



6/14/22

GEA Colleagues,

On behalf of the GEA Executive Board, I'd like to say that we are honored to serve as the leaders of our local union. The support you give each other and students is an inspiration. Helping colleagues, the district, and students is what makes our professions so rewarding. Together we made a difference despite the many challenges posed by the pandemic. Last year at this time I wrote to you about the encouraging signs as we finished a difficult school year and began a much needed summer break. A couple newer waves of Covid made our jobs more interesting during the past school year. As we close another school year, there is still reason for optimism as our lives and professions return to a greater sense of normalcy. The district and association owe you a debt of gratitude for your perseverance, resourcefulness, and skill. You make education possible for our students, and the district would be lost without you.

The GEA Unit A Bargaining Unit has voted to accept two MOAs (one each for the secondary and elementary levels) to facilitate a one-year pilot schedule in the middle school and high school. The district will be forming a joint labor and management committee (JLMC) next school year to create a long-term schedule that meets the needs of the middle school and high school.

The GEA will next turn its attention to negotiating a successor agreement for the ESPs (paraprofessionals). Although the current contract doesn't expire until August of 2023, it is never too early to begin preparations in the fall. ESP Representative Cecilia Moreau will be informing the district of the intent to bargain a new contract and assembling a negotiations team. Please consider serving your colleagues at the table.

GEA leadership is looking forward to the summer break but is also excited to serve you once again. Cheryl Wright and the Nominations and Elections Committee did a nice job of securing candidates for all positions and organizing the GEA election earlier this month. The Executive Board will be returning for another term. Jim Duggan (president), Amy Thornton (first vice president), Bill Brown (second vice president), Valerie Zeh (treasurer), Sara McNamara (secretary) and Cecilia Moreau (ESP representative) remain in their positions. These individuals spent countless hours collaborating with the district, organizing for MTA initiatives, protecting

your rights, negotiating agreements, and so much more.

Additionally, the GEA is fortunate enough to have talented building representatives that will pursue your interests and facilitate communication with the administration. Jen Bak and Linda Hyjek will serve as building representatives at Littleville Elementary. Denae Dostal and Brittany Passman will be the representatives for Chester Elementary. Chris Mosher and Hannah Sullivan are teaming up to be the building representatives for the Middle School. Mark Donovan and Beth Guertin will represent the High School.

Please consider volunteering to serve your association in the upcoming school year. We need people to serve on GEA committees, attend school committee meetings, organize events, and to assist one another.

The GEA Executive Board wishes all of its members a happy, healthy, safe, and productive summer break. We hope that you all enjoy time with family and friends and recharge as we begin to prepare for what promises to be yet another eventful school year.

Yours in Solidarity,

Jim Duggan  
GEA President