



Happenings

Affiliated with NYSUT, AFT #2937, AFL-CIO

www.pjta.us

Editor: Terence McGuire
tmcguire@pjschools.org

Message from the President

Officers

President:

Regis Foster

1st Vice President:

Jenny McElroy

2nd Vice President:

Carol Brown

Recording Secretary:

Debra Cassara

**Corresponding/
Social Secretary:**

Claire Dillon

Treasurer:

Joseph Becker

**Grievance Chair-
man:**

Robert Avdoyan

I hope everyone enjoyed his or her spring vacation! It is now May, so it's time to make our end-of-the-year plans.

P.J.T.A. Elections

P.J.T.A. elections will be held on May 10, 11, and 12. Ballots will be distributed in each building by the building representatives. Any member who has not received a ballot by May 15 must contact their Head Building Representative (HBR) immediately. The Head Building Representatives will bring the unopened ballots to the Representative Assembly Meeting on May 15. Ballots will be counted under the supervision of Kristin Wadeson, the Election Committee Chairperson, and the results will be announced at the May 15 Representative Assembly Meeting.

Voting will be held for all contested offices. The secretary was directed to cast one ballot for all uncontested offices. The contested offices are as follows:

1st Vice-President:

Grievance Chairman:

Jenny McElroy & Valerie Ricciardi

Robert Avdoyan & Dawn Higgins

Uncontested Offices:

President:

2nd Vice-President:

Corresponding/Social Secretary:

Treasurer:

Recording Secretary:

NYSUT Delegates:

Retirement Delegate:

Regis Foster

Carol Brown

Claire Dillon

Joseph Becker

Debra Cassara

Craig Fisher & Eric Hartmann

Ray Holyk

There will be a special edition of the Happenings that will be coming out to introduce the candidates.

President's Message

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P.J.T.A. Dues Increase

You will also be voting on a \$10 increase in dues commencing for the 2017 – 2018 school year. The dues paid by the P.J.T.A. members are paid to three organizations: American Federation of Teachers, New York State United Teachers and the Port Jervis Teachers' Association. The amounts paid to the A.F.T. and N.Y.S.U.T. are automatically approved by those organizations and passed through to the local, however, any increase in the P.J.T.A. portion of the dues must be approved by a general membership vote. The P.J.T.A. component, currently \$140, has not been increased since the 2001-2002 school year! It is obvious that expenses have significantly increased over the years, therefore, a \$10 dues increase is being proposed beginning with the 2017 – 2018 school year. The executive committee and the building representatives are all in support of this proposed increase, and ask that all members vote to approve the increase to allow the P.J.T.A. to effectively serve our members.

Tenure

Congratulations to the following PJTA members on their Tenure appointments:

Lauren Eckerson	Childhood Education 1-6	September 1, 2017
Rebecca Greene	Library Media Specialist	September 1, 2017
Jennifer Grismer	School Social Worker	September 1, 2017
Megan Muller	Special Education K – 6	September 1, 2017
Cory Puopolo	Physical Education K – 12	September 1, 2017
Nicole Vasti	Special Education	September 1, 2017
Jonathan Villegas	Art K – 12	September 1, 2017

Happenings Editor

Tim Leonard was selected to be the next editor.

Grievance

P.J.T.A. filed a grievance on the procedure for home instruction. P.J.T.A. won and there are new procedures for anyone wanting to do home instruction. If anyone is interested in doing home instruction, submit your name to Cindy Benedict for board approval.

Retirement Dinner

The P.J.T.A. annual End-of-the-Year Dinner will be held on June 16 at the Erie Trackside. To date, the board of education has accepted resignations for the purpose of retirement this year from Vito Dibiasi, Mary Grace Carlton, Geri Kirchner, Sharon Krause, Terry McGuire, Tim Moul and Doreen Semerano. I hope to see you all there as we celebrate the careers of our colleagues in our chosen profession! We all know that teaching is more than “just a job”!

Administrative Professionals' Day

April 26 was Administrative Professionals' Day! (formerly known as Secretaries' Day). These are some of the most important people in our buildings. Where would we be without our support staff or professional assistants?

PJTA honored our administrative professionals district-wide with gift certificates from Riverside Creamery in appreciation for the hard work they do.

Budget Vote/School Board Elections

May 16 is the budget vote and school board election. The board of education adopted a \$70,217,841 budget to be voted on for next year.

Three board member terms (Judy Amato, Florence Santini, and William Smith) are ending this year. All three incumbents are running, and one other candidate, Joan McBride is running.

The public will have a chance to hear the candidates discuss their views and answer questions at the annual Meet the Candidates Night, Tuesday, May 9 at 7:00 pm, in the high school cafeteria. The event is sponsored by the Port Jervis Parent-Teacher Associations. Anyone may send questions they want asked of the candidates to ptacandidatesnight@pjschools.org. Meet the Candidates Night will be televised live on Time Warner Cable channel 20 in the Deerpark/Port Jervis area.

I urge each PJTA member who lives in the district to go out and vote on the school budget and school board elections.

Gazette Article for School Budget Vote

PJTA will once again be putting in our annual advertisement in the *Gazette* urging the public to vote for the school budget on May 16.

President's Message

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Vote "NO" on opening the New York State Constitutional Convention

There is a push by some political factions in New York State to hold a new Constitutional Convention. Gov. Andrew Cuomo has expressed his belief in the past that a state constitutional convention is the best route to achieve comprehensive reform in New York. You can bet he will be pushing for it to happen.

Not only would a Constitutional Convention needlessly cost the New York State taxpayers an estimated \$100-million, but it could jeopardize the current level of pension benefits already received by retirees and promised to active members.

Public sector pensions are guaranteed against diminution thanks to powerful language present in the New York State Constitution. In the event of a Constitutional Convention, the language could be tampered with, thus eliminating that guarantee and paving the way for a reduced pension benefit. It won't matter if you have been retired 1 year or 20 years. YOUR BENEFITS WILL BE REDUCED, YOUR PENSIONS WILL BE REDUCED. THE MONEY THAT YOU HAVE SPENT YEARS WORKING FOR, PAYING TAXES ON AND SPENDING COUNTLESS HOURS OF OVERTIME BUILDING UP FOR RETIREMENT, WILL BE DIMINISHED!

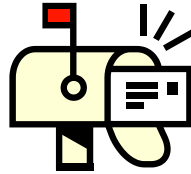
A Convention may open up New York's Constitution to hastily thought out changes and reversal of laws and protections that in some cases took more than 200 years to put into effect; and for police, firefighters, paramedics, Corrections, sanitation workers, teachers, MTA, hospitals, etc, benefits that took decades to achieve. THIS WILL AFFECT ALL NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC RETIREES. A referendum whether or not to engage in a Constitutional Convention will be on the ballot for voters in the next election, November 7, 2017.

VOTE "NO" when and if the CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION is placed on the ballot in November of 2017. There are much better ways in which \$100-million or so of our tax dollars may be spent. Make sure you start spreading the message!

In Solidarity,

Regis

Correspondence



Sympathy

Vicki Sickler—loss of her father, Ed Felter
Jennifer Grismer—loss of her grandfather
Dawn Higgins—loss of her father

Get Well

Stephanie Murphy

Cards Received

Thank you from The Humane Society of Port Jervis and Deerpark for the
donation made in memory of Donald Fisher
Thank you from Oncology Nurses of Orange and Sullivan for the
donation made in memory of Margaret Slaughter
Thank you for our ad in the 2017 PJHS Yearbook from the Yearbook Staff
Thank you to the Negotiating Team from Liz Maloney