



# THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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## Make Arlington Great Again

Another school year has begun, and with it another opportunity for you to make a difference in the lives of students. This fall, in particular, it is likely that many occasions will arise for showing compassion and tolerance.

Whether you like it or not, the current presidential campaign is affecting all of us, from the educators and parents who can vote down to the kindergarteners who hear the adults talking and see the ads on television.

As educators we know that it is not our place to inflict our political views on our students, but the attitude that we display in the face of all of the rhetoric flying around can be a tool to model good behavior.

This campaign, starting with the primaries, has been

the antithesis of what we strive to teach at school. Plagiarism, lying, bullying, and rumormongering are behaviors that we, as educators, specifically teach against. Unfortunately this sort of conduct is being de-

*As education professionals we are all aware that school is about more than reading, writing, and arithmetic, but this fall it seems like those other aspects of our jobs are more important than ever.*

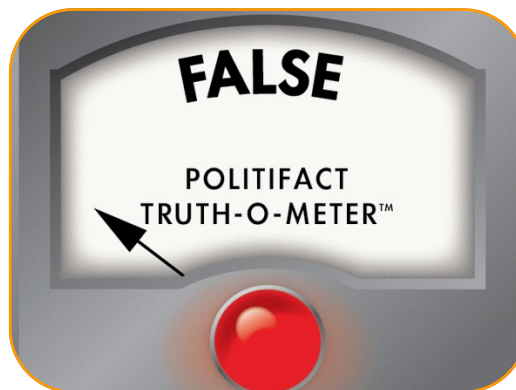
fended and even condoned in the media as a part of the campaign process.

So please, next time you see inflammatory talk being made light of on tv or online think about the fact that your students are seeing this too, and some of them are even members of groups

that are the targets of this hate speech. You don't have to care about politics or categorize yourself as part of a particular political party to be able to contribute to this election season. Simply help your students to understand

that not all adults perpetuate the behavior that this political cycle is steadily normalizing. All you have to do is continue doing what you always do: show your students that respect, kindness, honesty, and intelligence are traits that someone they look up to can display on a daily basis. As education professionals we are all aware that school is about more than reading, writing, and arithmetic, but this fall it seems like those other aspects of our jobs are more important than ever.

-Sam Falk, editor



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# You Can Count On the ATA's New Treasurer

## Trivia Challenge

Answer the question below correctly and you could be the proud winner of ATA gear!

**How many students attended Arlington as of June 30, 2015?**

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to [rmchugh@acsdny.org](mailto:rmchugh@acsdny.org) by September 16th. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.



**Dave Cordella**

I am looking forward getting to work this year representing the ATA as treasurer. This is my 14th year at AHS, teaching math. During a good number of those years I represented the ATA as a building rep. Growing up in a family where members were part of a union, I know the importance of strong leadership. The ATA has hard working members and leaders, and I am excited to be a part of the Executive Council.

Handling the finances

of our big organization is a huge responsibility, one that recently retired Kathy Cicala did so well for over a decade. This year I will work hard to try and fill the shoes Kathy has left behind, by drawing on my experience handling the budget for the senior class for 8 years. I look forward to representing all of you, and please let me know if you have any questions I can help with.

-Dave Cordella, Treasurer

## Welfare Trust Questions Answered

### What is Welfare Trust?

The Welfare Trust provides ATA members with reimbursements for out-of-pocket personal health, dental, and vision expenses. Dependents, spouses, and domestic partners are also covered. Enrolled families are entitled to \$2750 in dental benefits per family member, \$325 in vision benefits, and \$400 in personal health benefits, per year.

### What are the starting and ending dates for each Welfare Trust account?

Dental: Jan. 1 – Dec. 31  
Vision: Oct. 1 – Sept. 30  
Personal Health: Oct. 1 – Sept. 30

### What are some examples of eligible expenses?

Some examples of items that members can be reimbursed for are co-pays, over-the-counter FDA-approved drugs, eye examinations, contact lenses, crutches, substance abuse treatment, and even home improvements for medical purposes.

### How can I get reimbursed for my eligible expenses?

A reimbursement form can be found on the ATA website for personal health and vision benefits. The completed form, along with applicable receipts, must be mailed to the address found on the form. Dental benefits will be applied directly at your dentist's office.

### If I get reimbursed from my FLEX plan can I still get the money from the Personal Health Account of the Welfare Trust?

Yes. Paying with your FLEX plan money is no different than paying directly from your own pocket. Just submit the receipt with the Personal Health Account Form.

### Are there any dentists that accept the ATA payment in full?

Yes. There is a list of participating dentists on the ATA website. Call the dentist office and ask if they accept the Arlington Teachers' schedule administered by Preferred as full payment before you make

your first appointment.

### How is the value of the payment determined for the Dental if I go to other than a participating dentist?

A monetary value is assigned to each dental code. There is a list of payment values at the ATA Office. Welfare Trust Representatives in each building have a copy. The American Dental Association does not permit us to make a general distribution of their codes. At one point we had the values on our website, but the ADA insisted we take them off the site.

### I signed up for health insurance; do I also have to sign up for the Welfare Trust?

Yes. You must fill out the enrollment/change form found on the ATA website. Send the completed form through the interschool mail to Ron Higgins, ATA Office.

—Ron Higgins,  
Welfare Trust Chair

# Meet the ATA's New Chief Negotiator



**Robert McHugh**

*After 15 years as the ATA's Chief Negotiator, Donna Doerrier has stepped down in preparation for her retirement at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. The ATA Executive Council voted at its June meeting to appoint Robert McHugh as her replacement, effective immediately. McHugh, a social studies teacher, has been a member of the negotiating team, representing the high school, for the past 10 years. In addition, he has served as the Political Action Co-Chair, and on committees dealing with APPR, grievances, and communications. He answered some questions about the state of our contract and his new role as Chief Negotiator.*

**When does our current contract expire? When will negotiations begin again?**

The current contract expires at

the end on this school year, in July 2017. Typically, the team begins preparing for a new round of negotiations in the fall and winter before the expiration of the contract. This work includes soliciting ideas and contract proposals from members and examining the details of other recently settled contracts in the region. We then exchange proposals with the district in the spring and commence the negotiating process in earnest.

**Who comprises the negotiating team? How are the members chosen?**

The negotiating team includes the ATA President, Bob Maier, the Chief Negotiator, and representatives from each level; elementary, middle and high school. However, because both Bob and I both teach at the high school, we intend to have another representative from one of the other levels instead of a third high school member. The final composition of the team – chosen by the Chief Negotiator and President and voted on by the Executive Council – has not been finalized yet, but should be in place by the first Executive Council meeting of the year in September.

**What is the guiding philosophy of the negotiating team?**

I believe that one of the most

important things we can do as a negotiating team is to move inexorably in the direction of treating everyone equally. This includes elementary, middle, and high school teachers, but it also includes men and women and young teachers and veterans. In every negotiation that I have been a part of the District has made proposals designed – intentionally or not – to divide us. These proposals would have limited the salary growth of young teachers or dictated when and how often women could take child rearing leave. This is precisely the reason why unions exist – to ensure that, as the old credo goes, “an injury to one is an injury to all,” that we are all in this together.

**What are you most proud of negotiating during your time on the team?**

The best provision that we were able to negotiate during my time on the team was child rearing leave for adoptive parents. Because of that language, parents who adopt a child are now contractually entitled to the same paid time off that all other new parents have.

**What is your biggest frustration with the negotiations process?**

Being constantly reminded of the limits of rationality.

## Congratulations to Newly Tenured ATA Members

**Elementary**  
Beekman

Kimberly Wright

Noxon

Caitlin O’Dowd

Overlook

Kristen Clerkin, Julie Fagan

Titusville

Lisa Cole

Traver Road

Elena Fallon, Donna Piehler

West Road

Kristen Stephan

Vail Farm

Jesse Hushion, Patricia Malone

**Middle**

LaGrange

Vincent Minutolo, Alison Schwartz,  
Joseph Sullivan, Kevin Walsh

**High School**

Kimberly Dugard, David Regner

# Welcome, New Members!

The Arlington Teachers' Association hopes that all members are settling in to their classrooms this year and would like to welcome the following brand new people to the Arlington School District and the ATA. Please let us know if there are more additions to your building that we can include in the next issue.

## Beekman Elementary

**Kathleen Menton - Special Education**

Favorite Book: *A Thirteen Reasons Why*, by Jay Asher  
Favorite Food: New England Clam Chowder/Chicken Pot Pie

**Susan Sapek - Psychologist**

Favorite Book: *Many Lives Many Masters*, by Brian L. Weiss  
Favorite Food: Ice Cream

## LaGrange Middle

**Andrea Domkowski - English**

Favorite Book: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee  
Favorite Food: Pizza/Eggplant Rolatini

**Lauren Feliciano - English**

Favorite Book: *The Harry Potter Series*, by J.K. Rowling  
Favorite Food: Pizza

**Johana Sanchez - Computer**

Favorite Book: *The Firm*, by John Grisham  
Favorite Food: Seafood

**Marisa Bettina - Music**

**Khalie Wood-Aker - ENL**

**Emilie Britton-Buechele - Foreign Lang.**

## Union Vale Middle

**Eliza Kondzielaski - ENL**

Favorite Book: *Pride and Prejudice*, by Jane Austen  
Favorite Food: Pizza

**Ann-Marie Howard**

**Jenna Trapani - Speech**

## Arlington High

**Kathleen Geoghegan - Special Education**

Favorite Book: *Night*, by Elie Wiesel  
Favorite Food: Penne ala Vodka and Chicken Parmesan

**Lisa McGee - Special Education**

Favorite Book: *The Harry Potter Series*, by J.K. Rowling  
Favorite Food: Pasta Margarita

**Michael Schoonmaker - Physical Education**

Favorite Book: *The Harry Potter Series*, by J.K. Rowling  
Favorite Food: Crab Legs

**Jennifer Arco - Social Worker**

**Regina Davis - Business**

**Sarah Lobotsky - Math**

**Grace Pokela - Science**

**Jan Stark - Technology**

**Ashleigh Thomas - Art**

## Arthur S. May School

**Christine Halling - 5th Grade**

Favorite Book: *Wonder*, by R.J. Palacio  
Favorite Food: Pizza and Ice Cream

**Alissa Martino - Special Education**

## Noxon Road Elementary

**Alicia Caruso**

**Allison Kilroy**

**Michelle Hersh- Art**

Did we leave someone out? Please let us know so that we can include him or her next month!

### Titusville Intermediate

Josh Platt - 5th Grade

Favorite Book: *None*

Favorite Food: Pineapples

Elizabeth Masee - Library

Stephanie Cobb

### West Road Elementary

Matthew Zydel - Music

Favorite Book: *The Rule of Four*, by Dustin Thomason and Ian Caldwell

Favorite Food: Chicken Wings

### Central Office

Leeann Haubrich - Math

### Traver Road Primary

Susan Bellina - Special Education

Favorite Book: *Beautiful Disaster*, by Jamie McGuire

Favorite Food: BBQ

Lauren Boland - Art

Favorite Book: *The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck

Favorite Food: Mashed Potatoes

Liana Wemple - Music

Favorite Book: *The Nanny Diaries*, by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus

Favorite Food: Mediterranean

Kerry McCarthy - ENL

Rachel Stellini

### Vail Farm Elementary

Melissa Cordoni - Special Education

Favorite Book: *Gone Girl*, by Gillian Flynn

Favorite Food: Eggplant Parmesan

Alexa Oscarlece - Special Education

### Overlook Primary

Lyssa Merle - Special Education

Favorite Book: *None*

Favorite Food: Chocolate Chip Cookies

Carrie Eirish



ATA New Teacher Luncheon - August 30, 2016

## 2016 — 2017 ATA Officers

**President**

Bob Maier

**First Vice-President**

Greg Nieman

**Second Vice-President**

Steve Hertzog

**Treasurer**

Dave Cordella

**Chief Negotiator**

Robert McHugh

**PR Committee Chair**

Kristine Jackson

**Community Action Chair**

Betsy Marshall

**Welfare Trust Chair**

Ron Higgins

**Communications Chair**

Sam Falk

**Senior Building Representatives**

ASM — Erica Dunn

BES — William Mueller

NES — Nicolle McMorris

VFES — Pam Goetz

OPS — Christene Way

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Chris Greco

TIS — Sue Ramsden

LMS — Shared

UVMS — Jim DeBonis

AHS — John Filor

AHS — Noreen Mills Martin

# What's Going On?

"What's Going on" is a monthly feature of The Educator. It highlights noteworthy accomplishments by ATA members. Do you know of a colleague who deserves recognition? Let The Educator know by emailing [sfalk@acsdny.org](mailto:sfalk@acsdny.org). We can't know what's going on at all of your schools without your help!

Congratulations to the following ATA members for their contributions to the Arlington community and beyond.

### Arlington High School

Social studies teacher Robert McHugh has organized a

walking tour with the Millbrook Historical Society, which will take place in Millbrook on October 8. Participants can learn about how Millbrook's past connects with its present as they visit 10 of the village's most historically and architecturally significant buildings. More information can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/302620770105520/>.

### Arthur S. May School

Social worker Cindy Vandermark visited Nicaragua this summer with ASM library clerk Marie Taylor and some AHS students to work with the Bridges to Community organi-

zation. From August 6 to 14 they worked on building two homes there.

Special education teacher Michele Anderson authored two books for children this summer, *Reiki for the Young* and *Reiki for Older Children*. Both books will be available this fall on Amazon.

First grade teacher Erica Dunn started a GoFundMe page to collect donations so that ASM can start the year with a communal school supply room. She decided to help those students in need who have trouble obtaining the necessary school supplies they will need throughout the year.

## Edcamp Excites Educators



Photo by Julie Jee

Some teachers chose to attend a session about foreign language led by AHS teacher Aimee Licari at Edcamp Hudson Valley 2016.

On Monday, August 29, 2016, educators from around the state and beyond gathered at Poughkeepsie Day School to participate in Edcamp Hudson Valley. According to the website, an edcamp is a "un-conference" which means there is no set

keynote speaker or pre-planned sessions. It is free professional development for educators, by educators. Participants go into the day with ideas of what they might want to learn about, or even what they would like to facilitate. One of the key ele-

ments of an edcamp is to, "vote with your feet," so if a session does not meet your needs, you can easily walk away from it and find a session that does.

The Arlington Teachers' Association had 55 participants. Teachers from the high school, Kathy Bellino, Julie Jee, and Katie Nixon, as well as an assistant principal, Jenn Nilsen, were instrumental in organizing this event. The ATA also sponsored Edcamp Hudson Valley.

Throughout the day, participants were encouraged to share ideas and facilitate discussions. After brainstorming and organizing possible topics, a session board emerged with over 30 different sessions. Topics included place-based learning, social justice, and archaeology in the classroom.

-Julie Jee, AHS

# ATA Night at the Renegades Avoids the Rain

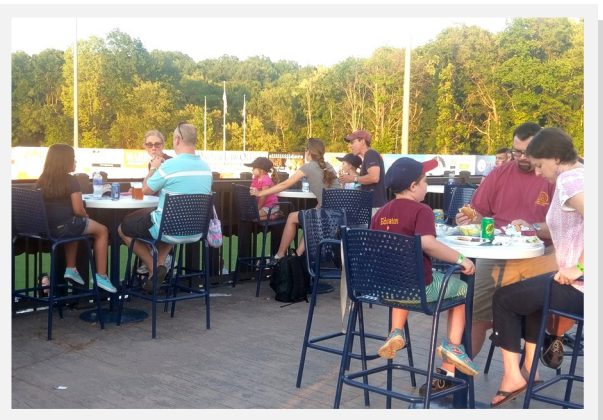


Hollis Bakke (TIS) and her family enjoyed the night.

After the first game was rained out ATA members gathered at Dutchess Stadium in Beacon on August 19 for the rescheduled 6th Annual ATA Night at the Renegades. The evening included pre-game all-you-can-eat food and post-game fireworks along with some great baseball.



Many ATA members, friends, and family gathered for a night of baseball, food, and fireworks.



Ample seating was to be found on the right field patio, which afforded a nice view of the field.

Photos by Sam Falk

## The PR Committee Needs You!

One of the most enjoyable ways to help the ATA and contribute to your community is to volunteer at one of the events organized by the PR Committee. The first event this year will be the Arlington Street Fair on September 24. This annual fair takes place on Raymond Avenue in Poughkeepsie, near the ATA Office. The ATA's tent will feature an activity for children.

ATA members are needed to help set up at 11 a.m., clean up at 6 p.m., and take shifts at the ATA tent. Please contact PR Chair Kristine Jackson at LMS or the ATA Office to sign up for one of the following time slots: 12-2 p.m., 2-4 p.m., 4-6 p.m., set-up, or clean-up. More information about the Street Fair can be found at [arlingtonhasit.org/](http://arlingtonhasit.org/)

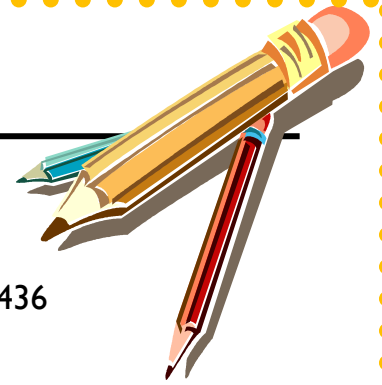
happenings/arlington-street-fair/.

In addition, please be on the lookout for more details about the ATA's annual fall highway cleanup. For many years the ATA has committed to keeping Route 55 near the High School clean. Once a date in October is selected organizer Debbie Pollock will be emailing to ask for volunteers.

# Dates to Remember

## SEPTEMBER

- 13th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 20th—Flex Benefit Plans Meetings, 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., AHS room 1436  
ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432
- 22nd—Middle School Open House
- 24th—Arlington Street Fair, 12-6 p.m.
- 27th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO



## OCTOBER

- 1st—Deadline to submit information for graduate or inservice credit  
Deadline for using 2015-2016 Welfare Trust Benefits
- 3rd—Rosh Hashanah—No School
- 6th—High School Open House
- 10th—Columbus Day—No School
- 11th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 12th—Yom Kippur—No School
- 18th—ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432
- 25th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 26th—Professional Development Half Day



# Announcements

### ***Don't Forget To Register!***

New York State Law now requires that all teachers register in order to maintain their Professional or Permanent certificates. Make sure to go to <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/> during your birth month to register.

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4 - 6 p.m. on September 9 and 12 and October 10 and 14. Contact Colleen Napora at AHS to sign up.

**Stay informed! Like us on Facebook or check out [www.arlingtonteachers.com](http://www.arlingtonteachers.com) for forms, photos, calendars, and more.**