



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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Let's Continue to Foster Positive Change

ATA President Bob Maier's 2020 State of the Union Address

With the close of 2019, and the start of 2020, it is important for me to share with the members of the ATA the status of our work, and an overview of this past year. If you remember, last year we spent a significant amount of time addressing the issues of the Janus case. I am proud to report that we are a 100% membership local with over 700 members, and 450 retirees.

As each year passes, the field of education seems to take its twists and turns. Many of us who have been with

Arlington some time have experienced the changes to the profession and the student population. With each decade that passes, our profession

Please continue to be vocal of your concerns. We need to be the drivers of change, not the passengers to the process.

seems to go through a cycle of change. I have spent many hours discussing this with our retirees, and their insight has taught me the cycle of "innovation and change" is not a new theme. Many I

spoke to remember the cycles and ultimately the outcome for Arlington.

In the last decade, our Elementary folks have had many initiatives that have completely changed their days, curriculum, and practices. It is remarkable to see the perseverance and dedication of our colleagues that

stepped up, met the challenges, and accommodated the changes. The benefactors of all of this effort are, of course, our students. Our students today with
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Trivia Challenge

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

Who has won the most Academy Awards for acting?

Last month's winner, selected as the only correct response received, was **Lara Ivchenko** from LMS. She correctly identified **Aomori City, Japan**, as the snowiest city in the world. Lara will be the proud owner of ATA gear.

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to sfalk@acsdny.org by February 7. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Know Your Rights Under the Taylor Law

From time to time, it's important to refresh ourselves regarding rights under the Taylor Law, which is the state law that sets the rules that govern collective bargaining and labor unions in New York's public sector. More specifically, individual members of collective bargaining units (such as the Arlington Teachers' Association) have the right to engage with fellow employees about their terms and conditions of employment.

Section 202 of the Taylor Law says "public employees shall have the right to form, join and participate in, or to refrain from forming, joining, or participating in, any employee organization of their own choosing." In other words, members of the ATA have the right to talk

to one another about things such as the collective bargaining agreement, contract negotiations, supervisory and administration issues, and potential or actual discipline.

Fully recognizing these rights, the ATA has in the past advised bargaining unit members, and will continue to so advise in the future, that it is in their best interests in some instances and under certain circumstances to refrain from discussing (whether in person or on social media) certain matters, such as confidential human resource issues. When the ATA issues such advice, it does so only with your best interests in mind. The last thing the ATA wants to see is members of its bargaining unit subjected to potential counseling or dis-

ciplinary charges (or immediate discharge in the case of those who are not tenured) for discussing things that are considered by the District to be confidential or sensitive in nature.

When the ATA gives you such advice, it is just that—advice; it is *not* a directive that is intended to interfere with, restrain or coerce your rights. At all times you retain your rights under the Taylor Law to discuss such matters notwithstanding the ATA's advice. However, if you choose to ignore the ATA's advice, and while the ATA would never retaliate against you for doing so, you do run the risk of having action taken against you by the District.

-Bob Maier,
ATA President

Tax Season Is Upon Us Once Again

Dues Deductions for the Calendar Year 2019 for:

Full Time Teachers Who Were Employed In All Of 2019: \$951

Full Time Teachers Who Started In September 2018: \$357

Full Time Teachers Who Retired In June 2019: \$594

Please note: ALL full time teachers pay the same amount of union dues. Dues deductions begin in October, and continue for 15 pay periods, ending in April or May.

ATA members have the option of having dues deducted over the first 6 or 10 pay periods, but very few individuals choose these options. If you are interested you can contact the payroll office to change your deduction timeline.

You may have a different amount taken out if you are part-time or were out on extended leave. Check your pay stub from the last paycheck in December for your exact amount, as well as other potential tax deductions. Check with your tax preparation professional to discuss your work related deductions.

-Steve Hertzog, 2nd Vice President

Let's Continue to Foster Positive Change

Continued from Front
 electronics and social media are different from the ones we saw 20 years ago. Again, we are meeting these challenges, and that should be celebrated. Our profession is always evolving, and so are we.

Currently the issue of grading practices has been gripping our district. As the Cookies and Conversation tour has met with all building faculties, I want to applaud your efforts to shed some light on the real challenges we face.

The ATA has been making a greater effort to build a relationship with the Board of Education. We feel it is really important that the governing body of our district understands directly from us, the professionals who serve the students each day, the major challenges that we face and where our priorities should be. The candid conversations that have occurred in each building bought out common themes. This was extremely

powerful, and truly a testament of our reality. Thank you for rising to the occasion.

Moving forward we will continue to work with the Board of Education to support us in what we see as the major challenges. Clearly the issue of mental health and student support was one heard in every building. There is no secret we have greater challenges with students and their well-being today than we have ever before. This needs to be our focus. This is the challenge that cannot be

set aside until a later time. This is the issue that could help improve many of our other issues like attendance, discipline, and the anxiety of students. I am hoping the Board of Education and the Central Office administration heard our colleagues that have asked for support in these areas. I believe it was best stated by one of our colleagues at a recent Cookie and Conversation session, asking how we can have such a focus on

would be paramount to building a more community-based school district. It is through your hard work each day that our dedication to our students shows. I know it is challenging at times, but understand the effort is obvious.

What 2020 will bring is going to be interesting. This is a big election year, and a challenging budget year for the State of New York. As the superintendent has expressed, there will be a

significant budget shortfall as they begin to build next year's budget. This may cause the district some challenges, but we have weathered much worse in the past. Please pay a greater attention to the process, and we will try to keep you informed as well.

As I began this article I made reference to the professionals who were here before us. We are so very fortunate to have inherited what we have in the District and the ATA from the efforts of our retirees. It is our responsibility now to foster positive change that will be the basis for this district

and our profession into the future. Education is ever changing, we have all witnessed it, engaged it, and worked through it. The focus we need to keep is that of what is best for our students. I believe no one knows this better than us, the professionals who work day to day with these young people. Please continue to be vocal of your concerns. We need to be the drivers of change, not the passengers to the process.

-Bob Maier, ATA President

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grading when we have so many other more important issues to tackle.

Please rest assured the ATA will continue to lead in this effort. As the budget season starts, there are greater conversations of the need in certain areas, while we try to slow the elimination of other positions in the name of "right-sizing". It is our hope that we could lower our class sizes and begin to have an opportunity to build greater relationships with students and their families. This

Summer Opportunities Abound

In February summer may seem far off, but it is not too soon to be thinking about applying for teachers after school ends. Information about numerous educational programs can be found in this list of just some of the great programs that are available at very little or no cost at all to educators.

Program Sponsor	Recommended Grade Level	Subject	Date
National WWII Museum	6-12	Social Studies—WWII	July 20-24;
McDonald Observatory	K-12	Science—Astronomy	Variou
Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History	K-12	Social Studies—American History	July 19
National Endowment for the Humanities	K-12	Humanities—Social Studies, ELA, Architecture, Music	Variou
National Gallery of Art	K-12	Art	July 6-
Library of Congress	K-12	All	Variou
American Meteorological Society	K-12	Science—Weather	July 26-Au
Smithsonian American Art Museum	6-12	Social Studies, ELA	July 13
FDA Professional Development Program in Food Science	6-12	Science, FCS, Health	July 12
The Met, MoMA, and the Guggenheim	3-12	All	July 13-
Elementary Physical Education Workshop	K-8	Physical Education	July 19
ASM International	6-12	STEM—Materials Science	Variou

g for one of the many professional development opportunities available
nd on the internet, but many can be very expensive. The following is a
cators. Many even include room, board, and travel expenses!



s	Location	Application Deadline	Website
27-31	New Orleans, LA	Feb. 7	tinyurl.com/y7h4nkv9
us	Fort Davis, TX	Feb. 7	mcdonaldobservatory.org/teachers/profdev#hubble
-22	Gettysburg, PA	Feb. 18	www.gilderlehrman.org/programs-and-events/teacher-seminars
us	Various	March 1	www.neh.gov/divisions/education/summer-programs
10	Washington, D.C.	March 9	tinyurl.com/y8bj5nn8
us	Washington, D.C.	March 23	http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/teacherinstitute/
August 1	Kansas City, MO	March 27	tinyurl.com/jgqg2x8
-17	Washington, D.C.	March 30	tinyurl.com/v8u7ubp
-18	Washington, D.C.	April 24	teachfoodscience.org/apply.asp
-17	New York, NY	May 15	metmuseum.wufoo.com/forms/connecting-collections-application/
-24	San Luis Obispo, CA	Ongoing	epew-cp.weebly.com/
us	Various	Ongoing	tinyurl.com/gwo24fq

2019 — 2020 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 Chairs

Brendan Lawlor

Betsy Marshall

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Communications Chair

Sam Falk

Senior Building Representatives

ASM — Erica Dunn

BES — Adrienne Pisciotto

NES — Nicolle McMorris

VFES — Gwen Moschetto

OPS — Nancy Thomas

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Joe Sutka

LMS — Bill Mueller

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. 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

English teacher Tina Tamweber is leading a workshop at SUNY New Paltz on February 1 as part of the Hudson Valley Writing Project's Saturday Seminar. The workshop, titled, "LET'S GET PERSONAL: Letter Writing as Literary Response", has the description, "Students respond with emotion when asked to write reflectively on topics that matter to them. We will explore the power of letter writing as a literary response genre through practice and the examination of student work."

Beekman Elementary

Speech teacher Christina Gibson teaches yoga at Stone Wave Yoga in Poughkeepsie. Her Vinyasa flow class takes place on Wednesday evenings. For more information go to <https://www.stonewaveyoga.com/poughkeepsie>.

Union Vale Middle

For the third year in a row, under the direction of



Photo by Sam Falk

Arlington High School

On January 1, social studies teacher Margaret Fallon (left) was sworn in as a member of the Stanford Town Council. The ceremony took place at the Stanford town hall in front of a large audience.

social studies teacher Chris Malet and special education teacher Katie Gatta, the students and teachers of Team 3 collected personal care items for Dutchess Outreach to distribute to those in need. This year, the students filled and wrapped 35 boxes to be given away and in three years have donated over 100 boxes to the local citizens. The service project is done in coordination with the students learning about human rights and how they can help those less fortunate.

Special Education teacher Karen Sipperly once again organized the annual trivia competition that benefits the Red Hook Library. This is the competition's 18th year. Each year many Arlington teachers compete in the charity event. This year it was held on January 26.

Vail Farm Elementary

An article about physical education teacher Mari-sa Sutera Strange appeared in a recent issue of *Runner's World* magazine. The article, titled, "Masters Champion With a 20-Year Winning Streak Has the Common Sense Running Advice We All Need," can be read online at <https://www.runnersworld.com/runners-stories/a30289090/masters-champion-with-a-20-year-winning-streak/>.

Several Vail Farm teachers have started a Facebook group called Living Outside the Farm. It was created with the intention of building relationships and community amongst faculty members. Events are posted and people make plans to go to them together.

School Board Responds To ATA Letter

The following is the Arlington school board's response to the letter they received from ATA leadership on December 9 regarding concerns about the district's grading initiatives. The ATA's letter was published in the December 2019 *Educator*.



ARLINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

CAO • 144 Todd Hill Road • LaGrangeville, NY 12540
Voice : 845-486-4460, ext. 20212

December 20, 2019

Arlington Teachers' Association
46 Davis Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Dear ATA Leadership,

We are in receipt of your letter, and will follow up with the Superintendent regarding your concerns.

We ask that you continue to work with Dr. Lyons on the grading standards to develop protocols that will enhance teaching and learning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter W. Bodnar".

Peter Bodnar
Board President

Our mission is to empower all students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who willingly contribute to their community and lead passionate, purposeful lives.

Dates to Remember

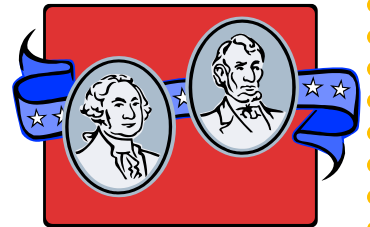


FEBRUARY

- 11th—Board of Education Meeting, Budget Workshop: 7 p.m., JDWR
- 14-17th—President's Day - No School
- 18th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- 29th—Math, Science, and Technology Fair: 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., AHS
- 25th—Board of Education Meeting, Budget Workshop: 7 p.m., CAO

MARCH

- 13th—Superintendent's Conference Day
- 10th—Board of Education Meeting, Budget Workshop: 7 p.m., LMS
- 17th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- 19th—School Budget Public Forum: CAO
- 20th—Professional Development Half Day
- 24th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., UVMS



Announcements

Retirees, Save the Date!

The next retiree luncheon will take place on Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 12 pm at Joe Willy's Seafood House on Route 9. More information will be coming soon.

Did you know that an application to change one's party enrollment for any primary election in 2020 must be received by the board of elections no later than February 14, 2020? You can check your registration status at <https://voterlookup.elections.ny.gov/>.

Stay informed! Like us on Facebook or check out www.arlingtonteachers.com for forms, photos, calendars, and more.