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The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

1700 SANSOM STREET - SUITE 903 - PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 - 215-568-4175 - VOLUME XXXIX-NO.4
Fax 215-568-8270 - email (act@act1776.com) - website (www.act1776.com) **JANUARY 2019**



From the President's Desk

SOME HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

For the past four years, my January Newsletter article has been about the upcoming contract negotiations after a one-year Agreement.

I am happy to say that there are no upcoming contract talks this year because, in September, you, the ACT Members, ratified a two-year contract.

The Contract was signed on January 22 and will **soon** be electronically delivered to all teachers.

This January, I am taking the opportunity of using *From the President* to bring to your attention some rather important issues dealing with your life both in the classroom and at home.

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Use of the Internet, social media and email at school bring with them their own set of caveats. Please keep in mind that you are using your employer's computer and that workplace transactions can be monitored. If you are using email to give or check assignments, always make sure that the message is class and curriculum related. Do not use a "chat room" approach and never place students on your personal email or cell phone list. Never, never follow or be followed by students on Twitter or Facebook.

Outside of school, there is a separate area know as off-duty conduct, sometimes, misconduct. This is not about restricting your personal freedom. However, please remember who you are, what your occupation (vocation) is and by whom you are employed. Be extremely careful about the words that you use, the comments that you make and any photographs that you post.

When in doubt about any of the above, please think before you act. It might be helpful to ask a fellow teacher to look at what you intend to write, post, etc. Just a heads-up: Please do not call out sick while posting Disneyworld photos on your Facebook page.

You may be saying, "She has got to be kidding!" "Who doesn't know this?" Well, I am sorry to say, "More people than you might imagine." It may be a good time for all of you to review your computer files both in school and at home. Please don't hesitate to use the "delete" key.

One last thing regarding the use of computers, the Internet and/or email, Facebook or Twitter: If you should be asked to attend a meeting with school or Archdiocesan administrators, please ask what the meeting is about. Never go into a meeting if you do not know what will be discussed. Please make sure that your Senior Delegate or other Association representation is present. Your continued employment might very well depend on it.

Happy Catholic Schools Week, everyone.

Rita

**TAX INFORMATION
UNION DUES FOR 2018**

ARCHDIOCESAN HIGH SCHOOLS - \$558.18

HOLY CROSS ACADEMY - \$320.40

THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS HAS A NEW ADDRESS

Effective February 1, 2019, the new address for the Association of Catholic Teachers will be

Association of Catholic Teachers

Neshaminy Plaza

3070 Bristol Pike

Bldg. Two, Suite 101

Bensalem, PA 19020

During the next few weeks, we will be transitioning from our current location in Philadelphia to our new location in Bensalem. You may have some difficulty reaching us by phone until we are up and running in our new location. If this should occur, the best way to reach us during that time will be through email which we will be able to access from our personal phones.

IT'S TIME TO START THINKING SABBATICAL!

It's time to start thinking about whether or not you want to apply. Applications for sabbatical will be posted in each school in February.

Applications for sabbatical leave must be submitted
no later than March 1st.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship

The National Association of Catholic School Teachers established the John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship to help defray the cost of a college education for outstanding children of NACST members. During their senior year of high school, \$4,000 awards are made to two students, \$1,000 in each of their four years of college study.

All sons, daughters and stepchildren of all active NACST members are eligible to participate in this scholarship provided they are in good standing in their senior year of high school. [Application forms are available from the Senior Delegate of each high school.](#) There is also an application posted on the ACT Website at www.act1776.com. **Deadline for submission of all applications is March 8, 2019.**

THE CHARLOTTE DRUMMOND FOUNDATION Memorial Scholarship

A Memorial Scholarship has been created in the memory of Charlotte Drummond in honor of her forty-five years of service to students in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Charlotte taught for forty years at the former Cardinal Dougherty High School in the city of Philadelphia and she taught for another five years at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield, Delaware County. Charlotte had a lasting impact on hundreds of students and alumni from both schools. Charlotte passed away on March 23, 2016 after fighting a courageous battle against Parkinson's Disease.

The Charlotte Drummond Memorial Scholarship is a legacy scholarship that keeps the spirit of Charlotte Drummond and her dedication to Catholic education alive by offering one \$2,000 scholarship annually, beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year.

Eligible candidates must be rising juniors or seniors attending a Philadelphia Archdiocesan high school, and must have a recommendation from a teacher or guidance counselor that speaks not only to their ideal candidacy for the award through involvement in school, but also speaks to their financial need.

An application for The Charlotte Drummond Foundation Memorial Scholarship is posted on the homepage of the ACT Website at www.act1776.com. **The deadline for submission is March 18, 2019 by 11:00 P.M.**

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



The following Legislative Report was submitted by *ACT Legislative Representative, David Sommers, at the ACT Executive Board Meeting held on [December 13, 2018](#).*

1. **Pennsylvania:**
 - a. The newly elected members of both the PA House and senate took their oaths of office on January 1, 2019 at the Capital in Harrisburg for the two-year legislative session. Pennsylvania financial issues will be an upcoming concern, including projected budget deficits.
 - b. House Education Committee, Chair is Rep. Curt Sonney, 4th Legislative District, Erie County. Individual member assignments have not been made yet.
 - c. Senate Education Committee: Chair is Senator Ryan Aument, R-Landisville. Individual member assignments have not been made yet.
 - d. Property Tax Reform (Formerly SB76 or 2017/2018): Property tax versus income or sales tax to fund public education in the Commonwealth or Pennsylvania. Various proposals in the legislative session are expected to be introduced early in the new session.
2. **New Jersey:** Non-public/private schools have received an increase in school security funding. The level will double from \$75 to \$150 per student. Funding for public school students stands at currently \$205 per student.

The bill was passed unanimously by both houses of the Legislature and signed by governor Murphy on January 8, 2019.
3. **Federal:** Department of Education has issued revised guideline changes (as of December 19, 2018) in the “Rethink School Discipline” policy dating from the Obama administration. The issue, equitable treatment of all students for disciplinary reasons, is at the heart of the guidelines and their revisions. The change also calls for more mental health treatment in schools to address issues of violence.

INSURANCE INFORMATION

Dental Plan: As of January 1, 2019, you and each of your family members have \$1,000 in dental benefits to use for covered services in calendar year 2019. A list of your dental benefits is listed on the ACT Website at www.act1776.com.

Medical Plan: A reminder that you will need to meet your annual \$100 individual deductible and/or \$200 family deductible for calendar year 2019. You may begin receiving bills for services requiring that a deductible be met before payment can be made. **These services include the following:** Outpatient laboratory and pathology, home health care and/or hospice, skilled nursing, chemotherapy, radiation, dialysis, outpatient Private Duty Nursing, and physician/surgeon charges that require a deductible.

Voluntary Vision Plan: If you signed up for the vision plan, your benefits went into effect **on January 1, 2019**. If you do not have a Vision Card, please contact Ginny at 215-568-4175 or email her at ginny@act1776.com.

FSA REMINDER

If you were a participant in the 2018 FSA Program, please remember that all monies in your account should have been exhausted by December 31, 2018. Any funds that remained in your account after December 31, 2018 will be lost. However, this does not mean that all your eligible expenses had to have been submitted by December 31, 2018. You have 90 days after the close of the calendar year in which to submit eligible expenses for 2018.

All eligible expenses for 2018 must be submitted by March 30, 2019.

Additional Credits?

If you have received an advanced degree or additional credits over the summer, which qualifies you for payment under a different column of the salary scale, notify your school accountant immediately.

You must also send proof (an original transcript) of the degree/credit to Mr. James Molnar at the Office of Catholic Education so that the change in degree/credits can be verified.

For your records, it is highly recommended that all documents be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested.

The five lanes of salary scale are

- Bachelor's Degree
- Bachelor's +18 or Certification
- Master's or 30 Graduate Credits
- Double Master's
- Doctorate

The teacher is responsible to provide timely notification to the System, with an official transcript. Timely notification shall normally mean within one (1) year of acquiring the additional credits. Salary adjustments shall not be made retroactively for more than one (1) year.



While visiting family in Florida, ACT President, Rita Schwartz, catches up with former St. Hubert's teacher, and ACT Treasurer, Bob Zingle, and his wife, Marion (center).

Bob retired in September of 2015 and now lives in Fernandina Beach, FL

RETIREES' ROUNDTABLE

ACT Congratulates Joseph Brandley on his retirement from the Secondary School System. ***Joe retired after 47 years of service to the students in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, teaching at Bishop McDevitt High School.***

ACT Congratulates William Hoy on his retirement from the Secondary School System. ***Bill retired after 56 years of service to the students in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, teaching at West Catholic High School.***

ACT thanks you for your service and support over the years, and wishes you a happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement!

REST IN PEACE



Mary Frances McElhare (St. Maria Goretti High School)

Donna McGinley (Conwell-Egan High School)

John Peters (Cardinal O'Hara High School)

Hold the Date! The Third Annual Retirees' Luncheon will be held at Randi's Restaurant in Northeast Philadelphia on ***Wednesday, May 15, 2019.*** Information will be emailed to retirees on our email list in March. ***In the meantime, please spread the word!***

ACT DAY AT THE PHILLIES



May 5, 2019

Game Time: 2:05

Philadelphia Phillies

versus the

Washington Nationals

All ACT Members (including retirees) and their families and friends are invited on Sunday, May 5, 2019. Ticket cost is \$16 plus \$1.50 per order for shipping and handling. **A ticket order form is available on the ACT Website at www.act1776.com.** If you have any questions concerning this event, please contact Ginny at the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or at ginny@act1776.com.

Deadline for ordering tickets: Friday, March 29, 2019.