

## LEGISLATURE PASSES FUNDING BILL

Laura Barrett



Public education activists from across the Commonwealth gathered at the State House before the October House vote on the *Student Opportunity Act*, a historic education funding bill.

Victory for more equitable school funding is at hand. The *Student Opportunity Act*, a major state education funding bill backed by the MTA, has been approved by the Legislature and is widely expected to become law before next year's state budget is finalized.

On Nov. 20, during the last formal session of the year, the Senate and House unanimously approved the same version of the bill to increase state funding for public schools by \$1.5 billion a year over inflation when fully phased in. The bill was developed by a joint House and Senate conference committee based on versions of the proposal approved by both chambers in October.

Governor Charlie Baker can now sign the act, send it back with proposed amendments or veto it; he had not outlined his intentions as the *MTA Reporter* went to press. Given the overwhelming support for the measure, he is viewed as unlikely to win significant changes if he seeks them.

"Member activism has brought us to this historic success," said MTA President Merrie Najimy. "By passing the *Student Opportunity Act*, the Legislature is living up to its constitutional obligation to make sure that the quality of a child's school is not determined by family income or ZIP code. All students deserve an excellent education — period."

Laura Demakis, president of the Chicopee Education Association, said that new funding will make a huge difference for her district, where staff have been lost through attrition and educators are continually being asked to do "more with less." New funding will provide Chicopee's students with new opportunities and Chicopee's educators with more support.

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## RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE 2019-2020

### CHAIR

Jacqueline Gorrie, *Randolph*\*\*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Seth Evans, *Brookline*

Silvia Golijov, *Ashland*\*

Kenneth Haar, *Naples FL*

Kathleen Harrigan, *Hanover*

Andrei Joseph, *Chestnut Hill*

Richard Liston, *Everett*

Jen Meagher, *Andover*\*

Rafael Moure-Eraso, *Medford*

Ana Maria Nogueira, *Ashland*

Patrick Patterson, *Ipswich*\*

Gerry Ruane, *Malden*\*\*

Robin Smith, *Springfield*\*\*\*

Robert Travers, Jr., *South Dennis*\*\*

Anne Wass, *Carver*

### RETIRED MEMBERS ORGANIZER

Robert Whalen

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### MTA MEMBERSHIP DIVISION

617.878.8118 ■ 800.392.6175, ext. 8118

\* Appointed Active Member

\*\* MTA Board of Directors

\*\*\* President's Designee

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Jacqueline Gorrie



MTA Retired Members Committee  
Chair Jacqueline Gorrie

This is the time of year that as MTA Retired members we get an opportunity to self-nominate for election as delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting and the NEA-Representative Assembly. The 2020 MTA Annual Meeting will take place on May 1 and 2 in Springfield. The NEA-RA will take place in Atlanta, GA, from July 2 to July 6, 2020, with the NEA Retired Annual Meeting

convening two days prior to the RA.

The forms necessary to self-nominate for these two elections are printed in the center of this edition of the *MTA Reporter* and can also be accessed on our webpage, [www.massteacher.org/retired](http://www.massteacher.org/retired). All self-nominations for delegate seats must be submitted to the MTA Executive Director-Treasurer by 5 PM EST on January 10, 2020.

There are additional forms for self-nomination for election to the Retired Members Committee and the MTA Executive Committee. The deadline for these forms is 5PM EST on March 6, 2020. ■

## MTA RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE LAUNCHES THE NEW RETIRED REGIONAL LOBBY DAY TRAINING PROGRAM

On Wednesday, November 13, the MTA Retired Members Committee launched its newest endeavor — the Retired Regional Lobby Day Training program (RLDT) at MTA Headquarters in Quincy. The program is the creation of the MTA Retired Members Committee. It arose out of the Committee's strategic planning meeting this past summer and it was designed specifically for MTA's retired members. The goal of the trainings is to create a cadre of MTA Retired activists by providing participants with everything they need to know to advocate on issues important to our retired educators. The trainings will prepare retired members to be knowledgeable, confident and successful advocates using the *Omnibus Retiree Bill* – S.1499/H.2232 currently in the Legislature as a case study.

All MTA Retired members are welcome and encouraged to sign up for one of the two remaining Regional Lobby Day Trainings listed here. To register for one of these dates, email Robert Whalen at [rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org) or call him at 617.878.8206. ■



*Andrei Joseph makes a point to Fellow retirees Elaine Koury and Jackie Gorrie.*



*Steve Gorrie, former MTA President, and Diane Desmond Gorrie listen intently to the presentation at the RLDT on November 13, 2019.*

### REGIONAL LOBBY DAY TRAININGS

<b>Wed., Dec. 4, 2019</b> 10 am – 2 pm MTA Holyoke Office 55 Bobala Rd., Holyoke, MA	<b>Wed., Dec. 11, 2019</b> 10 am – 2 pm MTA Auburn Office 48 Sword St., Auburn, MA
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## LEGISLATURE PASSES FUNDING BILL *Continued*

The bill fully implements all of the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission, with most of the new funding directed to low-income districts. The funding will be phased in over seven years.

Najimy said that the final bill reflects the insistence by MTA members, parents and the wider community that educators and other local stakeholders have the primary role in crafting how the money is spent for the benefit of our students.

“While we believe that the bill still includes too much in the way of discredited top-down intrusions from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education,” Najimy said, “this new bill limits the commissioner of education’s role in shaping district plans compared to the version of the *Student Opportunity Act* released by the Joint Committee on Education.

“We and our 116,000 members will continue the work of making sure that educator and community voices are central to building the public schools our students deserve,” she added.

The MTA was a major force behind the *Student Opportunity Act* and its earlier incarnation, the *Promise Act*. Through their local associations and statewide through the Fund Our Future coalition, actions included:

- 79 organizing events, 44 of them community forums and 35 of them in-district legislative meetings.
- 100 school committee resolutions and seven municipal board resolutions.

- 18,124 signatures on petitions.
- 3,844 emailed messages and 1,955 phone calls to legislators.
- Attendance at rallies on May 16 in Boston, Springfield and Pittsfield by more than 4,000 educators and fellow public education advocates.
- About a dozen weekly State House activist events from May through August.
- The distribution of thousands of flyers, stickers, signs and Fund Our Future T-shirts.
- Tens of thousands of social media posts and shares, including widely viewed posts of members of the New England Patriots testifying and wearing T-shirts in support of a new education funding bill.

Meanwhile, the MTA is leading the Council for Fair School Finance, a coalition that filed a lawsuit, *Mussotte v. Peyser*, in June on behalf of students in seven school districts. The lawsuit contends that the current funding formula is both inadequate and discriminatory, disproportionately harming low-income students and students of color. The lawsuit will remain active until and unless the council determines that the state has addressed funding inadequacy and disparities.

“Our advocacy for this bill has been loud and long,” said MTA Vice President Max Page. “We understood the need to be heard over the hum of business as usual. Our students can’t wait.” ■

For updates, please visit [massteacher.org](http://massteacher.org) and [fairschoolfinance.com](http://fairschoolfinance.com).

## NOBODY SAYS IT BETTER THAN MTA MEMBERS!

### A message from MTA Benefits

MTA Benefits loves to hear from members who use their benefits. It helps us to keep tabs on member satisfaction, but just as importantly, it helps other members who are thinking about enrolling in a particular program. So, we thought a recent member review would be the best way to remind you about the hearing aid discount program that MTAB offers through **Hear In America**.

*“Thanks to MTA Benefits, I not only got a free hearing test, but paid \$800 for a pair of hearing aids costing \$5,000. The*

*member discount covered half the cost and my Medicare supplemental paid another \$1,700. The firm the MTA Benefits partners with not only arranged appointments and follow-ups with the audiologist, but handled the negotiations with my insurance company! Wicked awesome service and savings!”*

— Trudy T.

Don’t forget to check out **Hear In America** if you or a family member experiences hearing loss. Call 800.286.6149 or register online at [www.hearinamerica.com/mta.html](http://www.hearinamerica.com/mta.html). ■

## MEET THE NEW FACES OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

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**Seth Evans**  
*Brookline*

Seth served 19 years as an elementary school (Grades 4 and 5) teacher in Needham before retiring in 2018. He has served as a building rep, PAL and Annual Meeting delegate, as well as current member of the MTA Education Policy and Practice Committee. Prior to teaching, Seth was a union organizer and business consultant in community economic development and worker ownership settings. He also started and ran a worker-owned home health care company in Boston.

Since retiring Seth has remained active in education-related causes. He works as a volunteer for the Children's Screen Time Action Network, specifically organizing teachers and parents to limit the overuse of digital technology in schools. He also volunteers in a Boston classroom and helps run tutoring sessions for area students in STEM-related programs.

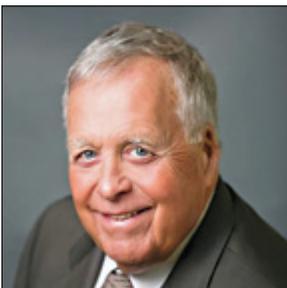
A father of two grown children, Seth lives in Brookline with his wife, Kim Nelson, and his puppy, Maggie.

**Silvia Rodriguez Golijov**  
*Ashland*

I grew up in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and immigrated to the United States in 1986. I began teaching music in Pennsylvania, where I lived. After moving to Massachusetts, I taught in the Worcester, Boston and Natick public schools.

In 2006, I began working at Brown Middle School in Newton as an aide to recently retired teacher Rose Breslin. In 2011, I graduated from Lesley University with a master's in special education and continue working at Brown as a special education teacher to this day.

My three children, born and raised in Newton, attended Newton Public Schools, K-12. My youngest, Elliana, is now a preschool special education teacher in Washington, D.C.



**Richard Liston**  
*Everett*

I'm excited to be returning to the Retired Members Committee. I'm Richard Liston and have been involved in union activities since I started teaching back in 1968.

Currently, I serve on the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board and NEA Retired Membership Committee. I am an officer in the Everett Teachers Association, immediate past president, and serve as the liaison between the ETA and the Retired Members Committee.

I have been married to Cheryl for 51 years. She is also a strong union activist and has always supported me in all my endeavors. We have three sons and six grandchildren. All our grandchildren live in South Carolina, so we winter there in a great retirement community.

I am always working to improve our COLA base and lower health care costs. I'm working with the NEA Membership Committee to find ways to increase our membership numbers and retain our current membership numbers.

## MEET THE NEW FACES OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE *Continued*

### **Jen Meagher**

*Andover*

Jen Meagher is in her 19th year as a high school English teacher. Prior to teaching, she worked in sales and marketing for a tech company, and spent several years working in higher education administration while pursuing her master's degree.



### **Rafael Moure-Eraso**

*Medford*

I am one of those immigrants you hear so much about. I came to this country as a student in 1967 from Colombia, South America, and became a U.S. citizen in 1981 (38 years).

I have been a teacher in college education for most of my professional life. Currently I am an Emeritus Professor at UMass Lowell. I retired in 2011 with 23 years of teaching experience at the college level, where I was chair of the Department of Work Environment for seven years.

I was a full member of MSP/MTA for 23 years and for seven of those years I represented the 13 faculty members of the department. I have represented faculty members in grievance procedures, during the promotion and tenure process, and in collective bargaining issues.

In my life before teaching at an educational institution, I was a professional full-time staff member in two AFL-CIO unions for 15 years (OCAW and UAW). I have experience in worker education, collective bargaining and legislative issues, all related to my field of occupational safety and health.

I am committed to working through the MTA to:

- Address the immediate problems of MTA retirees on pensions, COLA, health care and the never-ending fights of GPO/WEP.
- Support the continuing struggles of teaching MTA members to defend public education as the pathway for a more just society.
- Fight to reverse years of underfunding of our public schools by supporting the *Student Opportunity Act*.

I welcome the opportunity to represent retired educators at the MTA. I am proud of being part of the more than 10,000 MTA retirees that are almost 10 percent of the membership. I believe our numbers and militancy make us indeed ACTIVE MEMBERS of the MTA. Retirement never has meant inactivity. I will work to:

- Support political activism to protect public education and fight to reverse chronically inadequate funding for K-12 and college.
- Work for a more equitable representation of retirees in MTA governance.
- Increase the number of retired members of MTA, who as ACTIVE MEMBERS of this union need to be counted as such.

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## MEET THE NEW FACES OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE *Continued*



### **Ana Maria Nogueira**

*Ashland*

I am a history teacher based in Boston, but who has always taught out of here... I came to the U.S. in 2000 to do a Ph.D. fellowship program at the University of Maryland College Park. In 2001 I taught in Framingham for a year, in a bilingual public school. Since 2004 I have been teaching history and ESL for immigrant students in Fall River and Somerville, where I retired in 2018. Before coming to the U.S., I had been a teacher in Brazil for many years — always in public education. After retiring I got a part time job as an ESL teacher for adults. It feels like a nice way to say farewell to years of hard work.

As a recently retired lucky person, I spend most of my free time reading and participating in union activities. I have always been a union activist, since I began working. Collective power is the driving force behind any improvement in working conditions, in my opinion. We should always work together to get better deals in life. As a retired person my main objective is to continue fighting for what students and teachers deserve.

I also take pleasure in swimming and going for walks around my beautiful neighborhood, Jamaica Plain. I love it. Most of my family lives in Brazil: father, brother, two sons and two grandchildren. Hopefully now as a retired lucky person I can spend more time there with them.

### **Robin Smith**

*Springfield*

Greetings. My name Robin Smith and I am a lifelong resident of Springfield. I retired from Springfield after 30+ years in education. While working as a special education teacher I had the opportunity to work at both the elementary and middle school levels and provided services in settings ranging from inclusive to those that were self-contained. Throughout my career, I taught a variety of subjects.

As I think back on my career, there are many wonderful highlights. But there are three that are closest to my heart, the first being that I was able to teach for 10 years at William N. DeBerry School, the school that I attended as an elementary student. The second is that for one year I taught at the school that was named after the late Rebecca M. Johnson, a fellow church member who on behalf of our church handed me a scholarship that allowed me to make my final payment to attend Elmira College.

My third highlight was attending the 1991 NEA-RA in Miami, Florida, where I witnessed the reenactment of the signing of the agreement to merge the National Association of Colored Teachers and the National Education Association. That year was the 25th anniversary of the merger that also had taken place in Miami. This was my first Representative Assembly, and it added to the sense of pride that I already had for being union member.

In retirement, I continue to contribute to the lives of young people and my union membership. I am on the staff of the Center for Accessibility and Academic Accommodations at American International College, serving as an exam proctor. My current local union involvement is serving on Springfield Education Association's Committee of Retirees and the ALANA Committee. In my spare time I love to read, volunteer at my church, and make cards.

I am looking forward to serving on the MTA Retired Members Committee. ■



*If you have some news from your local retired group that you wish to share, please send it to Robert Whalen at [rwhalen@massteacher.org](mailto:rwhalen@massteacher.org).*

## ELECTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MTA RETIRED MEMBERS

### An overview

Our union's strength comes from full participation of all members, including retirees, in MTA and NEA election processes at the local, state and national levels. Please consider the following opportunities to engage in the democratic processes of our union. Share with other retirees, and let's grow union power.

The election and nomination process for all of the seats described here are subject to MTA Bylaws and to MTA Policy/Procedures for Nominations and Elections, all of which are available upon request from the MTA Division of Governance and Administration.

### Statewide Retired Region Executive Committee Member

The Executive Committee seat representing the Statewide Retired Region will be up for election. The Executive Committee, along with the Board, is a governing body of the MTA, with various responsibilities including real estate, finance and personnel oversight and decision-making. Executive Committee members automatically also serve on the MTA Board of Directors. Terms are for three years, beginning July 1, 2020. Candidates must be members of the Statewide Retired District. There is a self-nomination process, with a deadline of March 6, 2020. The election will take place at the 2020 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates, voted on by the delegates representing the Retired District.

Those wishing to run for this seat should submit a self-nominating letter no later than 5 PM on the first Friday in March, specifying the candidate's name and address and the office being sought. The letter should be addressed to Executive Director-Treasurer, MTA, 2 Heritage Drive, 8th Floor, Quincy, MA 02171-2119, and may be faxed to 617-570-4908 or emailed to [MTAGovernance@massteacher.org](mailto:MTAGovernance@massteacher.org).

### MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

The 2020 NEA Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) will be held July 2 through July 6 in Atlanta, GA. This is the meeting of representatives from all NEA state associations. At this meeting, policies are voted on and set regarding a range of issues critical to educators, from testing and economic and racial justice to electoral politics and more. It is an opportunity for democratic engagement and making national connections to build our movement and strength.

### Available Opportunities for MTA Retired Members:

- *Statewide Retired Executive Committee Member*
- *MTA Retired Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly\**
- *Statewide Retired District Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting\**
- *MTA Retired Members Committee\**

*\*Nomination forms available online at [www.massteacher.org/nomform](http://www.massteacher.org/nomform)*

Elected delegates are also strongly encouraged to attend the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting, taking place immediately before the NEA-RA in Atlanta. Information will be sent to all elected delegates, and MTA will reimburse additional hotel and meal expenses for attending this meeting.

NEA will allocate the number of retired delegate seats to the NEA-RA for Massachusetts. MTA/NEA retired members are eligible to run in the NEA Retired category for the seats allocated by NEA. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. These delegates will be elected by ballots provided to retired members in February.

MTA provides funding to the winners of the MTA Statewide, Regional, and Retired elections to the NEA-RA, subject to accountability requirements (\$1,600 stipend per delegate).

Those interested can access the online nomination form at [www.massteacher.org/nomform](http://www.massteacher.org/nomform). The nomination deadline is Friday, January 10, 2020, at 5 PM.

### Statewide Retired District Delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting

The 2020 Annual Meeting of Delegates will be held May 1 and 2. At this meeting, delegates from across the state gather to vote on policies and set the direction for the MTA in the year ahead. Your voice matters.

The Statewide Retired District delegates will be elected by ballot provided to the retired membership in conjunction with

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## ELECTION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MTA RETIRED MEMBERS

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the NEA delegate/director elections in February. Nominations are open to all eligible MTA/NEA retired members through a self-nomination process. The 2020 allocation of retired delegates and successors will be based on the number of MTA/NEA retired members as of January 15.

Retired delegates to the Annual Meeting may apply for reimbursement of certain expenses up to \$450.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at [www.massteacher.org/nomform](http://www.massteacher.org/nomform). The nomination deadline is Friday, January 10, 2020, at 5 PM.

### MTA Retired Members Committee

Four members of the Retired Members Committee will be elected by the Statewide Retired District delegates at the 2020 Annual Meeting. This committee plans the statewide retiree conference and serves as an important voice of retirees within the MTA. The committee seats have terms of two years starting July 1, 2020.

Those interested can access the online nomination form at [www.massteacher.org/nomform](http://www.massteacher.org/nomform). The nomination deadline is Friday, March 6, 2020, at 5 PM.

### Election Waiver

MTA's election waiver policy applies to the elections described in this issue. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled, the election(s) may be waived and the candidates declared elected to the position(s) in question.

### Nomination and Election Details Now on the MTA Website

In addition to the information published here and in the fall issue of *MTA Today*, all MTA and NEA election information may also be accessed at the MTA website: [www.massteacher.org/2020governance](http://www.massteacher.org/2020governance).

### MTA Retired Elections Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the nomination or election process, please feel free to contact Governance Specialist John Connelly at [jconnelly@massteacher.org](mailto:jconnelly@massteacher.org).

The chair of the Retired Members Committee is also available to assist you with information on election opportunities available to retired members and the election process. Chair Jackie Gorrie can be reached at [j11a17g49@aol.com](mailto:j11a17g49@aol.com). ■

***Please note that paper forms are available in this issue of the MTA Reporter, but we strongly encourage you to use the online nomination forms at [www.massteacher.org/nomform](http://www.massteacher.org/nomform)***

## FREQUENTLY REQUESTED CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS)</b> <a href="http://www.mass.gov/mtrs">www.mass.gov/mtrs</a>	<b>State Board of Retirement</b> <a href="http://www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire">www.mass.gov/treasury/retirement/state-board-of-retire</a>
<b>MTRS Headquarters</b> 617.679.6877 500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210 Charlestown, MA 02129-1628	<b>SBR Boston Office</b> 617.367.7770 One Winter Street, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02108
<b>MTRS Western Office</b> 413.784.1711 One Monarch Place, Suite 510 Springfield, MA 01144-4028	<b>SBR Springfield Office</b> 413.730.6135 463 Dwight Street, Room 109 Springfield, MA 01103
Questions regarding your MTA Member ID Card or Calendar can be directed to: Renee Gatewood – <a href="mailto:rgatewood@massteacher.org">rgatewood@massteacher.org</a> – 617.878.8000, ext. 8208	



**ONLINE NOMINATION FORMS  
AVAILABLE AT**

**[WWW.MASSTEACHER.ORG/NOMFORM](http://WWW.MASSTEACHER.ORG/NOMFORM)**





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**RETIRED** *The Voice of MTA Retired Members*

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