NEA RA (Representative Assembly)

- Statewide, Regional and Retired Delegates

NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors

AMENDMENT DEADLINE

January 8

Filing Deadline for Proposed Bylaw and Resolutions Amendments

Initial Deadline for Proposed Amendments to Standing Rules

NOMINATION DEADLINE

February 5

MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates

- Regional Ethnic Minority Delegates

NOMINATION DEADLINE

March 5

Board of Directors

- Districts 7B, 9B, 10B, 35C, 42C, 14D, 28D, 32D, 30E, 23F, 24F, 25F, 19G, 44H, 46H and 47H.
- At-Large Director for Ethnic Minority Members.

NOMINATION DEADLINE

April 3

NEA RA Student Delegates

with no more than 50 from any one local affiliate and no more than 100 from any one electoral district.

NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors*

Two NEA Director seats will be filled by a vote of the active members in March and April, in tandem with the NEA statewide and regional delegate elections. These members serve on the NEA Board of Directors and concurrently on the MTA Board. These seats have three-year terms, beginning Sept. 1, 2027, and expiring Aug. 31, 2030, in accordance with the NEA's fiscal year. Vacancies for up to five Alternate NEA Director seats also will be filled. Each candidate must be an active NEA member**, as determined by the NEA Constitution and Bylaws, for at least two years immediately preceding the election. Nomination papers must be signed by at least 200 active members, with no more than 50 from any one local affiliate and no more than 100 from any one electoral district. The policy on eligibility and procedures for the direct election of NEA Directors and Alternate NEA Directors is available upon request.

For information on nominations and elections, please contact Jim Carvalho of the MTA Division of Governance and Administration by calling 617-878-8305 or emailing jcarvalho@massteacher.org.

*In accordance with Article IX, Section 2B of the MTA Bylaws, all members of the Board of Directors (including officers; Regional, Statewide Retired and At-Large Executive Committee members; District, Statewide, and At-Large Directors; and NEA Directors) will be delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates. Election as delegates will occur simultaneous to, and by virtue of, election to the offices as indicated.

**RIF'd members and members who have been granted leaves of absence by their employers may be considered active members employed in education.

PROCEDURAL INQUIRIES

Inquiries concerning nomination and election procedures may be addressed to Jim Carvalho in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration at 617-878-8305 or at jcarvalho@massteacher.org.

Delegates to be Elected for NEA RA

Tentative dates for the NEA Representative Assembly are June 30 - July 4, 2027, and it will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The National Education Association Representative Assembly – the RA – is the highest decision-making body within the 3 million-member NEA. With nearly 6,000 delegates, the RA is also the world's largest democratic deliberative body.

Over the course of eight business sessions spanning four days, RA delegates debate the vital issues that impact American public education and set association policy and activities for the year ahead.

Statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts to the 2027 NEA Representative Assembly will be elected by the membership during February, March and April.

The nomination process begins Nov. 1 and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8. Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at massteacher.org/nomination-forms. The form may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a paper form can be found on Page 28 of this issue of MTA Today.

The election period for statewide and regional delegates runs from March 1 through April 16.

Online voting instructions for statewide and regional delegates will be sent to eligible active MTA/NEA members.

For active members, the delegate categories include regional non-supervisor, statewide non-supervisor, and statewide other/supervisor.

The MTA will be notified by the NEA in January 2027 of the number of delegates allocated to Massachusetts. The allocation of statewide and regional delegates will be based on electoral regions A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. A list of local associations by electoral region is available upon request.

The distribution of statewide and regional seats will be voted on by the MTA Board

of Directors at its meeting in February; candidates will be informed of the final allocation plan and will be given an opportunity to alter the designation for the level they seek to represent.

The election period for retired delegates runs from Feb. 1, 2027, through March 12, 2027. Online voting instructions for retired delegates will be sent only to retired and retired life NEA members.

Retired members receive an allocation of RA delegates in proportion to their membership, and candidates for those seats are elected by the retired membership.

Tentative dates for the RA are June 30 to July 4, and it is scheduled to take place in Indianapolis, Indiana. The statewide, regional and retired delegates from Massachusetts will attend, in addition to delegates elected by local associations.

The Credentials and Ballot Committee has adopted procedures for the election that call for online voting instructions to be sent to each NEA member in Massachusetts.

Those who prefer to vote by paper ballot may request one by following the instructions that will be sent to all voters.

Voting is by secret ballot, and the election and tabulation are conducted under the supervision of the Credentials and Ballot Committee.

There is a \$2,400 travel stipend for statewide, regional, retired and student delegates.

Elected delegates are expected to comply with the accountability requirements set forth by the MTA. Funding will not be provided unless accountability requirements are met.

The procedure for the election of MTA delegates to the RA should be reviewed carefully by anyone considering candidacy. ▀

2027 NOMINATIONS

Delegates to the NEA RA • Regional and Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting

- Statewide Retired District Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting

For all positions except Regional Ethnic Minority Delegate to Annual Meeting, the nomination **deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8, 2027**, regardless of postmark. For the Regional Ethnic Minority Delegate position, the **deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 5, 2027**.

We encourage candidates to use the online form available at

massteacher.org/nomination-forms (or this paper form may be submitted).

1 NAME OF CANDIDATE: _____

MEMBER ID #: _____

PERSONAL EMAIL: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

LOCAL ASSOCIATION (leave blank if retired): _____

DISTRICT / REGION / RETIRED: _____

2 Please check the box to indicate the elected position you are seeking.

Candidate must fill out a separate nomination form for each position sought.

Please check one box only.

- ☐ Retired Delegate to MTA Annual Meeting
- ☐ Regional Ethnic Minority Delegate to MTA Annual Meeting*
- ☐ Retired Ethnic Minority Delegate to MTA Annual Meeting*
- ☐ Regional Delegate to NEA RA
- ☐ Statewide, Non-Supervisor Delegate to NEA RA
- ☐ Statewide, Supervisor Delegate to NEA RA
- ☐ Retired Delegate to NEA RA

Position / Membership Status

- ☐ Teacher or Education Support Professional
- ☐ Administrator or Supervisor
- ☐ Retired Member

***Candidates for Ethnic Minority Delegate to Annual Meeting, please indicate your ethnic minority designation.**

- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Hispanic
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Cape Verdean

3 Bio / statement — please print — or use the online form at massteacher.org/nomination-forms.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. MTA Policy: Each candidate may submit by the deadline a headshot photograph and biography/statement containing no more than 50 words. Note: Only the first 50 words will be printed. The Credentials and Ballot Committee reserves the right to edit all bios.
2. Write out your statement on a separate piece of paper and submit with this form.
3. Type or print clearly, using both upper- and lowercase letters, as you expect the final statement to appear.
4. Do not combine words or numbers with hyphens or slashes.
5. "An," "a" and "the" constitute one word.
6. Abbreviations such as "NEA-RA" and "MTA" count as one word.
7. A date represented as "October 1, 2020" shall constitute three words. The same date represented as "10/1/20" is only one word.
8. Send this entire nomination form, including biography/statement and photo, to:
**MTA Governance and Administration Division,
2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119**
See nomination deadlines above. A photo the MTA has used within 2 years may be reused.

4 Please select from the following and check the appropriate boxes.

- ☐ 50-word (maximum) bio/statement enclosed.
- ☐ I am not submitting a bio/statement.
- ☐ I have emailed a photo to jcarvalho@massteacher.org (high-resolution 300dpi).
- ☐ Photo enclosed.
- ☐ Use my 2025 or 2026 photo. MTA can only use past photos if published for 2025 or 2026 elections.
- ☐ I am not submitting a photo.

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

SIGNATURE

DATE

Additional forms may be requested or this form may be duplicated.

Regional and Retired Ethnic Minority Delegates to be Chosen

Regional and Retired delegates to the 2027 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected by members of the Statewide Retired District in February and March and in each region of the active membership in March and April in conjunction with NEA delegate/Director elections.

The nomination period for Regional and Retired Ethnic Minority delegates will open Nov. 1. For retired delegate candidates, the deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8, 2027. For regional delegate candidates among the active members, the deadline is 5 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 5, 2027. Nominations are open to all eligible ethnic minority members through a self-nomination process. Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at [massteacher.org/nomination-forms](https://www.massteacher.org/nomination-forms). The form may be submitted electronically. Alternatively, a paper form can be found on Page 28 of this issue of MTA Today.

The election period for retired members runs from Feb. 1, 2027, through March 12, 2027. For active members, it runs from March 1, 2027, through April 16, 2027. Online voting instructions for the ethnic minority delegate seats will be sent to all MTA members.

The MTA provides reimbursement of up to \$650 for eligible expenses incurred by each Regional and Retired Ethnic Minority delegate to the Annual Meeting.

The allocation of Retired Ethnic Minority delegates is two. The allocation of Regional Ethnic Minority delegates for the active membership is based on MTA electoral regions and equal to the number of District Directors from each region.

No more than one delegate from each district within a region will be elected, with the exception of districts 10B and 44H, which each have two delegate seats.

There will be 50 seats for Regional Ethnic Minority delegates. All terms will last for one year. The regional allocations are: Region A, seven seats; Region B, six seats;

Region C, seven seats; Region D, six seats; Region E, five seats; Region F, six seats; Region G, six seats; and Region H, seven seats. Each regional candidate must be employed in education within the region in which the candidate seeks office. **T**

Retired Committee has Four Seats Open

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2027 MTA Annual Meeting in May.

Go to [massteacher.org/nomination-forms](https://www.massteacher.org/nomination-forms) or see the October issue of the MTA Retired Reporter for details and the self-nomination form for these positions. The deadline for nominations is March 5, 2027. Terms last two years and begin on July 1. **T**

Nominations Sought for Candidate Recommendation Committee

Nominations are now open for the election of members to the MTA Candidate Recommendation Committee.

The committee is responsible for making recommendations to members to support candidates for state and federal office.

Elections will be held to fill one seat in each of the following Congressional Districts: 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Terms on the committee last for three years. The committee member must reside in the congressional district to be represented. Any MTA member interested in running for the CRC should obtain the nomination form online at [massteacher.org/nomination-forms](https://www.massteacher.org/nomination-forms) or contact Jim Carvalho in the MTA Division of Governance and Administration. He can be reached by calling 617-878-8305 or emailing jcarvalho@massteacher.org.

The nomination form and a biographical statement of not more than 100 words must be received by Dec. 30.

Those eligible to vote for CRC members are delegates to the past year's MTA Annual

Meeting of Delegates who reside in the specified congressional district.

Upon request, candidates will be provided with a list of Annual Meeting delegates for the congressional district, along with names and addresses.

If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question.

Ballots including the candidates' biographical statements will be sent to the electorate on the first Friday in February (Feb. 5, 2027) and must be returned no later than 5 p.m. on the last Friday in February (Feb. 26, 2027).

The CRC terms will begin on March 15, 2027. Members are eligible to be elected for two consecutive three-year terms. **T**

Resolutions Committee Accepting Proposals

Proposed revisions to MTA Resolutions are now being accepted. Resolutions are the organization's statements of principle on issues relating to members, public education, the welfare of students, and human and civil rights.

A proposal for a new resolution or revision of an existing one may be submitted by any member. The deadline for submissions to the Resolutions Committee is 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8, 2027. Submissions must be made in writing and signed by the proposer. Please submit them by email to Mary MacDonald, the committee's staff consultant, at mmacdonald@massteacher.org. The committee may also propose resolutions.

All resolutions submitted by the January deadline are considered by the Resolutions Committee. Any resolution that receives a majority vote in favor from the committee is brought before the Board of Directors at its meeting in March. To become the official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the delegates to the Annual Meeting. **T**

For a copy of the current MTA Resolutions, please visit [massteacher.org/resolutions](https://www.massteacher.org/resolutions).

Bylaws and Rules Committee

Accepting Proposals

The MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee will soon begin reviewing proposed amendments.

A proposal to amend the Bylaws addresses the governance of the association or the primary characteristics and functions of the MTA. A proposal to amend the Standing Rules addresses the procedures of the Annual Meeting of Delegates, nominations and elections or governance documents.

Filing process and deadline

Proposed changes to the Bylaws must be received in writing by the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee by 5 p.m. on Jan. 8, 2027.

Proposed changes to the Standing Rules only may be submitted in writing to the MTA Bylaws and Rules Committee up to the opening of the first business session of the Annual Meeting, which will be held May 14 - 15 in Boston. However, early submission by the Jan. 8 deadline provides an opportunity for a full hearing by the committee, consideration by the MTA Board and presentation at the April preconvention meetings.

It also allows advance publication in the Spring issue of MTA Today.

Submitters will be informed of hearing dates and will be expected to meet with the committee to discuss the language and intent of their proposals.

Proper format

Please use the following format for each proposed amendment. A template is available from the MTA Division of Governance and Administration upon request.

1. Specifically cite all articles, sections and lines of the Bylaws or Standing Rules that are to be changed or affected.
2. Set forth your proposal in two columns, comparing the proposed text opposite the present text. In the proposed language, underline amended or added

language. Enclose in parentheses language to be deleted. Indicate the location of completely new language.

3. Accompany each proposed amendment with a written rationale on its purpose, impact and intent.
4. Include at the end of all proposals the submitter's name and local association information.
5. Provide your full name, address, telephone number(s), email address and your MTA membership ID number, which can be found on your MTA membership card.

Who may submit proposals

Individual MTA members, groups of members and local associations are eligible to submit proposed amendments to the MTA Bylaws and Standing Rules. Members wishing to use an official title representing an MTA affiliate or committee are required to submit evidence that a vote was taken by authorized representatives of the affiliate or the committee.

Current document

A copy of the current MTA Bylaws, Standing Rules and Resolutions is available to any member upon request and at massteacher.org/bylaws.

Assistance

The Bylaws and Rules Committee and members of the MTA staff are available to discuss ideas for potential amendments and to provide technical assistance.

Inquiries and proposals submitted to the Bylaws and Rules Committee should be channeled through the MTA Division of Governance and Administration by mailing:

MTA
2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor,
Quincy, MA 02171-2119;
calling 617-878-8213; or emailing
mtagovernance@massteacher.org. **T**

ELECTION WAIVER

If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, elections may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the positions in question.

STATEWIDE RETIRED DISTRICT DELEGATES TO BE ELECTED

MTA Statewide Retired District delegates to the 2026 MTA Annual Meeting will be elected in conjunction with the NEA RA retired delegate elections.

The nomination period for Statewide Retired District delegates is now in process and will close at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8, 2027.

Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process.

Nominees are encouraged to use the self-nomination form available online at massteacher.org/nomination-forms. The form may be submitted electronically. Alternately, a paper form can be found on Page 28 of this edition of MTA Today.

The election period will run from Feb. 1 through March 12, 2027.

Online voting instructions for statewide retired delegates will be sent to retired MTA/NEA members.

Those who prefer to vote by paper ballot may request one, per the instructions provided.

The MTA reimburses up to \$650 for eligible expenses incurred by each Statewide Retired District delegate to the Annual Meeting.

The 2027 allocation of Statewide Retired District delegates will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members from the Statewide Retired District on record no later than Jan. 15, 2026. Terms will last one year.

The procedure for the election will be sent to any Statewide Retired District delegate candidate who requests a copy. **T**

2027 MTA Friend of Labor and Friend of Education Awards

Photographs by **Sarah Nathan**

Each year, the MTA honors individuals who have made significant contributions to the labor movement and public education in the Commonwealth, by presenting the MTA Friend of Labor Award and the MTA Friend of Education Award.

The policy/guidelines establish the purpose of the Friend of Labor Award as follows:

- To acknowledge specific and general contributions to the working people of the Commonwealth.
- To publicize these accomplishments to members of the labor community and to the general public.
- To thank the designated individual for their time, effort and skill in bringing about those accomplishments.

The policy/guidelines establish the purpose of the Friend of Education Award as follows:

- To acknowledge specific and general contributions to the educators and students of the Commonwealth.
- To publicize these accomplishments to members of the educational community and to the general public.
- To thank the designated individual for their time, effort and skill in bringing about those accomplishments.

To nominate someone to be considered for the Friend of Labor or Friend of Education Award, please include the following information:

- The name, mailing address, email address, and title, if applicable, of the nominee and the award sought for them.
- A statement to support the nomination that summarizes the nature of the accomplishments and contributions of the individual to education and



Danny Timpona, organizing director for LUCE Immigrant Justice Network of Massachusetts, accepted the Friend of Education Award for its work in 2026.

educators (for Friend of Education Award), and working people and the labor community (for Friend of Labor Award).

- Your name, email address, local association, mailing address and telephone number.

Please send your nomination to MTAGovernance@massteacher.org no later than Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2027.



Education Minnesota leaders accepted the Friend of Labor Award at the 2026 Annual Meeting of Delegates. They included Secretary-Treasurer Ryan Fiereck, left, and President Monica Byron.

Call for Nominations: 2028 NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence

Nominations are open for the 2028 NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence. All current members of an NEA local affiliate or bargaining unit are eligible, including teachers, Education Support Professionals, and higher education faculty and staff. The MTA Executive Committee will choose the MTA nominee. Awardees are honored each

year at the NEA Foundation's Salute to Excellence in Education Gala. Applicants should email mtagovernance@massteacher.org for information and application materials. The deadline for nominations is Wednesday, Feb. 10. For more information about the awards, please visit <https://www.neafoundation.org/projects-initiatives/awards-for-teaching-excellence/>.



Higher Ed faculty and staff were among the attendees at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH NATHAN



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*Certain loans that may be arranged through a third-party lender are excluded from MTA savings.

2027 HCR AWARD NOMINATIONS

The MTA Human Relations Committee is soliciting nominations for the 2027 MTA Human and Civil Rights Awards, which honor individuals and groups for showing extraordinary dedication to civil rights and human relations.

The awards will be presented at the Human and Civil Rights Awards celebration during Summer Conference 2027. The location and date will be posted at massteacher.org/hcr when they become available.

For further information, please email Jennifer Freeling, director of the Division of Governance and Administration, or Eileen Pitts, governance assistant, at MTAGovernance@massteacher.org.

Nominations are due April 30, 2027.

Forms will be available at massteacher.org/hcr in January 2027.



Digital Membership Cards

Now Available on MTA's New Website!

MTA members can now access digital membership cards at **massteacher.org**.

To find your digital card, sign in to the website and select My Account. Your membership card will be available there to print or download and save to your device, making it a convenient and accessible option if you need proof of membership.



Please note that MTA has a fresh, new website so if you haven't already set up your login account, you must do so in order to access members-only content as well as the My Account feature. To set up your website login account, go to **massteacher.org** and click on the Sign Up link in the bottom left-hand corner of your screen. For assistance with login issues, please complete this form: **massteacher.org/contact-us**.

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Retirement Planning

You only retire once. You should not be expected to be an expert in something you will never do again. Take advantage of the valuable services provided by our retirement consultants, who are available to MTA members without charge.

Consultations

All consultations are held by appointment only during the hours listed. Members are advised to call selected MTA consultants in advance to schedule an appointment.

Proof of membership must be submitted when requesting retirement services. This schedule is in effect from September to June except at MTA's Quincy headquarters, which is staffed during the summer and school vacations. Please be aware that the MTA consultants do not have records of your service, so members are advised to bring that information along to meetings.

Quincy (MTA Headquarters)

Ray Thompson - in person on weekdays.
Contact: rthompson@massteacher.org or 617-878-8255.

Middleton Office

Barbara Callaghan - in person second Saturday of each month. Contact: bcallaghan@massteacher.org or 617-878-8760. Billy McDonald - in person third Saturday of each month. Contact: wmcdonald@massteacher.org or 617-878-8764.

Pittsfield Office

Cathy Grady - in person second Saturday of each month. Contact: cgrady@massteacher.org or 617-878-8762.

Raynham Office

Larry Abbruzzi - by phone second Saturday of each month. Contact:

labbruzzi@massteacher.org or 508-824-9194. Nancy Mikels - in person third Saturday of each month. Contact: nmikels@massteacher.org or 617-878-8765.

West Springfield Office

Ron Lech - in person third Saturday of each month. Contact: rlech@massteacher.org or 617-878-8763.

Worcester Office

Mike Whittier - in person first and third Saturday of each month. Contact: mwhittier@massteacher.org or 617-878-8516.

Virtual Consultants

Patricia Thompson - virtual on weekdays. Contact: pthompson@massteacher.org or 617-878-8766. Peter Mili - virtual on weekdays. Contact: pmili@massteacher.org or 617-878-8256.

Higher Education Members

JoAnne Martone - Contact: jmartone@massteacher.org or 617-878-8055. T

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Amanda Torres-Price, Director of Communications

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

LAST WORD

Kyle Chambers

**Vice President, University Staff Association,
UMass Amherst**

“My focus is on trying to build bridges, not just between the members of our local, but also with the other unions who all have issues that continue to go unaddressed by management. Right now, we're seeing the rise of artificial intelligence as the latest form of privatization in our jobs. They're outsourcing our job duties and it's already eroding our union from within. We need to continue to support each other and continue the fight before they can take whole swaths of people and say, “AI is going to do your job.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC HAYNES

