

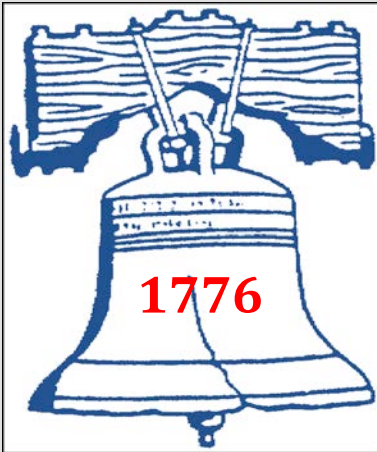
The Newspaper of Local 1776  
The Association of Catholic Teachers

THE

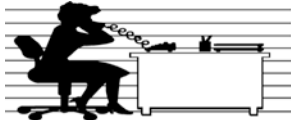
SPIRIT

OF '76

50+ Years Strong  
1966-2016



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Fax 215-568-8270 - email ([act@act1776.com](mailto:act@act1776.com)) - website ([www.act1776.com](http://www.act1776.com)) APRIL 2023



## *From the President's Desk*

### **No Contract Settlement Yet**

It is unfortunate that a settlement could not be reached on a new Labor-Management Agreement by March 31, 2023.

The Association and System continued to meet throughout April, and four sessions are scheduled in May (May 8, 15, 17, and 22). The goal, now, is to complete negotiations by June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Several of the System's proposals that are not in the teachers' best interest are still on the table. They include Salary, Medical, Grievance, the number of sections taught by part-time teachers, the accumulated sick day cap, as well as other significant changes in working conditions.

As talks continue, the ACT Team will work very hard to bring back a contract that you, the members, can accept. At present, that does not look promising.

Please continue to keep both Negotiating Teams in your prayers.

*Irene*

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The following Legislative Report was submitted by ACT Legislative Representative, John Corrigan, at the ACT April Executive Board Meeting held via zoom on April 20, 2023.

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## March 2023

**Constitutional Amendment:** On February 23, the PA House passed (161-40) a proposed stand-alone constitutional amendment to provide a 2-year window in the statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse victims. The House measure would have to be reconciled with the Senate combined bills passed earlier in order to be approved. The situation remains at an impasse.

**School Funding Court Decision.** The PA Commonwealth Court decision that found the school funding system to be unconstitutional was not appealed by the March 9 deadline.

**Governor Shapiro's Proposed Budget.** New Governor Josh Shapiro's first budget proposal includes an increase of \$567M (7.8%) in basic education funding, an increase of \$103M in special education funding, and additional funding for universal free breakfast, school safety and security grants, remediation efforts for environmental hazards, and tax incentives for new teachers.

## April 2023

**US Supreme Court Decision. Perez v. Sturgis Public Schools** (March 2023): The Supreme Court unanimously sided with a student in a special education case (sign language interpreter) that involves the interplay between two different federal disability laws: ADA (American Disabilities Act) and IDEA (individuals with Disabilities Act).

**Special Elections:** Two PA House seats are scheduled for special elections on May 16, 2023: PA House District 108 – vacancy of Lynda Schlegel Culver (R); PA House District 163 – vacancy of Michael Zabel (D).

**PA Primary Election Day** is Tuesday, May 16, 2023. PA has a closed primary system.

50 YEARS  
OF  
SERVICE



A  
GOLDEN  
ANNIVERSARY

THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS

congratulates

<i>John Cramutolo</i>	<i>Father Judge High School</i>
<i>Michele Murphy</i>	<i>Pope John Paul II High School</i>
<i>Edward Smith</i>	<i>Archbishop Wood High School</i>

all of whom are celebrating **50** years of service to the students of the  
Secondary School System of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

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**25 Years of Service - A Silver Celebration**

THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS

congratulates its members who are celebrating **25** years of service to the  
Secondary School System of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

<i>Joseph Aquilante</i>	<i>Bishop Shanahan High School</i>
<i>Mary DeMasi</i>	<i>West Catholic High School</i>
<i>Domenico DiMartino</i>	<i>Pope John Paul II High School</i>
<i>Michael Groves</i>	<i>Father Judge High School</i>
<i>Theresa A. Lazorko</i>	<i>Roman Catholic High School</i>
<i>William Moser</i>	<i>Father Judge High School</i>
<i>Karen Scott Benjamin</i>	<i>Saint Hubert High School</i>
<i>Monica Stolic</i>	<i>Lansdale Catholic High School</i>
<i>Christopher Vitale</i>	<i>Archbishop Ryan High School</i>

## First Semester Evaluation Data Results

As I have said in previous newsletter articles, you always rise to all of the challenges you face in the classroom. I have applauded and continue to acclaim all that you have done and are doing for your students.

Now, the data from the First Semester Evaluations is further affirmation of all that you have accomplished during this school year.

97.18% of tenured teachers received a Distinguished or Proficient rating and, in the case of Guidance counselors, a Satisfactory rating from their administrative evaluator. 98.86% of tenured teachers received these ratings from their department heads.

85.64% of non-tenured teachers received a Distinguished or Proficient rating and, in the case of Guidance counselors, a Satisfactory rating from their administrative evaluator. 87.85% of non-tenured teachers received these ratings from their department heads.

What impressive statistics! Congratulations to each and every one of you!

We are now in the fourth quarter. There is just less than two months left in the 2022-2023 school year. The end is getting closer with each passing day. As exhausted as you may feel, you can do this! You can make it to June 16<sup>th</sup>. Know that the Association of Catholic Teachers is here to help you remain strong as you continue to do all that you can for your students.

Congratulations once again on your accomplishments during the first semester evaluation period. I am sure that the data will be just as impressive for the second semester.

Have a great rest of the school year.



*Congratulations to all our hard-working teachers.*

# Senior Delegate Elections

## (May 15<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>)

*Teachers need an Advocate. Do you have what it takes to be a Senior Delegate?* If Social Justice in action, teacher dignity and respect are issues that you find important, and, if you would like to work with these issues, then consider running for Senior Delegate at your school.

### Responsibilities Include:

1. Act as a liaison between your members and administration.
2. Provide representation for your members in situations where any member reasonably feels that disciplinary action may occur.
3. File grievances to settle issues of opposing interpretations of the contract.
4. Encourage members to become familiar with and support the contract.
5. Conduct meetings at the local level.
6. Attend all meetings to represent your school.
7. Encourage your members to attend general membership meetings.
8. Keep the Executive Board informed of local issues.
9. Be responsible for conducting all union elections in the school.
10. Be responsible for the ACT Bulletin Board.
11. Distribute information from the ACT Office to the teachers.
12. Perform duties assigned to you by the Executive Board.
13. Be responsible for signing up new members and maintaining the good standing of present members.

*Senior Delegates received a stipend of \$250 for the 2022-2023 school year.*

*This is a good time to once again, **thank** all of the Senior Delegates who have served the Union and their own school members so well this year. The ACT Office and the Executive Board need and appreciate your work.*



## **SENIORITY LISTS POSTED (for school only)**

Article V, Section 1b states “**On or before April 1** of each school year, the Secondary School System shall supply to the Association and shall post in each school a complete listing of all full-time teachers in that school including those on approved leaves of absence arranged according to school seniority.” “Teachers shall have until **May 1** to call attention in writing to errors or file grievances with the local school administration concerning their positions on the seniority roster.”

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### **AREA VICE PRESIDENT ELECTION RESULTS**

There was only one candidate for each of the Central, Northeast, Northwest and Southwest areas, and therefore, no need for an election. The Area Vice Presidents are listed below:

Central:	Bridget Mierzejewski (West Catholic)
Northeast:	Christine Hanley Maldonado (Conwell-Egan)
Northwest:	Eric Wahl (Pope John Paul II)
Southwest:	James Vernon (Msgr. Bonner – Abp. Prendergast)

*The ACT Executive Board would like to thank **Thomas McKeever** (former Central AVP), **Anthony Perrucci** (former Northeast AVP), and **David McQuiston** (former Southwest AVP) for their years of service on the Board and to the ACT membership.*

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### **EXECUTIVE BOARD OPENINGS**

As a result of the most recent Area Vice President Election, the ACT Executive Board was left with two open positions for Member-at-Large.

**If you are interested in becoming a Member-at-Large, please contact the ACT Office no later than Friday, May 5, 2023 at 215-568-4175 or email Irene at [irene@act1776.com](mailto:irene@act1776.com) with the subject line “Members-at-Large Opening.”**

## BISHOP SHANAHAN TEACHER AND HIS COLLIE WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD AT THE ANNUAL COLLIE CLUB OF AMERICA CONVENTION

Bishop Shanahan Math teacher, John DeSantis, and his Collie, Ingrid, are once again in the news. The *Spirit of '76* first brought you their story in the February 2022 edition, after John and Ingrid's story appeared in the *Chester County Daily Local* and was featured on ABC's show, *Localish*.

At that time we learned that John adopted Ingrid in 2019 after her previous owners were unable to keep her due to Ingrid's health problems and the expensive medical procedures needed to treat them. John nursed Ingrid back to good health, after getting her the care she needed.

He later enrolled Ingrid in training classes, where she completed five levels of training and became a certified therapy dog. John was and is often seen visiting nursing homes, schools, and senior centers with Ingrid. Together they have made more than four hundred visits to bring comfort and joy to those suffering from loneliness, stress, and anxiety.

Recently, John attended the Collie Club of America (CCA) Convention held in Indiana, where collies were being recognized for their achievements in their fields of training and service.

**The highlight of the gathering was to honor dogs and their handlers who made outstanding contributions of service in the following categories:** Therapy, Search and Rescue, Protector, Library/Reading and Trauma Response with the "Shining Star Award."

**John and Ingrid were presented with the prestigious "Ambassador Award," which is presented to one team from around the world that excels in service and best represents the ideals of the collie breed.**

As the 2023 CCA Ambassador team, John and Ingrid will continue their mission to advocate for the benefits of pet therapy and bring comfort and companionship to the people with whom they visit.



**CONGRATULATIONS JOHN AND INGRID!**

Chester County  
Commissioner's Office  
Honors  
John DeSantis and Ingrid  
on  
National Therapy Animal Day





## **ACT WEBSITE**

All teachers are asked to logon to the ACT Website ([www.act1776.com](http://www.act1776.com)) and verify your personal information. It is critical that we have your current information and that it is accurate. It is important that we have a **PERSONAL** email address for you, since Executive Board Minutes, Newsletters, and other pertinent information will be sent via email. We cannot and will not send email to a school email address.

Every teacher was provided with a username and password for the ACT Website. (New teachers will receive their logon information in an email.) If you do not have this information, please contact Ginny at the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or email her at [ginny@act1776.com](mailto:ginny@act1776.com) and she can provide this information to you. To update your personal information, logon to the ACT Website and, in the upper right-hand corner of the homepage, click on member login. Type in your username and password and then verify the information on file. Any changes made will be sent to the ACT Office automatically.

## **SUMMER EMPLOYMENT AVAILABLE**

Sesame Rockwood Camps in Blue Bell, PA is hiring Camp Counselors, Lifeguards, Sports Staff, Arts Staff, and Staff to work the Ropes Course. If you are looking for summer employment, and if you are interested in any of the above positions, please contact Susan Pulkowski at 610-275-2267.

Sesame Rockwood Camps is located at 1702 Yost Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422 and they are accredited by the American Camp Association. Check out SRC's website at [www.srdcamps.com](http://www.srdcamps.com)

## **UNITED CONCORDIA DENTAL PLAN**

Please be aware that if you are making changes to your dental coverage such as adding or deleting dependents, you must complete a **United Concordia Enrollment/Change Form** and return it to the ACT Office. The form can be found on the ACT Website at [www.act1776.com](http://www.act1776.com). The form can be returned via email to [ginny@act1776.com](mailto:ginny@act1776.com) or faxed to Ginny's attention at 215-568-8270. Forms must be completed and returned within 30 days of the event. (marriage, birth, etc.)

As April comes to a close and we look  
forward to May flowers,



let us always remember to leave the earth  
a better place than we found it.