



# THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

VOLUME 8, ISSUE V

MARCH 2018

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## Be a Part of the Conversation

I don't know about you, but when I decided to become a teacher I never considered that I would be entering a career where I was not only responsible for the intellectual well-being of children, but possibly for their literally *being* at all. Teaching was not supposed to be life or death. I now have been forced to imagine what I would do if someone came to my classroom with the intent to murder me and my students.

That makes me angry.

And it makes me feel sad, and powerless. Most of the decisions made about how to best keep me and my students safe are made without my involvement—without the involvement of any teachers. There is the national discussion about gun control centered in Washington D.C., but there is also the discussion

about school safety on the local level. In Arlington a hired consultant is tasked with making plans for potentially lethal eventualities, and our school board decides how much funding to provide for the supporting infrastructure,

*Even if we don't all agree on how to best manage the complexities of school safety, at least we have now made our opinions known.*

and whether more staffing is needed. I sit at school board meetings where all of these things are discussed and I listen to students and parents voice their opinions at the microphone, but teachers are prohibited from being a part of that conversation.

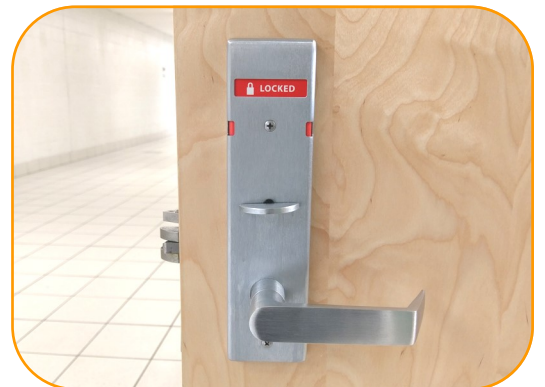
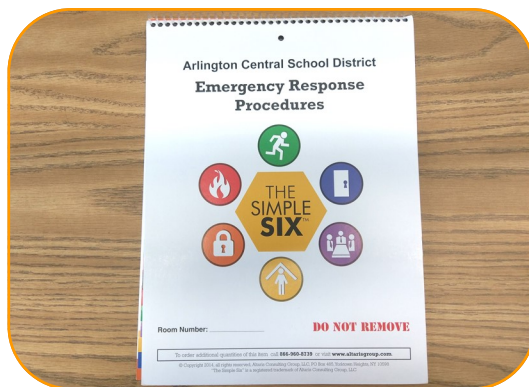
That's where the ATA comes in. We have the power to act together to have our

voices heard. We can start our own conversation, and when 700 of us talk it is hard to ignore. In these pages you will find the results of a school safety survey given to ATA members. Maybe it's just because I'm a science teacher,

but I found comfort in being able to collect and analyze data and gain some knowledge of where my fellow teachers stand on the issues at hand. Even if we don't all agree on how to best manage the

complexities of school safety, at least we have now made our opinions known. Maybe the real comfort is in seeing that I'm not alone in this time of unrest in the schools, and in knowing that the ATA has provided a venue for you to not be alone either. Let's make sure to continue the conversation.

-Sam Falk, editor



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# Trivia Challenge

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

**Which state has the highest rate of union membership?**

Last month's winner was **retiree Bonnie Glick**. She correctly identified **Lyndon Johnson** as the president who signed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. She will be the proud owner of ATA gear. Answer this month's question and you could win ATA gear too!

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to [sfalk@acsdny.org](mailto:sfalk@acsdny.org) by **March 23**. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

# Arguments Heard In Janus Case

On February 26 the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in the case *Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)*. At the core of the issue at hand is whether a union can charge dues for services provided. This case is working to overturn the *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* case of 1977 in which the Supreme Court ruled that public employee unions can charge an agency fee. An agency fee is a payment for services that the union provides for an individual who doesn't want to join the union.

As the *Janus* case was heard by the court last month we can now understand the premise of the argument. On the side of *Janus*, the parties argued that this issue is a matter of the First Amendment. The issue at hand is whether a union has the right to charge fees for services like collective bargaining, fair represen-

tation, and benefits. *Janus* is a public employee who has not joined the union. Up until now he has been charged an agency fee for services, as he has declined joining the union and paying dues. It is important to understand that unions have a duty of fair representation to all workers of

Currently the Arlington Teachers' Association has 100% participation, with no agency fee payers. As we have enjoyed the strong support of our membership, we will be looking for your continued support into the future. Our Local has been successful in tackling major issues, settling contracts,

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a bargaining unit. This has been true since the National Labor Relations act of 1935, which the *Abood* case upheld in 1977.

Now the *Janus* team has argued that fair share agreements violate workers' right to free speech. They believe this because the union may contribute to political campaigns that they may not believe in or support. We will keep you posted as we expect a ruling on this case before the end of this term of the Supreme Court in June.

and extending significant benefits. If our members decided that they no longer wanted to be part of the union, it could jeopardize

what we all enjoy in our jobs. All of the contractual protections and benefits could be in jeopardy, and our profession would be significantly undermined.

As we are informed of the Supreme Court's ruling in June we will keep you informed about what our next course of action will be. We hope to weather this storm like we have in the past, standing together, and facing the challenge head on. Please contact me at the ATA office if you have any questions.

-Bob Maier, ATA President

# Workers Rally In a Show of Solidarity



Photo by Sam Falk

On February 24 thousands of unionized workers joined together at Foley Square in New York City to display their unity in the face of challenges such as the *Janus* case. Speakers including NYS AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento and AFSCME President Lee Saunders rallied the crowd. Similar gatherings were held across the country.

# Act Now To Help End APPR

I recently had the pleasure of representing the ATA in several meetings with elected officials. On February 4, I attended the NYSUT Legislative Luncheon in Kingston where teachers from the Hudson Valley had the opportunity to speak with local elected officials and their representatives. I was seated at a table with a staffer from Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney's office. All of us at the table shared our views and needs with the staffer. In our conversation, I mentioned that while there was much national discussion about roads and bridges in the debate about infrastructure, there also needs to be a focus on educational infrastructure due to the age of many schools. I was assured that my concerns would be communicated to

Congressman Maloney.

More recently, on March 6, I lobbied in Albany as part of NYSUT's Committee of 100. We spoke to Assemblywoman Didi Barrett, Assemblyman Kieran Lalor, and Senator Sue Serino. During those meetings a number of issues were addressed including charter schools and the executive budget proposal. We also discussed a lack of financial and staffing resources to help our students who have mental illnesses. Our primary focus; however, was on the return of teacher evaluations to local control. While in those meetings, I argued that the APPR system, as it currently exists, drains time and money from the districts, which means that administrators have less time during the school day to focus

on basic school safety and discipline. My fellow representatives from other districts echoed those sentiments and all three legislators agreed that teacher evaluations should be returned to local control and the state system should be scrapped.

We now have the momentum to end APPR and need to act before the legislative session ends in June. Please take a few moments to write an email, make a phone call, or send a letter to your legislators urging them to end APPR. You can always make an appointment with them at their district office to deliver the message in person. If we all make a concerted effort, we can end this needless burden.

-Brendan Lawlor, CAC Co-Chair

Whether you would like to advocate for school funding, gun control, or the repeal of state APPR regulations; a letter sent through the mail, a phone call, or an in-person meeting carries more weight than a fax or email sent electronically. We encourage you to contact your elected officials using the information below. Don't know who they are? Just go to [www.elections.ny.gov](http://www.elections.ny.gov) to look up your election district.

## U.S. Senate

**Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand**  
Russell Senate Office Building,  
Room 478  
2 Constitution Avenue, NE  
Washington DC 20510-3205  
202-224-4451

**Sen. Chuck Schumer**  
Hart Senate Office Building,  
Room 322  
120 Constitution Avenue, NE  
Washington DC 20510-3203  
202-224-6542

## U.S. House of Representatives

**Rep. Sean Maloney**  
*District: FH-NY18*  
123 Grand Street  
Newburgh NY 12550  
845-561-1259

**Rep. John Faso**  
*District: FH-NY19*  
2 Hudson Street  
Kinderhook NY 12106  
518-610-8133

## NY State House of Representatives

**Hon. Kevin Byrne**  
*District: SH-NY094*  
3 Starr Ridge Rd., Suite 204  
Brewster, NY 10509  
845-278-2923

**Hon. James Skoufis**  
*District: SH-NY099*  
11 Main Street  
Chester, NY 10918  
845-469-6929

**Hon. Kevin Cahill**  
*District: SH-NY103*  
1 Albany Ave, Suite G-4  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-338-9610

**Hon. Frank Skartados**  
*District: SH-NY104*  
154 North Plank Road, Suite 2  
Newburgh, NY 12550  
845-562-0888

**Hon. Kieran Lalor**  
*District: SH-NY105*  
1075 Rt. 82, Suite #1  
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533  
845-221-2202

**Hon. Didi Barrett**  
*District: SH-NY106*  
12 Raymond Ave., Suite 105

Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
845-454-1703

## NY State Senate

**Sen. Bill Larkin**  
*District: SS-NY039*  
1093 Little Britain Road  
New Windsor, NY 12553  
845-567-1270

**Sen. Terrence Murphy**  
*District: SS-NY040*  
691 E. Main St  
Shrub Oak, NY 10588  
914-962-2624

**Sen. Sue Serino**  
*District: SS-NY041*  
4254 Albany Post Road  
Hyde Park, NY 12538  
845-229-0106

**Sen. John Bonacic**  
*District: SS-NY042*  
201 Dolson Avenue, Suite F  
Middletown, NY 10940  
845-344-3311

**Sen. George Amedore**  
*District: SS-NY046*  
721 Broadway, Suite 100  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-331-3810

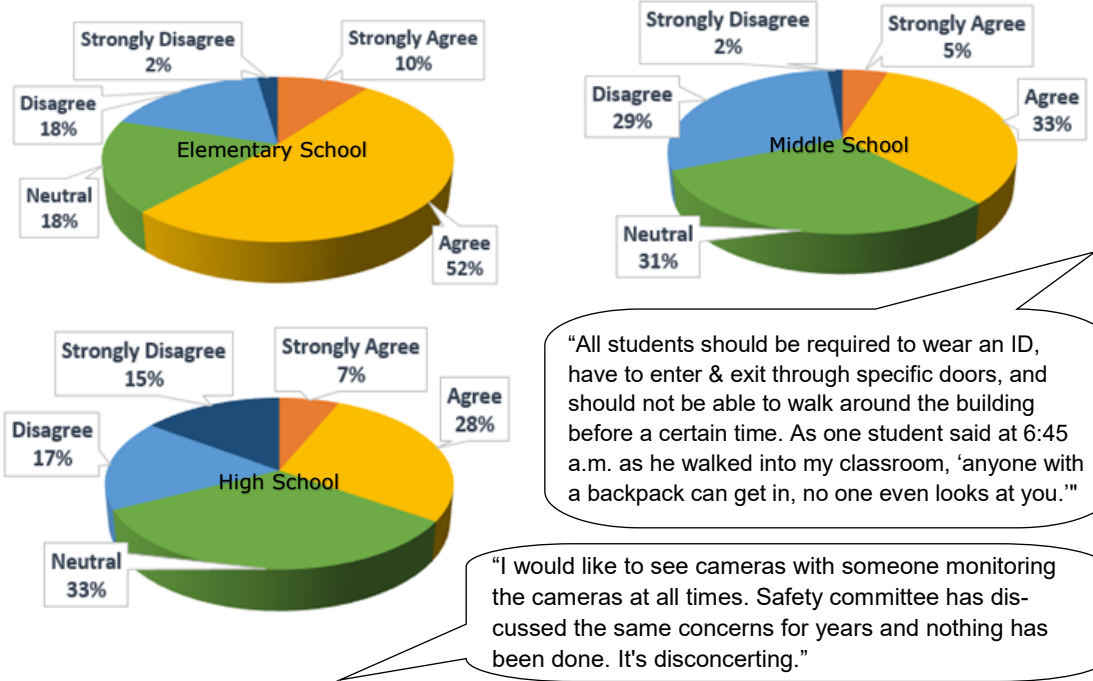


# ...The Results Are In

In an effort to continue the conversation on school safety going on all around us, *The Educator* asked ATA members to answer the following survey questions and to add their comments. Two hundred forty three of the ATA's 710 members, evenly distributed throughout the grade levels, answered the poll. This results in a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error.

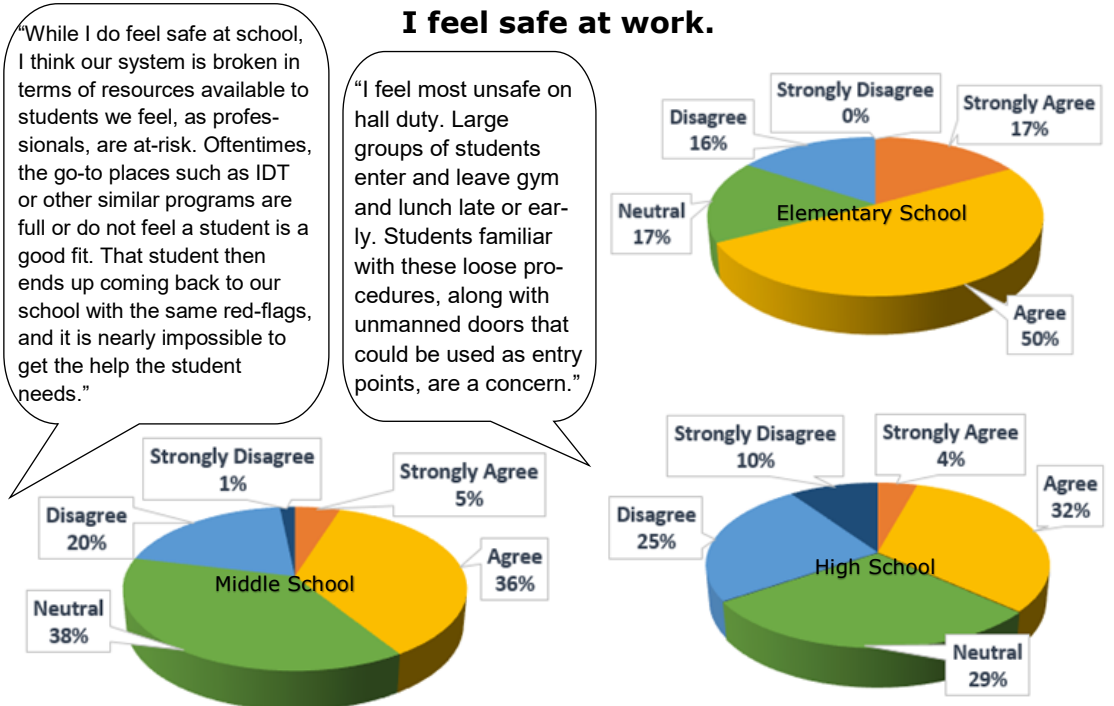
Of the 243 survey responses, 69 included a comment. While only a select few of those comments are published here, all were shared with administration. All ATA voices deserve to be heard.

## The Arlington Central School District has adequate safety precautions in place.



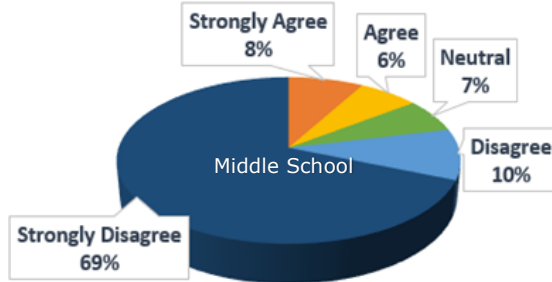
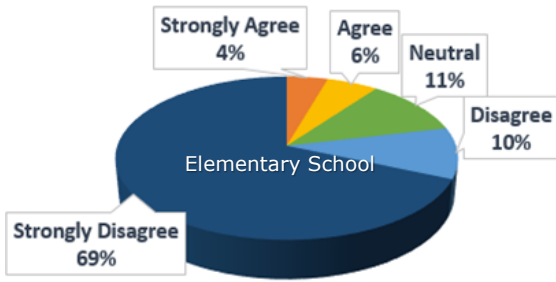
**Overall, 45% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 27% felt neutral, and 28% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.**

## I feel safe at work.

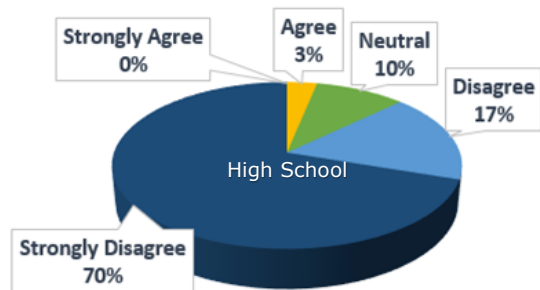


**Overall, 49% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 27% felt neutral, and 24% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.**

### Arming teachers would help to increase the safety of our schools.



**Overall, 9% of all respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 9% felt neutral, and 82% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.**



“Security should be armed as well as any teacher who already carries or has a license and there are many on staff who carry outside of school.”

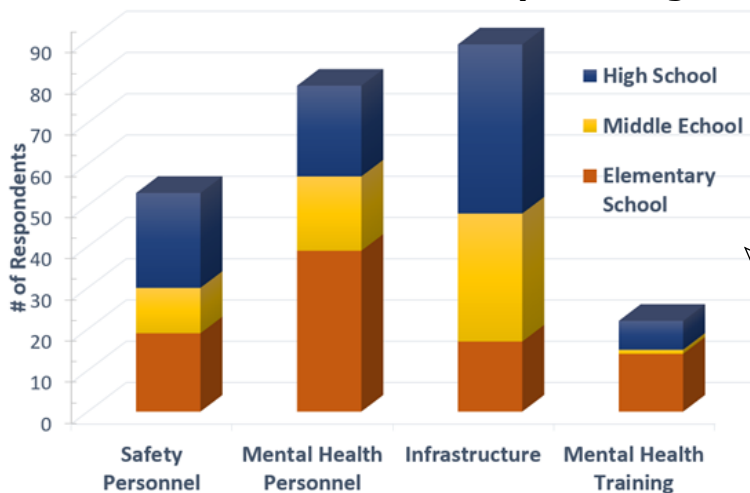
“I’m sure that some teachers are proficient and have gun permits, but I would have a lot of concerns about how that would be put into practice.”

“Our safety personnel are mainly retired police officers, detectives, troopers, etc., all of whom are trained in firearms and carried a gun for their entire law enforcement career. These men and women should be allowed to be armed to protect our students, should there be an emergency. There is no need to arm teachers, we have plenty of personnel who are trained, qualified and comfortable being armed.”

“Not just arming teachers, but arming the right teachers.”

“What I really think we need are fewer guns.”

### If I had to choose one area to augment in order to increase school safety at Arlington it would be:



**Overall, 37% of all respondents chose infrastructure improvements, 33% chose increased mental health personnel, 22% chose increased safety personnel, and 9% chose more mental health training.**

“When the fire alarm went off at LMS last week. We honestly didn’t know if we should leave our classrooms. I’ve never felt so unsafe as I did that day walking out into the open field. Everyone was so relieved when we found out it was burnt popcorn! It highlighted the need for updated procedures and better communication. I don’t want our schools to turn into bunkers, but we do need to invest in making our schools safer both with personnel and with improved planning and infrastructure. The real solutions are outside of the school - we really need strong gun control laws and real interventions when people are red flags whether due to social media posts, domestic violence, violence towards animals or other warning signs.”

“Our needs should be met according to building and age-appropriate needs, not uniform ideas. The elementary schools do not need hallway cameras, but we do need specific training, personnel to address safety issues, and support for children who we feel are on the brink.”

## 2017 — 2018 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 Co-Chairs

Brendan Lawler

Betsy Marshall

### Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

### Communications Chair

Sam Falk

### Senior Building Representatives

ASM — Erica Dunn

BES — William Mueller

NES — Nicolle McMorris

VFES — Gwen Moschetto

OPS — Nancy Thomas

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Chris Greco

TIS — Sue Ramsden

LMS — Kevin Walsh

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

Math teacher and varsity basketball coach Matt Hoyt was recently awarded the 2018 DeMaio Sportsmanship Award by the Dutchess County Basketball Coaches Association.

In April science teacher Megan Murphy will be running the St. Jude's half marathon as a member of the St. Jude's Heroes team. They are raising money for the research hospital.

### Arlington Librarians

On March 1 librarians Lucy Miller (AHS) and Mindy Grey (OPS, VF) gave a talk about the database "Teachingbooks.net" at the most recent MidHudson Reading Council event. They explained how to access the database and how to use it in the classroom with students.

### Arthur S. May School

Second grade teacher Julie Shook was recently



Photo by Sam Falk

### Arlington High

English teacher Katie Nixon (pictured above) will be running the Boston Marathon with the Boston Children's Hospital Miles for Miracles team in honor of her nephew Noah and her patient partner Noelle. In order to raise money she recently organized two events. On February 25 a trivia competition was held at the Publick House in Pleasant Valley which also featured a generously donated buffet and raffles. That day Nixon raised over \$3000 with the help of science teacher Dave Moss (above left), who emceed and wrote the trivia questions, and social studies teacher Austin Crittenden (above, right) who lent his DJ skills and equipment. In addition, on March 4 a roller skating event was held at Roller Magic in Hyde Park, which raised more money.

added to the Board of Trustees of the Arlington Education Foundation.

### Traver Road Primary

Psychologist Mary Beth Neils is currently collecting donations for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She will be running a half marathon on June 10 in Lake Placid.

### Union Vale Middle

It was recently announced that the Dutchess County Basketball Coaches Association will be renaming its service award in honor of social studies teacher and assistant varsity basketball coach Ernie Verdis in honor of his more than 30 years of dedication to local basketball.

# School Board Candidates Sought

It is vital for the continued excellence of our schools that we elect school board members who keep the best interests of the students and employees in mind while also considering the impact on tax-payers. With the current concerns about school safety, along with the trend of "right-sizing", many important funding decisions will have to be made. Sure, we have to offer the core subjects, but what about art, music, and even library services? Can we afford those, and enhancements to our security infrastructure? When the things that make an Arlington experience great are on the line we need school board members who care.

We all know someone who fits that description, whether he or she is a

family member, friend, or neighbor. Often these people don't know how much we need them though. Several current school board members have stated that they only ran when they were asked to. That's where you come

board members Ed McCormick, Chip McLeod, and Mary Anne Meaden will expire in May.

Please contact the ATA Office at 845-454-7002 or [ataupdate@gmail.com](mailto:ataupdate@gmail.com) if you know of

Please contact the ATA Office at 845-454-7002 or [ataupdate@gmail.com](mailto:ataupdate@gmail.com) if you know of anyone who would be interested in running for a school board position this year. Completed petitions to run are due to Central Office by April 16.

anyone who would be interested in running for those positions. It is a great opportunity for people who care about their children's future and their community as a whole to make a difference.

To be eligible, candidates must live in the district and

in: the ATA is requesting your help to identify possible school board candidates and to talk to them about running.

This year there are three seats up for election on the school board. The terms of current Arlington school

not be currently employed by Arlington. In order to be on the ballot in May a petition must be obtained from Central Office and returned there with 100 signatures by April 16. ATA members are available to help with that task.

# Charitable Efforts Continue In All Seasons

This winter has certainly proven to be a challenging one in terms of consistency with all the snow days and delays. We are all trying to figure out how to squeeze in all the curriculum we need to, all the while dreaming of warmer days. While all of this is going on, the ATA is still hard at work, bettering our community through a variety of ways.

Currently, the PR committee is sponsoring a drive honoring former ATA secretary, Jackie Higgins, that benefits the Dutchess County SPCA. Members have been bringing in much-needed items such as old towels and blankets, pet food, and even some pet toys. We are always so impressed with our members' participation in this event, no doubt because so many remember what a loving and warm person Jackie was and wish to honor her memory through this drive.

The ATA has also pledged to become a Bronze sponsor in this year's annual Literacy Connections Spelling

Bee, held at Marist College. This organization supports literacy in our community, and reaches out to adults who may be struggling with reading in order for them to have more opportunities in life. We also continued our effort to help offset the overhead costs of the annual H.O.P.E. basketball game by paying for the players' jerseys.

On April 28, the ATA will be partnering once again with Rebuilding Together Dutchess County, an organization that helps local families make much-needed repairs on their homes.

sees. This year's game will take place on Friday, March 23, with the proceeds going to benefit 29 graduating seniors who have suffered the loss of a parent or guardian during their time in Arlington.

On April 28, the ATA will be partnering once again with Rebuilding Together Dutchess County, an organization that helps local families make much-needed repairs on their homes.

Union Vale Middle School technology teacher Doug Dickeson will be leading the ATA's team and will be sending out more details. In addition, our semi-annual highway clean-up will be here before we know it! We'll wait until the snow thaws a bit and get back to you on date. Finally, in June, the ATA will be organizing its annual mini-golf outing which supports the Arlington Education Foundation. Last year's event was our most successful yet, and we hope to make it even better with your help.

Our members are constantly involved in ways to make our community better. We donate our time, energy, and finances to so many events and organizations, yet still continue to support the ATA's efforts. I am so proud to work with so many generous, giving people. So, as we approach our well-deserved spring break, I hope you take some time to also take care of YOU.

-Kristine Jackson, PR Chair



# Dates to Remember



## MARCH

16th—Professional Development Delayed Start Day

20th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., LMS

26-30th—Spring Break

## APRIL

2nd—Spring Break

7th—District Arts Fair: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., LMS

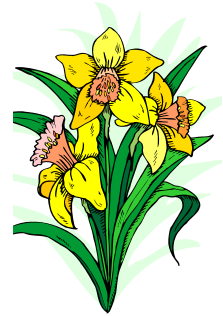
10th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., TIS

16th—Board of Education Candidate Petitions Due: 5 p.m., CAO

17th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

24th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., CAO

28th—Rebuilding Together Dutchess County: TBA



## MAY

4th—Professional Development Delayed Start Day

8th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., UVMS



# Announcements

Now that Arlington has used more than the allotted number of snow days, the make-up days are:

1st—Friday, May 25

2nd—Monday, April 2

3rd—Monday, March 26

4th—Tuesday, March 27

**Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4—6 p.m. on April 6 and 9. Contact Colleen Napora at AHS to sign up.**

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