

**President's Report** *Brian Fitzgerald*

Before any other review of the past year of my tenure, it is essential to recognize that almost none of this work has been done in a vacuum. I work with a solid leadership team at our WEA, and credit for the work of our Association truly needs to be widely spread among WEA (and MTA) staff.

That said, since my last annual report, my calendar indicates that I participated in 74 scheduled meetings as WEA president. The meetings ranged widely in subject matter, formality, and population – from presenting resolutions to the Wareham School Committee to one-on-one consultations on contractual questions. Many more conversations aren't included in that total, nor are the four days of training in Next Generation Leadership from the MTA, four days representing our region at the National Education Association Representational Assembly, and two days representing Wareham at the MTA Annual Meeting.

In more specific terms of what was done in that time, I continue to divide my obligations into three areas:

-Protecting and strengthening our members' rights. Along with our PR & R chair, I have been involved in grievances concerning members of Units A & C concerning rights to privacy while taking sick leave, evaluation concerns, suspensions, and working conditions. This has often involved working with MTA legal, and continuing to push for a fair evaluation system, sanely and fairly implemented. While some clarifying language has been passed, this remains an area of much needed work. Our Unit B colleagues voted to ratify a contract, and Unit C is scheduled to vote on Friday on a tentative agreement being recommended by the negotiating team. This tentative agreement was arrived at fairly and relatively quickly, and our WEA's positions were driven by a member survey that was compiled and referenced through this process.

Serving as the voice of Wareham educators. I worked with the school committee and superintendent on issues of concern to members outside our district. The superintendent and I co-authored a letter on charter schools, and the School Committee unanimously endorsed a resolution I submitted against those same concerns. The School Committee similarly endorsed a resolution in favor of a moratorium on high-stakes testing, supporting a State Senate bill to that effect. I testified at the State House to the Joint Committee on Education in support of that bill. I regularly speak during public comment at School Committee meetings.

Building the strength and accountability of our WEA. Ongoing efforts at communication and organization are a long-term investment. In addition to working with communications to author a monthly newsletter and website, our Facebook page has grown in influence. Thanks to photos taken by our vice president, community members grew more engaged with our Association through Facebook. One photo was "liked" 2000 times. Our WEA is stronger this year because agreements carefully negotiated that (after a meeting on Friday) could expand membership to eight new members based on their current positions. Continued vigilance for attempts to privatize work done by WEA members is a threat to public education, and one of the best defenses is to make a staff ID badge and a WEA membership inseparable.

**Secretary's Report** *Linda Stewart*Executive Board Meetings

- Attended and participated in nine Executive Board meetings.
- Recorded and submitted Minutes of nine executive board meetings between June 2015 and May 2016.
  - Maintained attendance records for officers, building representatives and guests.
  - Recorded all motions and the resulting votes, including the following:

Following a discussion led by Linda Stewart, Secretary, a motion was made to advance the grievance filed by Brian Fitzgerald, to Arbitration level. The motion was offered by Wendy Nault and seconded by Kristen Kelley. The motion passed unanimously at 4:31 p. m on November 2, 2015.

A discussion to welcome caseload workers into the Wareham Education Association took place on December 7, 2015. At 4:20 p.m. Linda Stewart, Secretary, made a motion to endorse the Memorandum of Understanding concerning caseload workers. Susan Akins seconded this. The motion passed unanimously.

At 4:30 on February 1, 2016, following a brief discussion, the draft 2016-2017 School Calendar was adopted following a motion by Amanda Fitzgerald, seconded by Susan Akins, Director of Ways and Means. The vote was unanimous.

On March 7, 2016 it was noted that the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Teachers Association is set for May 13 and May 14. Six members have expressed an interest in attending: Ellen Brillard, Amanda Fitzgerald, Brian Fitzgerald, Michelle Lefrancois, and Joyce Thatcher. The WEA has seven available slots for delegates. At 4:50 Linda Stewart, Secretary, made a motion to accept this slate of delegates and send them to the convention to represent the WEA. The motion was seconded by Mary Shaw, Building Representative (WMS) and passed unanimously.

On April 11, 2016, the distribution of funds in healthcare trust was discussed. Susan Akins, Director of Ways and Means made a motion at 4:04 p.m. that we have our healthcare payments lowered for the 2016-2017 school year. Michelle Lefrancois, Chairperson, PR & R. seconded this. The motion passed unanimously.

Upon further discussion at the April 11 meeting, it was concluded that Brian Fitzgerald, President, perhaps should be given authority to make a decision at the next meeting of the municipal employees where the healthcare trust fund is discussed. It seems that the information changes at each meeting and discretion is required. Based on that thought at 4:06 Linda Stewart made a motion to reconsider the prior vote. This was seconded by Deanna Semple, Vice President and passed unanimously

Continuing with the healthcare payment issue, Linda Stewart, Secretary, made a motion at 4:10 p.m. which was seconded by Mary Shaw, to give Brian Fitzgerald autonomy to cast the WEA vote on healthcare payments/refunds based on new and compelling information and to vote in the best interest of the members.

At the April 11 meeting at 4:25, Brian Fitzgerald nominated Beth Giuffrida as Nomination Chair for the June election. Deanna Semple seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

- Submitted attendance records to WEA Treasurer.

#### Good-will Correspondence

- Obtained cost-effective greeting cards and maintained a supply of postage stamps.
- Between October 17, 2015 and May 31, 2016, twenty-one cards were mailed to members. These included expressions of sympathy, get well wishes, and expressions of congratulations upon the birth of a child and upon the news of a marriage.

#### Building-level Member Meetings

- Co-facilitated, along with Mary Shaw, the Wareham Middle School building representative, two member meetings.
  - What Do Our Dues Do?, November 2015
  - The Grievance Process, June 2016

#### Attendance at Wareham Education Association Social Events

- Appreciation Gathering, November 2015
- WEA Retirement Party, May 2016

5/31/2016

**Banking Summary - Year To Date**  
7/1/2015 through 5/31/2016

Category	7/1/2015-5/31/2016
<b>INCOME</b>	
Interest Inc	79.40
Member Appreciation Function	550.00
MTA Reimbursement	
MTA Political Action	350.00
Office Reimbursement	6,219.50
TOTAL MTA Reimbursement	6,569.50
Payroll Deduction	151,624.70
Scholarship	
WEA	2,330.00
TOTAL Scholarship	2,330.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>161,153.60</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Uncategorized	0.00
Arbitration	825.00
Conference	
ESP Conference	260.54
MTA Annual Meeting	1,400.00
TOTAL Conference	1,660.54
Corporation Filing	18.50
Functions	
Lay Awards	775.00
PCEA Awards Banquet	385.00
TOTAL Functions	1,160.00
Insurance	257.00
Meeting	
Executive Board	315.62
Member Appreciation Function	782.70
TOTAL Meeting	1,098.32
Membership Goodwill	100.00
MTA Dues	150,146.93
MTA Grants	
Mass Child	80.55
TOTAL MTA Grants	80.55
Newsletter Printing	638.16
Office Supplies	526.04
Payroll Taxes	
One Check Payroll	2,217.17
TOTAL Payroll Taxes	2,217.17
PCEA Dues	3,315.00
PCEA Meal	60.00
Postage and Delivery	75.73
Retirement Party 2016	1,415.50
Scholarship Award	
WEA	2,200.00
TOTAL Scholarship Award	2,200.00
Stipends	
Board Members-Chairs	1,972.59
Building Reps	584.82

**WEA Cash Balance - As of 5/31/2016**

Account	5/31/2016 Balance
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	
CD Savings	15,000.00
Checking	30,759.17
Money Market	2,004.54
Savings	13,254.46
<b>TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	<b>61,018.17</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>61,018.17</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
	0.00
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>61,018.17</b>

**Banking Summary - Year To Date**  
7/1/2015 through 5/31/2016

Category	7/1/2015-5/31/2016
MTA Political Action	350.00
Negotiations	371.01
Officers	8,075.06
<b>TOTAL Stipends</b>	<b>11,353.48</b>
Workers' Compensation	
Norfolk and Dedham	769.00
<b>TOTAL Workers' Compensation</b>	<b>769.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>177,916.92</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>-16,763.32</b>

**Professional Rights and Responsibility Chair** *Michele Lefrancois*

Throughout this year, I have been involved in a total of 10 grievances which encompassed various levels of our association. Specifically six grievances involved our evaluation system and its shortfalls, two members fighting for letters of reprimand to be removed from their files, one member's suspension without pay for an alleged breach of student confidentiality (which was proven to be hearsay by a vindictive parent), and one more where sick time was questioned and resulted in suspension without pay which was dropped when the grievant left the system.

I began this job in August of 2015, with Robin Cambra handing me the reins so to speak. Robin was kind enough to sit in on my first official duty in August 2015, meeting with the Superintendent on a very involved grievance that he began on behalf of a member. This issue continued through to a level 3 and was finally resolved through this process, without need for arbitration.

As the year continued, so did the continuance of 6 other grievances which were related to the evaluation process. Two were moved into arbitration as the School Committee upheld the administration position and our members are not satisfied, but were settled with the involvement of MTA. Two of the grievances were dropped as the grievant no longer works in Wareham. The final two others were dropped prior to level 2 meetings at the request of the WEA members.

I have also tried to attend monthly WEA meetings, as well as meeting on three occasions with MTA legal and Brian Fitzgerald to ensure our arguments are within the letter of our contracts and rights as a union. I was attended two school committee meetings and attended the town meeting to support our schools in their bid to get the Decas roof repairs and Minot feasibility study voted through for our children's education. I also attended two Wareham Elementary PTA meetings.

Most recently I attended the MTA Annual meeting on May 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> as a WEA delegate. This was my second year attending and as expected it was a learning experience. The MTA annual conference is democracy at its core. Budget and bylaws are amended and approved and this year we voted for a new president and vice president, the second requiring a "run-off" election where over 1500 delegates waited patiently to cast a second ballot for the final two candidates. I was also made blindingly aware of the assault that is being and will continue to be waged against Public School funding in the way of Charter Schools. I am eager to begin with my fellow WEA and MTA members to educate and inform the public about this deliberate undermining of our schools and the funding that we WILL NOT GET due to these charter schools. November 2017 stands to be the union's biggest fight if we are to regain control of our budgets and provide high quality, well rounded education to the children of Massachusetts.

I am most pleased to say that in this role of PR&R Chair, my proudest accomplishments have been that I have been able to meet with some administration to resolve possible issues without filing a grievance for a member, to the satisfaction of both parties. I honestly feel sometimes just standing up to administration in solidarity with a member, asking questions respectfully and requesting that we work together has earned me respect from all whom I've worked with and for this year.

I am excited to work for the WEA next year in this same role to ensure all members are represented and heard when they have questions, issues or concerns.

**Health and Safety** *Anne Marie Brooks*

In the fall, teachers with newly acquired professional status and paraprofessionals with 3 years in the district were given the opportunity to sign up for the sick bank. I would suggest that next year some way to allow members to easily determine if they are in the sick bank be set up. Currently, access is awkward.

There were a few issues with cold building temperatures early in the winter. These were resolved. There are no legal temperature ranges for buildings that are not residences, so generally the solution was to talk to the building principal and resolve the situation. Older buildings are not evenly heated.

One issue of concern was the presence of high mold levels in portables at Minot. The copy of the professional evaluation and report noted that the portables were unusable. They had been kept locked and no one allowed in without authorization and protective gear. The portables are to be (or have been) demolished.

**Scholarship Report** *Kristen Kelley*

I want to thank all of you who helped and supported me in my first year as the chair of the Scholarship Committee. I could not have done this job without the support of the representatives and members of the board.

Activity for the year:

October 2015 - scholarship plea notifications were sent out in an effort to collect pledges in the fall rather than wait until the spring.

Continued to collect pledges each month.

March - Calendar fundraiser - this brought in \$290.00. 50/50 raffle winner of \$290.00 was Jen McCarron. Daily winners won gift cards or scratch tickets.

April - sent out reminder notices to individual members who made a pledge in the fall but had yet to make their donation.

Also sent out the requirements for applying for the WEA scholarship. Deadline was April 27th.

April 28, 2016 - attended the scholarship meeting at the high school. Received the applications from Wareham H.S. seniors.

May - met with Janice St. Pierre to go through the applications and determine the monetary awards.

May - Checks and award letters went out.

Pledges - \$1580.00 Decas \$385 Minot \$450 Middle \$470 High School - \$275

March Calendar - \$290.00

PCEA - \$350.00

Balance from previous year - \$110.00

Total \$2330.00

Awarded \$2200.00

Balance \$130.00

**Communications Report** *Wendy Nault*

Throughout this past year I have edited and distributed the *Beacon* newsletters to our WEA membership throughout the district. I have worked with building representatives to ensure that an ample number of copies of the *Beacon* are sent to each building every month so that all members are able to access pertinent information.

I also joined fellow WEA officers and building representatives at mini-meetings that were held at Decas throughout the year to help keep an open line of communication between the WEA and its membership.

I have also been working with Deanna Semple to plan a breakfast to recognize those paraprofessionals who received service awards from the PCEA and to show our school's appreciation for our paraprofessionals and the work they do with our students.

Recently I have been working with the Wareham Elementary PTA president and Minot Forest representatives to combine our volunteer appreciation receptions. Our goal is for our WEA members to work more closely with the PTA to make our schools better for everyone. Also, I co-authored a press release disseminating information to the press about raising and distributing scholarship funds.

**Ways and Means** *Sue Akins*

We started the year running and before we knew it was already November. We sent a personal invitation to all new district employees to attend the November E-board meeting. The purpose was to give them a better understanding of how the board functions.

We hosted a Member Appreciation on November 20, 2015, 61 WEA members attended and we were fortunate to have our MTA representative Audra on hand to talk to our members.

Our December Executive Board Meeting was a working dinner to celebrate the holidays. We had the union President from Framingham Public Schools, Sarah McKeon, speak to the board about ways to increase member participation.

A retirement celebration was held May 20, 2016 at Salerno's from 3PM-6PM. We honored 5 retirees and a great time was had by the 40 people that attended.



**Plymouth County Education Association** *Amanda Fitzgerald*

- PCEA Reps. – Jacquie DeGrace, Nicole Roberge & Amanda Fitzgerald – Minot
- Amanda Fitzgerald continues to be the PCEA Secretary.
- December - WEA contributed \$100 in Target gift cards for the annual collection for the Old Colony Y and Radius Pediatrics.
- PCEA Legislative Conference was held March 7, 2016. WEA members Nicole Roberge, Anne Marie Brooks, and Amanda Fitzgerald attended.
- PCEA Annual Awards' Banquet was held at The 1620 Hotel in Plymouth on April 5, 2016. From Wareham, there were 5 retirement awards, 3 Honorary Life Membership awards (30 years), 0 Professional Service Award (35 years), 4 Honor Awards, and 3 Rookie Awards. 31 paraprofessionals will be honored at their respective buildings with PCEA Service Awards and gift cards that were purchased by WEA. 5 other Wareham School employees were honored with Service Awards.
- A Volunteer Award Reception will be held in June for both Decas and Minot volunteers, in partnership with the Wareham Elementary PTA. WEA will help pay for refreshments and paper for certificates.
- Wareham was awarded \$350 in scholarship money this year.
- PCEA continued to contribute to Mass Child.
- PCEA offered seminars throughout the school year for PDPs.
- MTA reported that there will be a \$5 increase in MTA dues next year, for a total of \$464 for FTEs and \$140 for paraprofessionals.
- Deadline to register for PCEA Summer Courses is June 20, 2016.
- MTA Summer Conference information is on the MTA website.
- PCEA was awarded a grant from MTA for Public Relations. They distributed t-shirts and pins to PCEA members and pencils and candy to others at community events throughout Plymouth County. It is planned for PCEA to participate in next fall's Cranberry Festival in Wareham.
- PCEA will hold their Annual Meeting on Monday, June 13, 2016.

**Unit C** *Ellen Braillard*

The activities of Unit C during the year have focused primarily on providing support to the paraprofessionals in Unit C that may have had issues regarding their employment contract rights and dispute resolution.

In September of 2015 Deanna Semple and I meet with Dr. Shaver-Hood, Superintendent and reviewed the concerns of “double dipping” expressed relating to paraprofessionals working part of their contractual work time at the CARE program for which they also get paid. The Superintendent agreed with us that the work of these paraprofessionals at the CARE program was not in conflict with their contractual responsibilities and indicated that she would notify the various school principals that the individuals involved would be allowed to leave for their work with the CARE program as soon as students are dismissed at their assigned school. This notice was sent to the principals on September 14, 2015.

On October 28, 2015 at the Wareham High School Union Representatives: Sean Brown, Lisa Ohman, Jennine Alexander and Ellen Braillard held a 10 minute meeting with staff to answer any questions they may have regarding the upcoming contract negotiations. Sean Brown also discussed how the Union dues are spent. There were about 16 to 18 attendees.

In December 2015 Unit C has sent out the survey to the paraprofessionals to obtain a consensus of the membership regarding contract issues.

On December 22, 2015 Brian Fitzgerald, Michele Lefrancois, Audra Makuch (our MTA Representative), a Unit C paraprofessional member and I met with Superintendent Dr. Kim Shaver-Hood regarding a Level II grievance. The status of the matter was that the punitive action of a two-day suspension had been reduced to a Letter of Reprimand. The above group met with the Superintendent to express the continued appeal of the Union for no punitive action. After review of the matter the grievance relating to possible suspension of a paraprofessional was approved by the superintendent. The paraprofessional was not suspended but received a letter from the superintendent which will not become part of the personnel file.

In January 2016 the first Unit C contract negotiation meeting was held. The negotiation team reviewed responses to our survey from the paraprofessionals in Unit C to see what contract matters are of importance to our members. Sadly only seventeen survey responses were received. We will be meeting again after February vacation.

On May 10, 2016 a tentative agreement for the Unit C contract was reached. The ratification meeting and vote will be on Friday, June 10, 2016 at 2:15 in the WMS Library. In accordance with the bylaws, a notice regarding the meeting will be posted in all school buildings. At the meeting, the negotiation team and the MTA representative will review the tentative contract to discuss its provisions and answer any questions that are raised. A ratification vote will then be held. At the end of the meeting an additional vote will be taken on whether Unit C members would like to seek membership in the Plymouth County Education Association.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent our group of dedicated paraprofessional educators this past year and I look forward to working with our Unit C in the future.