



The Bridgeline

Bridgeport Education
Association

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President's Message

It may seem early to be thinking about next fall, but the Bridgeport BOE has scheduled many changes. Four new schools will be opened, and the whole system will be redistricted. These changes will affect hundreds of teachers. There will be positions eliminated, but the BOE says that no one will lose their job. Additionally, 63 elementary and 14 middle school positions will be shifted. The Superintendent's intent is to notify all teachers who will be moving by March. Before any plans can move forward, the BOE must approve the redistricting plan.

I have met with Assistant Superintendent T. Carroll and A. Wallack, who are coordinating the moves. We are working on putting together a concise flyer that informs all stakeholders. More information will follow.

Also coming next year is the elimination of out of school suspensions. BEA is working with the Superintendent to best implement this new law. While over the past few years, several new programs have been developed to address students with behavioral issues, student behavior continues to be a major concern. It is of the highest importance that all staff and students are safe.

Mary-Beth Lang

Officers

Mary-Beth Lang

President

Gary Peluchette

Vice-President

Maria Nocerino

Secondary Vice-President

Victoria White

Elementary Vice-President

Herminio Planas

Treasurer

Tiffany Ladson-Lang

Recording Secretary

Tax Information

Tax information is found on your December 12, 2007 pay stub. If you were a full union member both this year and last year, dues are \$852.85. If you are a new teacher, an agency fee member, or have changed status within the union, your dues are noted on the pay stub from December 21, 2007.

Also on that pay stub, is information about your contributions to the insurance plan, charitable deductions, and your TSA account. Lastly, mileage is paid out at 50.5 cents per mile.

BEA Bulletin Boards

Building Delegates,

Please make sure that your school has a BEA bulletin board and that you are regularly posting the information from the Delegates' Meetings, CEA, NEA, and BEA. Recently, a Labor Board official went to a school to confirm that such a bulletin board did exist and to examine the information found there. It is important that every school has this bulletin board.

Certification

Please check your certification and the renewal date. It is your responsibility to make sure that it is current. The Human Resource office has the appropriate forms and will assist in the process.

At least 6 weeks are needed for the office to process your forms. HR will send you a letter approximately 2 months prior to the expiration date of your certificate with renewal procedures. Teachers who lose their certification risk salary, seniority, retirement, and tenure status.

Protect Yourself

If you are asked to attend a meeting which you determine is disciplinary in nature, you are entitled to a Union representative. Stop the meeting and ask for representation. That representative is chosen by you. You do not have to accept the representative that the administrator has asked to the meeting. If you want a representative who does not work in your school, please call the office.

If you are assaulted by a student, notify the principal and the police. Even young students should be reported to the police because it is sometimes the only way the student will get the help s/he needs.

Disability Insurance

As part of your full membership in BEA, you are enrolled in a disability insurance policy from UnumProvident. If you want more information about this program or if you think you qualify for disability, please contact the BEA office and ask for an application. If you are not yet a full member of the BEA, membership forms are available at the office. The insurance booklet is available at the office and on the BEA website.

Ready For Retirement?

It is not too early to let your administrator know if you plan to retire this year. Be sure that your paperwork from the State is completed and returned to the State Teachers' Retirement Board prior to the end of the year to ensure a smooth transition. Submit your retirement letter to Dr. John Ramos, Superintendent. Please keep in mind that several items must be taken care of, on your behalf, by various offices downtown before your retirement. They include the following: insurance, sick time buy out, longevity payments, and the filling your vacancy.

Save June 3 for the BEA Retirement Social.





Health Insurance Issues

Reminder

You will pay a higher cost for covered medications you take on a long term basis (3 months or more) if you continue to purchase them at a participating retail pharmacy. If you use **Medco by Mail**, you will pay your mail order co-payment for a ninety day supply only once.

Remember, the first three times you purchase each long-term drug at a participating retail pharmacy, you will pay your participating retail pharmacy co-payment. After that, you will pay a **higher** cost for each long-term drug unless you choose to order through **Medco by Mail**.

Reminder

Please notify the Benefits Office (576-7326) if you have a change in your number of dependents. If you add or lose a spouse, or if you have added a child due to birth or adoption, please notify the Benefits Office as soon as possible to insure dependents' coverage.

Teacher Attendance

Administration has shown increasing concern about teacher attendance. They are closely monitoring all teachers. The contract allows for administrators to ask for a doctor's note after any absence for five school days, or three days or more in a holiday or vacation week. **If anyone receives a letter regarding attendance, please contact the BEA office immediately.** Progressive discipline requires intervening steps prior to any letter being placed in a teacher's personnel file. Teachers should also be aware that if they have a recurring illness, they should apply for intermittent FMLA.

DonorsChoose Update

Over 600 teachers have registered with Donors Choose. Grants totaling \$130,000 have been funded. Put a grant together and send it in today!

Materials bought by Donors Choose must remain with the children, class, or program for which they have been obtained. If a teacher received materials for students, and the teacher is transferred to another school but with similar students, the materials may go with the teacher.

Bridgeport Public Education Fund

Outstanding Teacher applications are out!
All forms should be returned by Feb. 29.
Save May 6th for the Outstanding Teacher Award Celebration!
BPEF Grant applications will be out in February.

**Bridgeport Education
Association**

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We're on the web!
www.beaunion.org

Bridgeline Editors

Tiffany Ladson-Lang,
Public Relations Chair

Carmella Lorusso,
Associate Editor

Jerry Coleman for NEA/RA
I have taught in Bridgeport for the last 21 years. I also have 8 years experience teaching in 3 other states. Thus I have a total of 29 years teaching in Urban, Rural and Suburban areas. This allows me a unique window into the benefits and problems facing education today.

BEA Elections– Candidate Statements

President

Gary Peluchette

For the past 20 years I have served the BEA as a Building Delegate, Grievance Chairman, Negotiations Co-Chair, Delegate at Large, Elementary and First Vice-President. As BEA President I will have the experience needed to ensure Bridgeport teachers are treated with the respect due to our profession

Marie Petitti

I am Marie Petitti and I am running for the position of BEA President. In 1982 I was hired as a math teacher at Harding and in 2001 moved to Central. As an elected BEA, CEA and NEA Delegate I have always been an outspoken advocate for teachers.

Delegate At Large

Woody Fitzgerald

I have served and continue to serve as a Building Delegate. I have been a member of the negotiations committee, Secondary V.P., Vice-President and Grievance Committee Co-Chair. I would like to serve as Delegate At Large and CEA/RA Delegate to further expand my role in the BEA.

Mark Improta

No statement submitted

Patrice Lundgren

A BEA member for 30 years, I have represented and worked for you at the local, state, and national levels. By electing me again as one of your Delegates at Large I will be able to continue representing and working for you. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Usha Menon

A BEA Delegate for several years, I have served as Building Delegate in both the school and the Administrative building. At present serving on the CEA Retirement Committee. Chairperson for the Retirement Commission for BEA. I am ready to continue serving your interests as your representative as Delegate At Large.

Delphina Pinto

As a 30 year member of the BEA, having served as Building Delegate, Delegate-at-Large, and Membership Chairperson, I feel I am qualified to be a Delegate-at-Large once again. I am conscientious, hard-working, and attentive to all things. I ask for your vote on March 4th

Additional Candidate Statements on Insert

BEA Elections– Candidate Statements

Vice President



Victoria White

Many years of experience and results:

- Elementary V.P.
- BEA Secretary
- Executive Board Member
- Building Delegate
- Grievance Committee
- Negotiations Team Member
- Prep Periods Committee
- Personnel Polices Committee

An **EXPERIENCED** advocate for **ALL** teachers!



Elementary Vice President

Tiffany Ladson-Lang

It has been my pleasure serving Bridgeport Educators. I appreciate the support you have given me over the years and I hope that you will continue to do so. It will be an honor to represent you as Elementary Vice President after serving as Secretary. Thank you again for your support.



Secondary Vice President

Maria Nocerino

I have been honored and proud to serve the teachers of Bridgeport as a Representative and Secondary Vice-President. If elected, I will continue to protect the contract and ensure the rights and safety of all teachers.



Secretary

Kathleen Flaherty

Please vote for me as your BEA Secretary. I've been elected and served on the Executive Board for six years. Also, I'm the Read Across America and Disability Chairperson. For 20 years I've taught in Bridgeport. I am a hardworking and honest individual. I want to continue to serve you.

