

THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT

OF '76

50 Years Strong
1966-2016

1700 SANSOM STREET - SUITE 903 - PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 - 215-568-4175 - VOLUME XXXVII-NO.1
Fax 215-568-8270 - email (act@act1776.com) - website (www.act1776.com) September 2016

From the President's Desk

THE APPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: PLEASE APPROACH WITH CAUTION AND COMMON SENSE

Each year, teachers and students become more and more involved with technology. Each year, this makes me more and more concerned that our teachers remember to use technology wisely, both professionally and personally.

You recently signed a document attesting to the fact the you have read the **Appropriate Use Policy for Technology**, which is an Addendum to the **Archdiocesan Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries** and that you will uphold it. The Policy states that there is to be a "safe environment for learning with technology." In keeping with this "safe environment," there is a "responsibility to use the equipment correctly," and "to follow the policies as outlined in the Guidelines." I hope that you have read the Policy and will follow it, because it is most important that you do.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT . . .

Please be advised that any teacher who violates this Policy could be subject to disciplinary action. Each year, I represent teachers at meetings dealing with breaches of the Acceptable Use Policy. Some of these meetings have not ended well.

Let's look first at the problems that could occur within the school building. The first thing to remember is that anything you write, e-mail, download or Google on the school computers is not your property and is not private. Anything and everything you do on a school computer is accessible to the school administration.

Use of technology outside of school is another, and, potentially, equally dangerous, venue. Even using your personal computer, cell phone, iPhone or iPad, you need to be extremely careful. What you blog, what and whom you text or tweet, what you include on a Facebook page can result in disciplinary and, in some cases, job-threatening action.

One final thought: if there is, in your mind, a question as to whether or not something might prove problematic, please err on the side of caution and don't do it. This will help to ensure that you continue to teach in the 21st Century.

Rita



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.

Education Grant Application Due

Teachers who wish to apply for an Education/Study Grant under the Labor-Management Agreement (XIII, Sec.7) must do so by October 15th. The grant offers 50 percent tuition reimbursement up to a maximum of \$2000 per year for undergraduate coursework, \$2200 for Master's Degree coursework, and \$2500 for Doctoral Coursework. **The grant can also be used as reimbursement for successfully passing the Praxis Series exams in a teacher's area of certification.** Teachers who have received a study grant for two (2) consecutive years are not eligible to receive for the following year.

Grants are awarded on the basis of system seniority and are available to any teacher with at least one year of teaching in the System.

You should apply for the grant if you are taking courses in the fall of 2016, or anticipate taking courses in the spring or summer of 2017.

Forms to apply for an Education/Study Grant are posted at the local school.

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

Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to
Holy Cross Academy (Delran, NJ)

UNION DUES FOR 2016 - 2017

\$534.10

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS

JOHN J. REILLY

\$500.00 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER for 2016

The 9th Grade Scholar at Holy Cross Academy is
Jessica Silverio
not Matthew Giroux as previously listed.

Congratulations, Jessica!

ACT WEBSITE

All teachers are asked to logon to the ACT Website (www.act1776.com) and verify your personal information. It is critical that we have your current information and that it is accurate, since this is a contract year. **It is important that we have a PERSONAL email address for you**, since contract information and updates, Executive Board Minutes, 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 log-on information in their welcome packet.) 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 and she can provide this information to you.

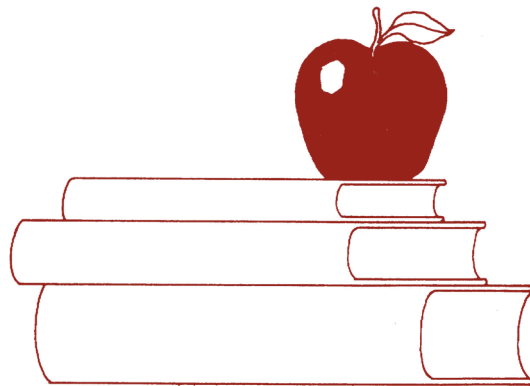
To update your personal information, logon to the ACT Website and, in the upper right hand corner of the homepage, click on member login. Type in your username and password and then verify the information on file. Any changes made will be sent to the ACT Office automatically.



MOVIE TICKETS

The ACT Office keeps a limited supply of movie tickets on hand for teachers to purchase at a discounted rate. We have REGAL/UNITED ARTISTS and AMC Tickets Available. **AMC Tickets are \$9.00 per ticket. Regal Tickets are currently \$8.50 per ticket.** If you are interested in purchasing tickets, please send a check payable to the Association of Catholic Teachers with your request. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope with your request.

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC TEACHERS, 1700 SANSOM STREET – SUITE 903,
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103, 215-568-4175
act@act1776.com or nacst.nacst@verizon.net.



ACT UNION DUES FOR 2016 - 2017

\$553.00

\$26.33 Per pay

beginning with the pay of September 16, 2016
and ending with the pay of June 24, 2017.

2016 Association of Catholic Teachers John J. Reilly Scholarship Awards

THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

On behalf of the students of the Roman Catholic High School, I thank you for your gift of \$500.00 for the Tuition and Scholarship Program. Through your support, the Roman Catholic High School continues its mission of supporting the school community in its pursuit of educational excellence. Please retain this acknowledgement for tax purposes. This letter also recognizes that you received no goods or services from your donation.

Founded in 1890, through the benevolence of Thomas E. Cahill, Roman Catholic High School is located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia. Drawing students from throughout the Delaware Valley, Roman Catholic boasts a challenging academic curriculum, a competitive sports program and engaging activities. Roman students set high standards for achievement both in the classroom and on the athletic field. The Class of 2016 garnered a total of close to \$25 million in scholarships and federal grants with over \$25 million earned in academic scholarships.

Sincerely,
Rev. Joseph W. Bongard '77
President/Rector

MORE NOTES OF THANKS

Rita and Irene,

Thank you for the \$500 check to be applied toward Liam Logue's tenth grade tuition. He is a First Honors student with a roster of all honors classes. You have made a good choice.

I appreciate the Association's financial commitment to deserving students.

Fr. J. Dalton, Principal
Father Judge High School

Dear Rita,

Thank you for sponsoring the ACT Scholarship Award. I am grateful for your continued support of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

*Sincerely,
Rita McGovern, Principal
Lansdale Catholic High School*

Dear Ms. Schwartz,

We would like to thank you and the Association of Catholic Teachers for awarding a \$500 scholarship to Matthew. We truly appreciate that you have recognized his academic excellence at Roman Catholic. Thanks, again.

Sincerely,
Mary Ellen, Tony and Matthew Bolden

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS WITH CHILDREN GOING AWAY TO COLLEGE WHO HAVE KEYSTONE HMO FOR THEIR MEDICAL INSURANCE

KEYSTONE HMO: If you have children attending college outside of the Keystone Network (Philadelphia and five-county area), **your children will be covered for Emergency and Urgent Care visits only**. **Your child would have to come home for routine and preventive care**.

If your child should have a medical emergency, he or she has two options available:

- In a true emergency, go to the nearest ER.
- In an urgent care situation, find a provider in the area. Call **1-800-810-BLUE** (1-800-810-2583) to find an in-network provider in the area. You may also visit an urgent care center for medical issues if an in-network provider is unavailable and if you do not require the medical services of an emergency room.
- Prior to visiting a physician office, it will be necessary for you to obtain a pre-approval.

GUEST MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN ATTENDING COLLEGE OUTSIDE OF THE KEYSTONE HMO NETWORK

If your child is attending college in a state that would require him or her to travel a great distance to get home for routine and/or preventive care, he or she may be eligible to participate in a Guest Membership Program. Guest membership is a temporary courtesy enrollment in another HMO (Host) plan that enables members who are living away from home (90 or more consecutive days while attending school) to receive a comprehensive range of medical benefits, including routine and preventive services. A Guest Member remains an IBC member, but is also enrolled to receive benefits of the host plan while in their service area.

HOW TO OBTAIN MEDICAL CARE WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF THE AREA

(PERSONAL CHOICE) If you are traveling across the country and require medical care, simply present your ID card to any participating Blue Cross® and/or Blue Shield® PPO provider across the country and your costs are the same as if you were being treated by an in-network local doctor or hospital.

If you run into a medical emergency when you are far away from home, you have two different options:

- In a true emergency, go to the nearest ER.
- In an urgent care situation, find a BlueCard provider in the area. Call **1-800-810-BLUE** (1-800-810-2583) to find an in-network provider in the area. You may also visit an urgent care center for medical issues if an in-network provider is unavailable and if you do not require the medical services of an emergency room. You may also visit the BlueCard Doctor and Hospital Finder at www.bcbc.com.



Out of the area and need care?

Call **1-800-810-2583** to find an in-network provider in the area.

Then, if services require preauthorization,
Call **1-800-275-2583**.

(KEYSTONE) If you run into a medical emergency when you are far away from home, you have two different options:

- In a true emergency, go to the nearest ER.
- In an urgent care situation, find a provider in the area. Call **1-800-810-BLUE** (1-800-810-2583) to find an in-network provider in the area. You may also visit an urgent care center for medical issues if an in-network provider is unavailable and if you do not require the medical services of an emergency room.
- Prior to visiting a physician office, it will be necessary for you to obtain a preapproval.

Managing your health with ibxpress.com

On ibxpress.com you can conveniently and securely view your benefits and claims information and use the tools that help you take control of your health. As an independent Blue Cross member, you and your dependents 14 years of age and older can create your own accounts on ibxpress.com.

To register, simply go to ibxpress.com, click *Register*, and then follow the directions. You will need information from your ID card to register, so be sure to have it handy.

Once you're registered, log on to ibxpress.com to:

- view your benefits information;
- review claims information;
- review annual out-of-pocket expenses;
- request a replacement ID card and print a temporary ID card;
- change your PCP (Keystone);
- view and print referrals;
- download forms.

The ibxpress.com website also provides you with tools and resources to help you make informed health care decisions.

- Provider Finder and Hospital Finder
- Symptom Checker
- Health Encyclopedia
- Treatment Cost Estimator
- Personal Health Profile
- My Health Assistant
- Health Trackers
- Personal Health Record

[SAVE MONEY WITH WELLNESS DISCOUNTS FROM BLUE365](http://www.blue365deals.com)

You can enjoy exclusive value-added discounts and offers on programs and services from leading national companies. Blue365 gives you an easy-to-use, valuable resource to save on healthy programs and services. Visit www.blue365deals.com to see the latest discounts.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR UNITED CONCORDIA DENTAL PLAN

This is a reminder that teachers and their family members who are covered under the dental plan have access to the Concordia Advantage dental network, which offers discounts for all services — covered or not.

This means you can:

- 1 - Receive non-covered services at a discount
- 2 - Save on services that exceed your \$1,000 annual maximum

If your dentist has signed on to the above agreement and you are in need of dental work that is not covered under our dental plan, it is recommended that you get the treatment plan in writing on letterhead. The treatment plan should include procedure codes for each service and the amount being charged. Once you have the treatment plan in writing, you can contact UCCI at 1-800-332-0366 and find out what their allowance is for each procedure code. This is the maximum that your dentist should charge you for that service if he has signed onto the extended agreement.

You can check to see if your dentist is participating in this agreement by logging on to the United Concordia website at www.ucci.com and clicking on the link “**find a dentist**”. If your dentist has a black square next to his name, then he has agreed to charge his/her patients the United Concordia allowance.

If you have experienced any problems concerning this agreement, please send an email to the ACT Office outlining your problem. The email should contain your dentist’s name and address, the date of service, the procedure codes billed, and the amount you were charged. We will forward this information to our dental representative at United Concordia.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR DENTAL PLAN AND PERIODONTAL COVERAGE

Under your dental coverage with United Concordia, periodontics is covered at 50%. However, teachers with any one of the following chronic diseases will have periodontics covered at 100%. These chronic conditions are as follows: Diabetes, Heart Disease, Cerebrovascular Disease (stroke), Rheumatoid Arthritis, Lupus, Organ Transplants, Head and Neck Radiation Therapy.

In order for you to receive 100% coverage on Periodontics, you will need to go to the United Concordia website at www.UnitedConcordia.com. Sign in or create a *My Dental Benefits* account. This is where you will sign up for the Smile for Health Wellness Program. Once your medical condition is verified, United Concordia will turn on the added periodontal coverage. You may also contact United Concordia at 1-800-236-9168 for additional information.

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE

OFFICE HOURS: ACT returned to its regular schedule on Tuesday, September 6, 2016. The ACT Office hours are now Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

ADDRESS CHANGES -- If you are in the process of moving, or have already moved to a new address, don't forget to call or email the ACT Office with your new address and phone number. You can also visit the ACT Webpage and log-on to your personal page to update your information.

IF YOUR PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED, OR WILL CHANGE OVER THE SUMMER, PLEASE NOTIFY THE ACT OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

RETIREMENT INFORMATION -- The ACT Office has put together some medical information (rates, comparison sheets and contract provisions) for teachers who are considering retirement in the near future. If you are considering an early retirement or if you will be reaching the age for normal retirement, call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 for your retirement packet. You may also email your request to ginny@act1776.com.

FREEDOM CREDIT UNION – The Freedom Credit Union offers teachers and their families a wide range of financial opportunities. For more information visit the credit union's website at www.freedomcu.org. The phone number for the Freedom Credit Union is 215-612-5900.

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act@act1776.com or nacst.nacst@verizon.net

ACT School Visit Schedule 2016-2017 School Year

NAME OF SCHOOL	ACT VISITOR	DATE	DAY
Bonner-Prendergast	Irene	November 16	Wednesday
Carroll	Rita	November 15	Tuesday
Conwell-Egan	Rita	December 13	Tuesday
Hallahan	Irene	January 11	Wednesday
Holy Cross	Rita	December 6	Tuesday
St. Hubert	Rita	January 31	Tuesday
Fr. Judge	Rita	February 14	Tuesday
Lansdale	Irene	December 14	Wednesday
Little Flower	Irene	January 18	Wednesday
McDevitt	Rita	January 17	Tuesday
Neumann-Goretti	Rita & Irene	October 18 March 21	Tuesday Tuesday
O'Hara	Rita & Irene	October 25	Tuesday
Pope John Paul II	Rita & Irene	November 29	Tuesday
Roman	Rita	January 24	Tuesday
Ryan	Rita & Irene	March 14	Tuesday
Shanahan	Rita	November 22	Tuesday
West Catholic	Rita	February 21	Tuesday
Wood	Irene	November 9	Wednesday

WELCOME BACK!

*WE LOOK
FORWARD
TO SEEING YOU
AT OUR
SCHOOL VISITS.*