

Membership  
Update



June 28, 2013

From the President...

## Contract Negotiations

Our current contract expires on August 31, 2014. In preparation for upcoming negotiations, the Superintendent and I have agreed to participate in Interest Based Bargaining instead of the traditional process of labor-management bargaining. Interest Based Bargaining — sometimes termed win-win bargaining — focuses on mutual needs. It challenges labor and management to create effective solutions that meet mutual interests. This week members of the district's negotiating team as well as members of the PTU executive board and staff attended a two-day training on Interest Based Bargaining conducted by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The training focused on strategies for identifying mutual interests and reaching consensus on best options for achieving the parties' mutual interests. For more information on Interest Based Bargaining, please visit [www.fmcs.gov](http://www.fmcs.gov).

It is my intention to begin negotiations sooner rather than later with the City of Providence and the School Board so that a successor agreement may be reached well before the expiration of our contract. As we begin the negotiation process, building delegates will be asked to solicit membership feedback with respect to the traditional bargaining items such as working conditions, salary and benefits but also about what we need to accomplish to bring resources and genuine decision-making authority back to the school level. **As always, any member can contact the union office directly with any suggestions or feedback regarding the negotiations of a successor agreement.**

As we end another school year, I would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication throughout this past school year. I applaud you for your continued commitment to providing the best education possible for Providence students considering the challenging conditions you encounter every day.

Enjoy your summer recess!

## President Smith Speaks at School Board Meeting

At the last School Board meeting, I addressed the Superintendent and the Board members about the need to adequately identify and appropriately place special needs students in a timely manner. Many teachers have expressed their frustration with the RTI process and the length of time that it takes to place a special needs student in the educational setting that best meets the student's needs. I also addressed the Board about the need to create suitable educational placements for our most chronically disruptive students in order to provide these students with the supports needed to become productive students in the traditional classroom environment.

I support Superintendent's Lusi's call for a thoughtful pause and reset and to begin having discussions about what supports and resources are needed in order to make the classroom teacher's job manageable.

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## Slow Down!

The Providence Teachers Union has consistently opposed the use of standardized tests for high stakes purposes such as graduation requirements and teacher evaluations. However, Federal and State mandates have persistently pushed in that direction.

Last week, a measure of common sense came out of Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan's office. He announced that States could request an extension for implementing new assessments based on the common core standards. To successfully implement the common core, teachers and schools will need additional time and support. Secretary Arne Duncan's letter in its entirety is attached for your review.

Unfortunately, RIDE and Commissioner Gist have been less than forthcoming with these resources. Instead, they have used a model of leadership that is heavy on compliance but light on supports. Teachers need the resources, aligned curriculum, time and professional development to support their efforts in the classroom.

In a recent membership letter, AFT President, Randi Weingarten, urged the membership to email the Commissioner of Education and ask that she delay the implementation of common core assessments. We need sufficient time to do this work correctly. Haste in this area will only serve to cause needless harm to students, teachers and schools and will undermine educational improvement.

Please email Commissioner Gist at [Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov) and ask her to "Slow Down!"

## From the President...

### Reminders...

◆ **Longevity Reimbursement**

The remaining 50% longevity reimbursement will be issued to eligible teachers on July 3, 2013. Direct deposit will be utilized for those teachers who are currently enrolled. All other checks will be mailed to teachers' homes.

◆ **Sick Leave Bonus**

Sick Leave Bonus checks will be issued on July 17, 2013. Eligible teachers will be notified by the Payroll Office during the first week in July.

◆ **Salary Increase**

A 3% salary increase will go into effect the 1st day of the 2013-14 work year. An additional 3% salary increase will go into effect on the last day of the 2013-14 school year.

### Mary B. Joyce Scholarships

Congratulations to the following Providence students who were the recipients of this year's PTU Mary B. Joyce Scholarships:

Central:	Christine Duong
Classical:	Sophia D'Ambrosio
Hope:	Giovanni Chiossone
Alvarez:	Tyrah Wiggins
Mt. Pleasant:	Lesley Vongrasamy
PCTA:	Kayla Long



### PTU Scholarships

Congratulations to the following PTU Scholarship winners:

- ◆ **Samuel P. Hobe** who is the son of Diane Burdick, a teacher at Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex. Samuel will be attending the University of RI and his area of study is Business.
- ◆ **Erica Vincent** who is the daughter of Lisa Vincent, a teacher at Mary Fogarty Elementary School. Erica will be attending the University of Tampa and her area of study is Nursing.

Best wishes to Samuel and Erica in their academic endeavors!

