

# Bridgeline

Bridgeport Education Association

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## President's Message

Good Morning BEA Members,

Welcome to the new school year.

I remember reading a science fiction novel years ago where the characters, when parting each other's company for an extended time would say, "May you live in interesting times." The author was paraphrasing what is attributed as a curse in some cultures. I disagree that this is a curse. Living in interesting times can come to be what defines us as a nation, a culture, or a generation. Those Americans who lived during the Depression and World War II have come to be known as the greatest generation. They faced adversity and rose to the occasion. Growing up as I did during the late 60s and early 70s, I saw the social and political upheaval of the era make our nation face difficult choices, confront ideologies that had held back our citizens, and rethink the roles that had come to be accepted as the norm. But in the end I think that many of the changes that occurred in our society empowered people to take a stand for what was right and just.

As educators we are living whether we like it or not, in interesting times. We need only look to the attacks on teacher unions in states like Wisconsin and Ohio, to see that what was once revered is now reviled. But, I also have great hope. I have seen teachers stand up to these attacks and organize to take back their professional rights, and work to recall the elected officials that have led these attacks. Teachers are saying

that we will not be blamed for the economic problems of our country. This past summer the NEA gave the Friend of Education award to the state senators of Wisconsin who fled the state, rather than let the legislature strip workers of their collective bargaining rights.

There are other forces working against education, especially those that are working to privatize urban education. Simply stated, these are people looking to make a buck off of children, many of whom live in poverty. As urban teachers dedicated to our students, we cannot let this happen.

So, during our interesting time, we need to look to other interesting times to guide us in ours. In the past, activists sought to empower their constituency, and we as teachers need to be empowered to make the changes that are necessary to take back our profession. As teachers, we have always raised our hands as a way to ask for what we needed. Perhaps, as in the past, we need to raise our fist to demand what we need for our students and our profession.

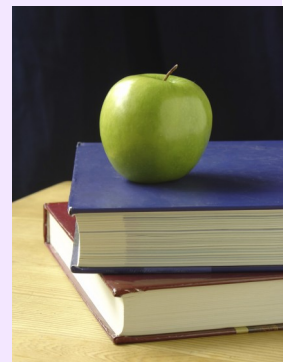
Thanks, and have a great year!

*Gary Peluchette,*  
President

....as in the past we need to raise our fist to demand what we need for our students....

### Have you changed????

Changes in name, address, or phone number should be reported to the BEA office immediately.  
(203)416-0055



## Professional Rights & Responsibilities

Carmella Lorusso, Grievance Chairperson

Lynne Todisco

Sue Beres, Facilities

Ann Langley, CEA Urban Intern

### Know Your Contract

Lesson plans belong to you, the teacher. Use the template that the district provides you in the Public Folders on your webmail. The template explicitly shows you what your requirements are for planning. Principals can not add to it.

#### Class Size ...Article VIII page 24

Limit size of grades 2-12 .... 29 pupils

Limit class size of K-1 .....24 pupils

Limit class size of Pre-K.....18 pupils

Your class size is determined by the number of students who have reported to school for at least one day and not the number of students on your class list.

Pre-K thru grade 12, please notify the BEA office if your class size exceeds the contractual limit after an attempt to resolve the issue at the school level has failed.

#### Preparation Periods..... Article VIII page 35

A preparation period is that time in which a teacher is free to prepare lessons and/or meet what he deems to be his professional responsibilities during the school day. During this time it is up to the discretion of the teacher as to what needs to be accomplished.

#### Teacher Attendance..... Article VI page 17

Your attendance at your job is important. You are entitled to 15 sick days a year. By all means if you are sick stay home. Please be cautious about the number of days. If there is an illness that requires use of more than six of these days in a year, please contact the BEA office for appropriate guidance with this issue.

#### Supplies..... Article VII page 33

The Board shall permit the principal of each school to requisition supplies in his/her school, the cost of which shall not exceed \$1.00 per student per school. Please see your school administrator before October 1<sup>st</sup> to access your dollar per pupil fund.

#### Sick Leave.....Article VI..... page 18

Once each year after the beginning of the school year, but not later than November 15, each teacher shall receive a statement of sick leave credit.

**It is imperative when you receive your sick day statement, that you retain it for your files and monitor your own use of sick days.**

#### Webmail

Your web mail account is the property of the Board of Education. It is imperative you become familiar with the guidelines established by the Board for its use. If you need to contact a person from the BEA office, please send a brief message stating your name and a phone number where you can be reached. Please do not send detailed messages explaining your problems or concerns using the school email. You may always call the BEA office (416-0055) and leave a detailed message.

#### Extra-Curricular Activities

The BEA is aware that some of you volunteer to help students outside of your contracted time. Since this is voluntary on your part, it is necessary for the principal and you to sign this document. This waiver shows that your willingness to continue in this position should not be interpreted as any agreement to continue this position in the future or establish a precedent for yourself or the Bridgeport Education Association. Volunteering outside the guidelines of the BEA, does not protect you from liabilities that may be incurred due to unforeseen circumstances. The waivers are available through your delegate or the BEA office. After the document is signed, the original copy comes to the BEA office, a copy to the principal and a copy for you.

**Have you  
been  
assaulted ?**

Any and all assaults by students directed at professional staff must be reported to the BEA. Even if you decide not to press charges, you **must** call the BEA

**203-416-0055**

\*Delegates please take note and make sure the information is called in to the office.



## Cell Phone Discounts

AT&T offers 15% discounts to Bridgeport Teachers off their monthly wireless bill. All you have to do is stop by the AT&T store with either your pay stub or CEA card, and Driver's License.

Good teaching is  
1/4 preparation &  
3/4 theater.

~Gail Godwin



## Election Update

This year, elections are being conducted for CEA and NEA Representative Assemblies. The CEA convention will be held on May 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> in Cromwell, and the NEA convention will be held on June 30<sup>th</sup> - July 5<sup>th</sup> in Washington, D.C. If you are interested in being a representative for either, or both, of these conventions, the forms will be available in the BEA office, and must be submitted no later than January 13<sup>th</sup>. The elections will take place in early March.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Amy Broad, Elections Chairperson*



## BEA Contract is On Line!

You can now access our contract on line by following the steps below:

1. Open your Bridgeport Board of Education webmail.
2. Click on Public Folders. (Bottom left-hand corner)
3. Click on the Human Resources folder.
4. Click on arrow to the left of Human Resources folder
5. Click on HR Contracts
6. Click on BEA Contract to open.

## Obama, Duncan to provide relief from many NCLB restrictions

Van Roekel notes that the waiver plan provisions get away from labeling schools as failures.

“Instead, the Department of Education has adopted a term NEA also uses for low performing schools: Priority Schools. The waivers recognize the Title I schools that need the most help—and the students they serve—as a federal priority.”

Last week, Van Roekel completed a back-to-school tour for a first-hand view of how teachers are collaborating with key education stakeholders to significantly improve student learning and success. “I’ve been visiting schools across the country and I

know that teachers and education support professionals care deeply about their students and they want policies that work to benefit students,” said NEA President Dennis Van Roekel. “President Obama and Secretary Duncan have crafted a path that breaks through the logjam of bad NCLB policy and opened the way to better ideas that will work for students and schools.”

“NEA will continue to work with Congress and push for comprehensive NCLB reauthorization,” said Van Roekel.

## Officers

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Vice-President

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Elementary Vice-  
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**Gary DeBrizzi**  
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**Julie Kaffen**  
Administrative  
Assistant

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[www.beaunion.org](http://www.beaunion.org)



## October 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	♦ <b>New Teacher Orientation—</b> October 6th between 3:30 and 5:30 PM at Vazzy's Restaurant					
11	♦ <b>E-MAC Meeting</b> October 3rd, BEA Office					17
18	♦ <b>Delegates Training,</b> October 25, Vazzy's Restaurant 3:30, call BEA to attend.					24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



**Use biodegradable cups and utensils:**  
For class parties and snack time, keep a stash of biodegradable plates and utensils.