

the PENDULUM

THE OFFICIAL IN-HOUSE PUBLICATION OF THE NEWBURGH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



NTA

VOL. 48 NO.4
JUNE 2018

JANUS VS. AFSCME

BY CAMILLE ALAIMO

DECISION EXPECTED IN JUNE

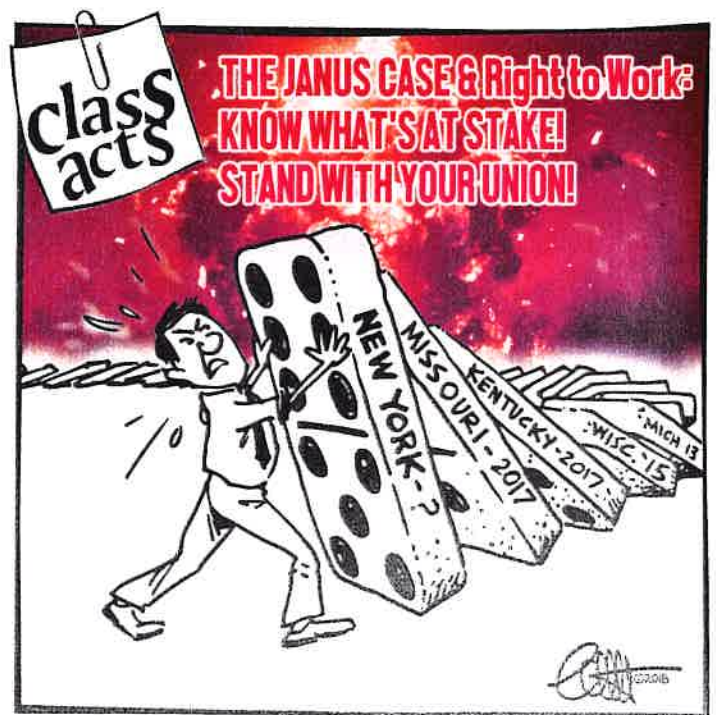
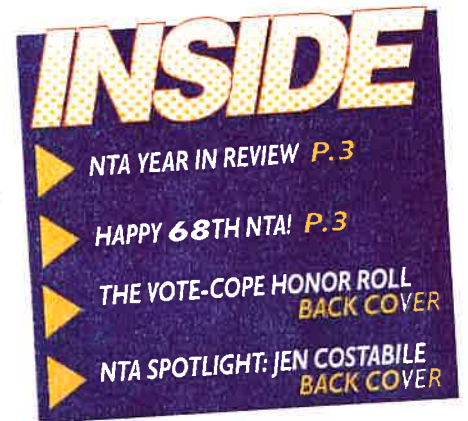
In February of 2018, the case of Janus, the social worker who sued his union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees because he objects to paying union dues, was heard before the U.S. Supreme Court. If Janus wins, it is likely that New York will become a right to work state, ultimately resulting in the diminished power of public unions in both membership and

funding. More than half the states in this country have lost their unions over the past ten years. In a domino effect, state after state declared the Right to Work (for less) status, which has led to the extermination of unions. In step with recent history,

IF JANUS WINS, IT IS LIKELY THAT NEW YORK WILL BECOME A RIGHT TO WORK STATE, ULTIMATELY RESULTING IN THE DIMINISHED POWER OF PUBLIC UNIONS IN BOTH MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDING.

New York State United Teachers expects the U.S. Supreme Court to rule in favor of Janus. Consider the outcome in Wisconsin, a Right To Work state where public employee wages and benefits have decreased by 21%. In the Winter of 2018 edition of *neoToday*, the article "Moonlighting" reports, "Nationwide, many public school teachers and education support professionals work nights and weekends to supplement the income they receive from teaching. These educators are not pursuing a passion when working as waiters, bartenders, hotel

clerks and cashiers. They are not trying out new careers as sales representatives at clothing, electronic and auto stores. They are not attempting to bulk up the resumes working as freelance tutors, personal trainers, electricians, plumbers and other jobs related to the area of expertise at school. They are simply trying to keep their financial boats afloat." The article also states that 16% of teachers nationwide work other jobs outside the education system, and that currently teacher wages are 17% lower as compared to other workers. Additionally, teachers across the nation are forking over a 20-80% copay for their healthcare plans. Wisconsin workers now urge New York State educators to not buckle under the pressure of corporate interests. If unions' membership falls below 51%, by law, they must be expunged. NYSUT has been preparing for the defeat as the Janus case unfolds. Thankfully, two things have happened in New York unions' favor: NYSUT and the Newburgh Teachers Association have teamed together in asking the membership to support the union by signing the recommitment card provided by each



CONTINUED PAGE 2

JANUS VS. AFSCME

DECISION EXPECTED IN JUNE

FROM COVER

support the union by signing the recommitment card provided by each building delegate throughout the Newburgh Enlarged City School District. This is physical evidence that the NTA membership numbers are high and strong. A stack of papers with individual signatures is much more compelling than an electronic number before our state representatives. A second unexpectedly pleasant win for New York State educators, surprisingly

put forth by Governor Andrew Cuomo, is the new policy that if someone chooses not to pay union dues, he or she will be denied some forms of union representation, such as representation at a meeting that may be disciplinary in nature. The union must still represent those non-dues-paying members when it comes to contractual matters. They will still get the benefits within the contract.

SCHOOL BUDGET PASSES, ENDORSED CANDIDATES WIN

BY DARRELL KUHN

Voters easily passed the Newburgh Enlarged City School District's \$275,391,654 budget for the 2018-19 school year. This represents a \$7,563,654, or 2.82%, increase from the current 2017-18 spending plan, which officially expires on June 30, 2018. The district's spending plan passed by a tally of 907-302 on May 15, 2018. The newly approved spending plan will officially kick in on July 1, 2018. Newburgh Teachers Association President Stacy Moran said she is proud that voters passed this budget. "It is always good when a community supports its public schools," said Moran. "This budget is fiscally sound and it strengthens our ability to serve the students of Newburgh." Moran said that the NTA gains several positions through the 2018-19 budget, including school counselors, social workers, and a bilingual teacher. Voters also approved of the Newburgh Free Library's budget, Proposition 2, on May 15, 2018 by a tally of 931-226. Proposition 3, the Cold War Veterans' Exemption, passed by a vote of 868-200, and Proposition 4, the Capital Reserve Fund, passed 762-327. Proposition 5, the authorization to sell the Washington Street School, passed by a tally of 880-224. Proposition 6, the Transportation Limit Proposition, passed by a vote of 677-409. For the Board of Education election, the NTA's two endorsed candidates, Ramona Burton and Philip Howard, won. Burton received 776 votes and Howard netted 882 for their three-year terms. Mark Levenstein was elected to his one-year term on the board with 553 votes, and Sylvia Santiago was elected to a three-year term with 650 votes. All of their terms begin on July 1, 2018. Carrie Robinson got 473 votes and Shoy Colbourne earned 266. "I am looking forward to working with all of the members of our Board of Education to address current and future concerns facing our educational community," Moran said.


NTA PHONE BANKS

Newburgh Teachers Association President Stacy Moran thanks all of its members for participating in the phone banks to rally support for the 2018-19 Newburgh Enlarged City School District budget vote and Board of Education election. This effort helped district voters pass the budget and elect the NTA-endorsed Board of Education candidates. Congratulations to the Gidney Avenue Magnet School (GAMS) NTA members, who had the most participants by percentage of every district building and won the Phone Bank Grand Prize.

FINAL PARTICIPATION RESULTS PER DISTRICT BUILDING:


Balmville: 12%	New Windsor: 9%
Fostertown: 5%	NFA Main: 3%
GAMS: 54%	NFA North: 1%
Gardnertown: 15%	NFA West: 0%
Heritage: 8%	South: 2%
Horizons: 7%	Temple Hill: 16%
Meadow Hill: 2%	Vails Gate: 3%

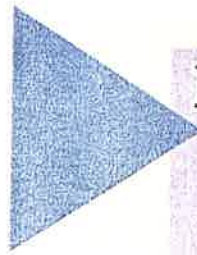




**NEWBURGH
TEACHERS'
ASSOCIATION**

The Newburgh Teachers' Association Official Publication
New York State United Teachers
American Federation of Teachers
Local 2067, AFL-CIO
Founding Editor: John Wolner





Newburgh Teacher Center

Beverly Browne Fazio
Coordinator

CHESTNUT STREET SCHOOL

HOURS:

MON 8am - 3:15pm
TUES 10:45am - 6pm
WED 8am - 3:15pm
THURS 7am-2:15pm
FRI 7am-2:15pm

845.568.6719



NTA

Historically Speaking

68 YEARS
Happy Birthday!

BY CAMILLE ALAIMO

If the Newburgh Teachers Association were an individual, she would be well into retirement age. Although it is believed that the NTA started in 1950, the first written record of its existence dates back to 1953, when the Newburgh Enlarged City School District Superintendent was given honorary membership! Labor unions in the United States started forming nearly 50 years before that. In the publication *The First Fifty Years: A History of the Newburgh Teachers' Association*, Marlene Naratil writes, "It was not uncommon in the 1950's for teachers to believe that the superintendent would always share their goals and aspirations. Some social historians have characterized the relationship between the super-

intendent and teachers as paternalistic prior to the 1960's." Union dues then were \$4 a year. A salary schedule was developed with step one starting at \$3,300 per year and ending in step 16 at \$5,600 per year. It is not clear what happened if a teacher was employed past 16 years. It might be surprising to learn that educators in the 1950's had much of the same concerns that they have today. A "superior teaching" committee was put into place with a merit pay system, which teachers were opposed to because "they questioned the evaluative procedures that were used to recommend individual teachers for higher merit pay." This is similar to the evaluation system public school educators in New York State

are facing today. Their opposition was predicated on the fact that favoritism and other subjective criteria would determine who received the merit pay, while educator professionals would be denied any input into developing these evaluative criteria. Equally bewildering to educators was the rising popularity of the latest gizmo to compete for student attention: the television. Some fearfully believed that TV would replace reading, similar to today's arguments regarding cell phones. Davey Crockett with his coonskin cap soon became a fad for young boys. The forever-fashionable Barbie became the accessory "du jour."

In 1956, the NECSD Board of Education denied teachers a raise, which prompted the NTA to hire a full-time lawyer to the position of "executive secretary" for a salary of \$2,000 per-year. Shortly thereafter, this new business paradigm led to salary increases and the establishment of the Welfare Trust Fund, significantly less generous than today's Benefits Trust Fund. It was not until 1959 that the NTA received health benefits for its members. Despite the nostalgia, fighting for excellence in public education has been an uphill battle for the NTA and other teachers unions. The fight continues.

NTA HAS STRONG 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

BY DARRELL KUHN

It has been another busy school year for the Newburgh Teachers Association. Much has been accomplished since the school year officially began on July 1, 2017. The NTA settled a five-year contract for its members, an agreement that gives them a 2% annual raise until June 30, 2022, among other benefits. The NTA leadership has also been working hard to educate its membership about the Janus case. The Janus vs. the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) is currently being heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. The case involves Mark Janus, an employee of the Illinois Department of Healthcare Services. He is suing the AFSCME, his union, because he does not want to pay his fair share of dues while continuing to reap all of the union benefits. A ruling in favor of Janus means that public service employees could choose to quit paying union dues while still retaining all of the benefits of union representation. Without dues, unions cannot afford to exist. Ultimately, this type of financial devastation could bankrupt unions, the NTA included. The law says that if union membership falls below 51%, it must be

dissolved. This means the new NTA contract would be null and void. NTA leaders have been working to get its members to recommit to the union in the inevitability that the U.S. Supreme Court rules in favor of the Janus case. "We trained our NTA representatives to do one-on-one organizing, which has led us to have most of our members recommit to our union, and I am confident that we will get all of them by the time the Janus decision comes down," said NTA President Stacy Moran. "We continue to engage our members to become more active in their union and in political issues that concern us." As for the 2018-19 school year, Moran said the NTA wants to settle a contract for its Teaching Assistants. The NTA also wants to retain all of its members. "We also want to continue our community outreach," Moran said. Moran added that in order for the NTA to accomplish its goals for the 2018-19 school year, it needs the efforts and support of all of its members.



NTA

VOTE COPE Honor Roll



Thank you to the following Newburgh Teachers Association members, retirees included, who give very generously to VOTE/COPE, the political action fund for the NTA and New York State United Teachers. VOTE/COPE contributions give us political strength to combat threats to tenure, to the Triborough amendment to the Taylor Law (which ensures our collective bargaining rights), and to our pensions.

For more information about VOTE/COPE and how to contribute, please contact NTA Vice President, Matt Scully at vp@newburghta.com



Brian Alexander
Edward Basha
Joseph Belcher

Frances Bennet	Janis Cortright	Mary Ann Farkas
Cynthia Bottali	Bette Coughlin	Philip Gertler
Irene Brown	Russell Coughlin	Beth Glynn
Beverly Browne Fazio	Jennifer Costabile	Michael Grammer
Jillian Caci	Jeanne Daley	Janice Greenop
Mary Carnes	Laura De Pace	Robin Grove
Michelle Clark	Guy DuQuesnay	Nancy Guzman
Laurie Colacchio	Christopher Eachus	Sherri Hall
Ann Copertino	John Eitel	Annmarie Healey
Maryann Corbett	Krista Espinoza	Judith Hernandez
Donald Cortright	Carolyn Evans	Maria Teresa Hoyos

NTA SPOTLIGHT



BY CAMILLE ALAIMO

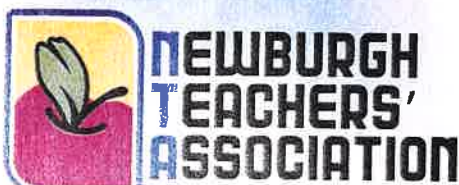
JEN COSTABILE



Jen Costabile, the Newburgh Teachers Association's head delegate at the Newburgh Free Academy Main Campus, is working tirelessly on strengthening interest in the NTA among its membership. During a recent interview, Jen stated, "It is gratifying to see a shift in perspective. Rather than regarding the union as an insurance policy - there just in case you need it - it's important to cultivate its worthiness and value because it may not always be there." This is the case with 50% of the country today. Jen spoke to teachers in South Carolina who work on Saturdays to make up for

the weather-related days off. In Los Angeles throughout the past months, a teacher was hauled off in handcuffs for speaking her opinion. Another teacher who bought furniture for her classroom was told it "didn't match" the existing furniture, "so get rid of it." These are just a few examples of the direction of Right to Work (for less). The United States would become a Right to Work Nation if the U.S. Supreme Court rules in favor of the current Janus vs. the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees case. The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to rule in favor of this case. "In recent years," Jen contends, "We have seen consultants come in who have never taught, being paid thousands of dollars to serve the interests of big corporations, such as Bill Gates' Microsoft." Moreover, Jen believes that our only recourse in fighting the demands placed on us by initiatives that increase our workload, is the union. Jen goes on to say, "Unionized teachers are the last vestige of social justice, not just for our own profession, which is under constant assault, but also for the students, especially those in inner city

districts, where defunding public schools, the infestation of charterschools, and reform are attacking our most vulnerable. Teachers are their only defense and only voice. Teachers who are safe and protected create environments that our safe and protected." Ultimately, our working environment is their learning environment. Your hours, pay, number of classes and working conditions such as lunch time and preparation periods are negotiated and protected by the NTA. Delegates are also responsible for helping teachers write and file their evaluation appeals and aid in disciplinary hearings. Jen says that the union supports educators in many areas of the profession. What it protects is virtually every condition of our workday. "It is highly unlikely that the conditions of our contract would remain without a delegate working for free, so that others can get fairly paid for their work," Jen added. "If you are profiting from any extracurricular activity during the day offered by the (Newburgh Enlarged City School District), your union is the entity making sure you get paid for your service. You have a social obligation to give back because without you there is no union." Coaching, after school offerings, paid committees, home teaching, and club advising are included in these activities. When asked about what she would like to see in the future, Jen replies, "My hope is that every member will make a small contribution to the union so that a small group of union members would not have to do so much to protect the working conditions of all members." There are many ways to get involved. Consider joining a committee, attending union meetings, being vigilant of union happenings nationwide, responding to emails, writing to state representatives about your concerns, stuffing educators' work mailboxes with union information, and heeding the call to action by the NTA.



52 Pierces Road
Newburgh, New York 12550

