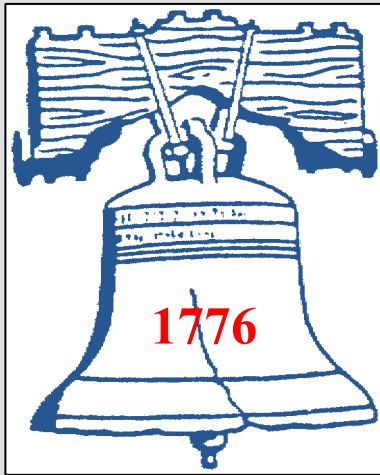




THE SPIRIT OF '76

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

60 Years Strong
1966-2026

3070 BRISTOL PIKE, BLDG. 2, SUITE 101, BENSALEM, PA 19020- 215-568-4175 – VOLUME XXXXVII-No.2
Fax 215-568-8270 – email (act@act1776.com) - website (www.act1776.com) **OCTOBER, 2026**

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST UNION MEMBERS



Gabriela Cabarcas, Lansdale Catholic High School
Samantha Covais, Lansdale Catholic High School
Monika Esaian, Archbishop Ryan High School
Michael Nevadomski, Archbishop Ryan High School

*The Executive Board of the Association of Catholic Teachers and its members
welcome you and wish you a happy and rewarding school year.*

Thank you for Joining Us!

ACT EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

October 20, 2026 was the deadline for the submission of Nominating Petitions for the eight (8) Executive Board positions up for election in 2026.

On Friday, October 23, 2026, in conformity with the ACT Constitution, Nominations and Elections Committee members from the Nominations and Elections Committee reviewed each petition received and verified signatures.

There was one Petition received for each of the Offices open for election this year. Since there were no contested positions, the Nominations and Elections Committee certified the petitions and ACT's Executive Secretary, Matthew McShane, casted the one ballot which made the election official.

ACT Executive Board Members for 2026-2028

PRESIDENT	JAMES R. VERNON
VICE PRESIDENT	KATHLEEN TOENNIESSEN-INNES
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY	MATTHEW MCSHANE
TREASURER	CHRISTINE MALDONADO
LEGISLATIVE REP	JOHN CORRIGAN
MEMBERS-AT-LARGE	ROBERT DILL
	JAMES FLANNERY
	ELLEN O'HARA

Congratulations to all our appointed Board Members!

Elections for the four (4) Area Vice Presidents will be held in the spring of 2027.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Thank you to the members of the Nominations and Elections Committee: *Evan Ortiz* (CE), *Beth Saggars* (BS), and *Juliane Teson* (FJ) for volunteering to be on the Committee and for their diligence in verifying the petitions and certifying the election.

VERY IMPORTANT!

Representation May Be Crucial

Article III, Section 2 of the Labor-Management Agreement is short but extremely important. Please pay particularly close attention to what it has to say.

No teacher may be asked to attend a meeting with the school or diocesan administration without a representative of the Association being present if the teacher reasonably feels the meeting could result in disciplinary action against him/her.

Disciplinary action cannot be taken against any teacher unless the teacher has been apprised in writing of his/her right to union representation.

Should you “reasonably feel” the meeting could turn into one that involves you in disciplinary action, immediately get to your Senior Delegate for advice or call the ACT Office if you choose. Don’t let a relatively minor situation turn into a major one because you decided you could “handle” it yourself.

SYSTEM SENIORITY LIST TO BE POSTED

Article V, Section 1a states “On or before **October 31** of each school year, the System shall supply to the Association and shall post in individual schools a complete listing of all full-time lay teachers in the System including those on approved leaves of absence arranged according to system seniority and school seniority.”

“Teachers shall have until **December 15** to call attention in writing to errors or to file grievances with the local school administration concerning their positions on the seniority roster.”

ADDRESS CHANGE FOR THE OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Office of Catholic Education as well as the Office of Financial Affairs has a new location and mailing address. Their new address is **1601 Cherry Street, Suite 1100, Philadelphia, PA 19102-1310.**

NOTE: Due to the potential of a possible Executive Board Election this month, the “*From the President’s Desk*” article was suspended for the month. It will resume with the November edition of the *Spirit of ’76*.

IT'S OPEN ENROLLMENT TIME

OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR THE DENTAL AND MEDICAL PLANS ENDS THIS WEEK

During the month of October, you received information from the Archdiocese that outlined the benefits available to you as an Archdiocesan employee. You were able to compare the three health plans available as well as select additional coverage such as dental, disability, cancer, and optional life insurance coverage.

It is important to know that teachers who opt out of the Medical Coverage are still eligible for the Dental Plan at no cost to themselves. However, you must enroll in the dental plan to obtain these benefits.

The open enrollment period for the medical and the dental plan ends on October 29, 2026 with changes going into effect on November 1, 2026.

FYI: Deductions for medical and disability insurance as well as any optional insurances you may have selected will begin with the November 13, 2026 paycheck.



OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS VOLUNTARY VISION PLAN

Enrollment information for the Voluntary Vision Plan through Davis Vision for the 2027 calendar year [will be emailed to all ACT Members this week.](#)

For teachers currently on the Voluntary Vision Plan: If you have not used the plan this year, try and do so before your benefits expire on December 31, 2026.

All ACT Members wishing to enroll or renew their coverage in the Voluntary Vision Plan for the 2027 calendar year, will need to **submit a new completed application form along with payment by Friday, November 20, 2026.**

REST IN PEACE



Ann Marie Davis, retired, Saint Hubert High School

Eternal rest grant unto her o Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Correction: In the *Rest in Peace* segment of the September 2026 Newsletter, John “Jack” Fitzsimmons was identified as being retired from Abp. Ryan High School. Jack retired from Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls. *The editor apologizes for the error!*

IMPORTANT NOTICE

If at any time, you receive an email from the ACT Office or from anyone within this office that has a **vague subject line** such as “Document” “Invite” or “Photos” **DO NOT OPEN IT**. These types of emails are usually spam and may contain viruses. **Do not open the email or click on any links.**

If you are unsure whether our office sent you an email, you can always give us a call or email us, asking if we sent anything out.

Happy Fall, Happy Halloween, Happy Harvest!



ATTENTION RETIREES

If you have moved over the course of the year, or if you plan on moving before the end of the year, please make sure to give Retirement Focus your new address so that you receive your 1099R Form in the new year. You can contact Retirement Focus at 1-855-874-0356 or at www.RetirementFocus.com

UPCOMING SCHOOL VISITS

- Father Judge – October 28
- Bishop Shanahan – November 3
- West Catholic – November 5
- Msgr. Bonner-Abp. Prendergast – November 10
- Archbishop Ryan – November 12
- Conwell-Egan – November 18

*On All Hallows Eve and All Saints Day.
Let Us Remember Our Schools' Patron Saints.*

+ Saint Hubert +

+ Saint Therese of Lisieux +

+ Saint John Neumann +

+ Saint Maria Goretti +

+ Saint Pope John Paul II +

*May they continue to bless our teachers, staff, and students
at these schools and at all our schools.*