

ASSOCIATE

Frederick County Teachers Association

**FCTA Officers and Staff
wish all our
members a very
Happy New Year**

Phone: 301-662-9077
www.myfcta.org



Presidents Message: Sunshine Patriots and Summer Soldiers

A while back I had the pleasure of sitting in on a high school English class while they were discussing Thomas Paine’s famous Revolutionary War pamphlet The Crisis. The teacher was guiding the students through a discussion of what it means to be a “sunshine patriot” and “summer soldier”. The students gave insightful answers about how easy it is to fight for what you believe in when the weather is warm and conditions are easy but it gets hard to stay committed when the cold, icy weather sets in and things get tough. The students mentioned how this is true in any struggle, particularly one that drags on and suffers setbacks.

Not to stretch a comparison too far but I couldn’t help but think of our own struggles as I listened to this conversation. It has been over three years since FCTA members received a raise, teachers continue to be the scapegoats for all the ills of public education and beyond, across the country public employee bargaining rights are attacked and the already crushing bureaucratic workload of teaching just gets worse. Under these conditions I could imagine how easy it might be for members to give up and become apathetic as negotiations begin and the state legislature goes into session.

However, just as Thomas Paine urged his compatriots to continue the struggle, FCTA leaders must ask the same of our members. As negotiations get started FCTA will be advocating for overdue salary adjustments and a show of support from politicians for the work we do. Your association will be asking for MEMBER support as we fight for the needs of educators and students here in Frederick and at the state legislature in Annapolis. We will be holding elected officials feet to the fire and expecting them to find ways to support our important work. We will fight for a budget that is good for education and against laws that make our jobs more difficult, micromanage our time or divert money away from our classrooms. In order for FCTA to succeed I know that a few committed members cannot do this alone. We need EVERY MEMBER to support the Association in these difficult times. So in the spirit of Thomas Paine, I ask FCTA members to do the following:

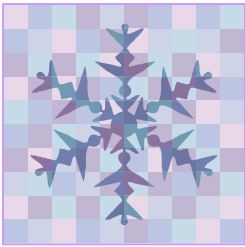
- **Pay attention**-read email alerts from the negotiations team, like FCTA on Facebook to get timely information, read information sent to you by your building rep and follow the county budget process and actions of the General Assembly through the media. Attend BOE meetings or watch on TV or the web.
- **Attend the Public Hearing on the BOE’s FY13 Budget**- join fellow educators at this important meeting on Monday, February 1st (more information is included in this newsletter).
- **Participate in actions called by FCTA in support of our positions**- from writing emails to elected officials to more direct expressions of concern, commit to standing together to express what we need and expect.
- **Contact me with questions, concerns and ideas**- I can be reached at gbrennan@mseanea.org or by calling (301) 662-9077.
- **Don’t give up and don’t give in to apathy!**

Yours in Solidarity,

Gary

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CALL TO ACTION!

FCTA Members needed to attend the BOE Public Hearing on the proposed
FY13 BOE Operating Budget!



When: Monday, February 1, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

Where: FCPS Central Office Building-South East St., Frederick
Educators must weigh in on decisions that directly affect us,
our families, and our students.

If teachers do not show up and advocate for the needs of public education, who will?

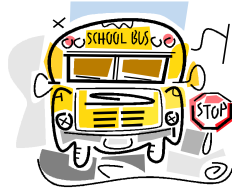
FCTA supports the following budget priorities:

- Commitment to funding step increases and other salary improvements as a top priority.
- Allocation of funds to current needs before funding new programs such as starting up charter schools.
- Reasonable class sizes.
- Preserving employee benefits.
- Maintaining programs to help our most at-risk students and their families.

BOE FY13 Operating Budget Calendar

January 04	Public Release of FY13 Superintendents Recommended Budget
January 11	Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session Opens / BOE Budget Sessions
January 25	BOE Budget Session – Finalize FY13 Budget for Public Hearing
February 1	BOE Public Hearing on FY13 Operating Budget – 7:00 pm; FCPS Central Office Building
February 22	BOE Adopts FY13 Proposed Budget
March 1	BOE Forwards FY13 Budget Request to County Commissioners
April 11	Sine Dei – Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session Ends
May 2	BOCC Public Hearing – FY13 BOE Operating Budget 6:00 PM Gov. TJ High
June TBA	BOCC finalizes FY13 Operating Budget
June 13	BOCC Adopts FY13 Operating Budget (including BOE)
July 1	FY13 Begins

Get On the Bus With FCTA



**LOBBYING NIGHT IN ANNAPOLIS
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2012**

**OUR LEGISLATORS NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU ABOUT PENSIONS, EDUCATION REFORM,
SCHOOL FUNDING AND OTHER ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO EDUCATORS
BUS LEAVES FREDERICKTOWNE MALL @ 4:30 PM
DINNER, SNACKS AND BEVERAGES ARE PROVIDED!
FREE! FREE! FREE!**

Contact GBRENNAN@MSEANEA.ORG to sign up or see your building representative!

NOMINATIONS FOR FCTA OFFICE OPEN JANUARY 5TH Terms Begin July 1, 2012

Nominations open January 5th, 2012 at the FCTA Representative Assembly, for the following positions:

1. **FCTA Board of Directors (two year term)** – Four (4) to be elected. The Board of Directors is responsible for the fiscal affairs and the general management of the Association. They also provide direction between meetings of the Representative Assembly and submit a yearly budget to the RA for approval. The Board meets monthly from August through May.
2. **Delegates to the MSEA Convention** – Forty-five (45) to be elected. Persons elected will represent FCTA at the MSEA Convention to be held October 2012 in Ocean City. Delegates will receive a stipend to offset expenses. *FCTA Officers and members of the Board of Directors serve as MSEA Delegates by virtue of office.*
3. **Delegates to the NEA Convention** – Fifteen (15) to be elected. Persons elected will represent FCTA at the NEA Convention – June 30-July 5, 2012 in Washington, DC. Delegates will receive a stipend to offset expenses. *FCTA Officers (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) serve as NEA Delegates by virtue of office.*

The election timetable is:

- **January 5** Nominations Open at the January 5, 2012 Representative Assembly
- **February 2** Nominations Close at the February 2, 2012 Representative Assembly. All intent forms due by the end of the Representative Assembly.
- **February 9** Publication with candidate information and ballots distributed in schools
- **March 9** BALLOTS DUE IN THE FCTA OFFICE BEFORE 5:00 P.M.
- **March 12** Election results published.

Any dues paying member is eligible to be a candidate for the Board of Directors, or NEA/MSEA Convention Delegate. Nominations may be made by the Nominations & Elections Committee, the candidate, or any other FCTA active member. **All nominees must file a Letter of Intent and return it to FCTA by the**

FCTA Hosts Community Workgroup on Closing Achievement Gaps

FCPS teachers, administrators and support staff as well as academics and community leaders came together November 28th at the FCTA office to discuss the progress our school system is making in closing achievement gaps and to discuss areas where continued efforts must be focused. The meeting was hosted by the FCTA Human and Civil Rights Committee. Attendees included FCPS Superintendent Theresa Alban, Middle School Director Tracey Lucas, teacher and Human and Civil Rights committee chair Dawn Lynch, Eliminating Achievement Gaps (EAG) Board President Lorrel Angeley, Frederick County Chamber of Commerce CEO Ric Adams, United Way of Frederick County CEO Josh Pedersen, County Council of PTAs President Daphne Gabb and FCTA President Gary Brennan.

Larry Steinley, FCPS English Language Learner Supervisor gave a presentation on the challenges faced by immigrant students who must adapt to a new culture and language while still reaching the same standards as native speakers of English. Dr. Michial Gill, a minority achievement coordinator with the Maryland Department of Education shared focus group results about the experiences and perceptions of African American male students. African American boys continue to underperform other sub-groups in the school system. Dr. Gill stressed the need for educators to understand where their students are coming from and stressed that high expectations for all students is mandatory.

FCTA President Gary Brennan explained that the goal of the workgroup was to get members of the community who are focused on eliminating achievement gaps together so they could network, share and find ways to support one another. "We can do a lot in the schools but we need the support of groups like Eliminating Achievement Gaps, the PTA, the Chamber and United Way", Brennan said.

Are You Connected?

Get up to date information about FCTA on Facebook. Find out about upcoming FCTA events by doing something you do every day – logging into your Facebook account.

- *Search "Frederick County Teachers Association"
- *Then Click the "Like" button



History is a great teacher. Now everyone knows that the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

NEA PAC votes to endorse Maryland State Senator Rob Garagiola for Congress

Much sought-out endorsement is critical to win Maryland's competitive 6th Congressional District

WASHINGTON - December 09, 2011 - The National Education Association's Political Action Committee, The NEA Fund, today voted to endorse the candidacy of Maryland State Senator Rob Garagiola in the Democratic primary for Maryland's 6th Congressional District. Election experts are picking this Congressional seat as one of the most likely Democratic pick-ups in the country, and Rob Garagiola as the favorite in the race.

"NEA is proud to endorse Rob Garagiola for Congress," said NEA President Dennis Van Roekel. "Now more than ever, as more and more Americans struggle every day, we need people like Rob Garagiola in Washington. If elected, he will bring to Congress a commitment to students, the right vision for public education and the right values to make the tough choices on behalf of Maryland's working and middle class families."

"I'm honored to receive the endorsement of the NEA," said Rob Garagiola. "In Maryland, our outstanding educators have helped make Maryland's public schools the best in the nation for three years in a row. I'm eager to get to Congress to fight for the resources that our children and educators need—in Maryland and across the country—to ensure that every student has a great public school."

Maryland's 6th Congressional District is currently represented by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R). In redistricting, the new 6th was drawn to include parts of northwest Montgomery County, most of Frederick County, and all of the western Maryland counties of Washington, Allegany, and Garrett. This represented a shift in registered voters from R+15% to D+3%. While Rep. Bartlett has indicated he will run again, he must first navigate a competitive Republican primary and then an uphill general election due to the district's shifting demographics. Primary day in Maryland is Tuesday, April 3.

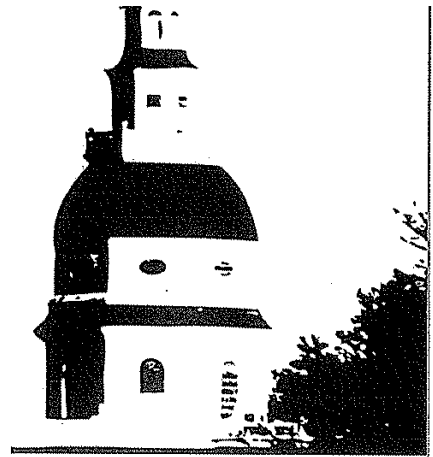
"As the husband of an Association member who teaches in Frederick County Public Schools and the father of three, Rob has firsthand understanding of the day-to-day concerns of educators and he has proven his commitment to championing our issues," said Maryland State Education Association President Clara Floyd. "During Rob's tenure as the Majority Leader of the Maryland Senate, he has been a vocal leader for adequate funding for our students and sensible policies for our schools."

As the NEA's national political action committee (PAC), The NEA Fund provides direct financial support to recommended candidates for President, the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate who will fight to support teachers, staff and students and improve public education.



Have to you gone to www.neamb.com and registered for the click and save program yet? If you have not you are missing out on all the ways your membership in FCTA, MSEA and NEA can save you money!

See the end of this Associate for a peak at some of this month's deals.



2012 Legislative Priorities

MSEA's chief priority in the 2012 Maryland General Assembly session will be to protect school funding. We must hold the governor and legislators accountable, urging them to protect school funding and safeguard the investments we've made in our public schools and our children's future by:

1. **Fixing the broken Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Law**

A broken MOE law puts our children's education at risk by opening the door to \$2.6 billion in local education cuts. We need to strengthen the law by ensuring it has accountability, flexibility, and fairness and that the state/local partnership to fund our schools remains well-defined, intact, and dependable.

2. **Rejecting the irresponsible shift of teacher pension costs to local governments**

This much debated shift is tantamount to a huge cut in education funding—creating far more problems than it solves. We must reject such an irresponsible shift and instead lead the charge for the continued investment in our students.

3. **Supporting a balanced approach to restore the fiscal health of Maryland**

Solving budget challenges cannot be done on a continued diet of cuts. We need sensible solutions, including new revenue, that will keep our schools great, our quality of life secure, and our jobs here.

Hundreds of other education-related bills will be filed and included in the 2012 legislative agenda. Our efforts to fight on behalf of our students, schools, and profession include:

Urging Gov. O'Malley to introduce a budget that maintains Thornton funding formulas

We call on the governor to introduce a budget that keeps critical resources in our classrooms by maintaining per pupil funding formulas, fully funding the geographic cost of education index, and restoring the inflation factor.

Improving student achievement

Whether it is to encourage greater parental involvement, recruit and retain outstanding teachers, or ensure that high quality professional development opportunities exist, we must focus on solutions that help educators teach and students learn.

Rejecting the BOAST voucher bill

Sponsoring and supporting a voucher bill when schools are already struggling to receive needed resources takes us further away from our goal to provide great public schools to every student.

Improving retirement security

While we would like to repeal the harmful pension reforms from last session, we must prioritize our efforts to end the "Teacher Tax," protect COLAs for current and future retirees, and seek long-term relief in employee contribution rates as the pension system is strengthened and stabilized.

Protecting and strengthening bargaining rights

We call on legislators to oppose "right to work" legislation and any usurping of bargaining rights. We will continue to advocate for statewide agency fee legislation, because we know that strong unions build the middle class.

*Visit www.marylandeducators.org/activate
to learn what you can do to help protect the investment in our schools!*

FCTA Winter Calendar

January 2	Winter Break, FCTA Office Closed
January 5	FCTA Representative Assembly 4:30 p.m., Gov. TJ High
January 11	Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
January 12	FCTA/FCPS Education Reform Council
January 16	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, FCTA Office Closed
January 20	2 Hour Early Dismissal - Teacher Directed Work Time
January 23	Teacher Work Day (7.5 Hours Teacher Directed Time)
January 24	Start of 2 nd Semester
January 25	Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
January 26	FCTA Board of Directors
January 27-29	NEA Mid-Atlantic Regional Leadership Conference
February 1	BOE Public Hearing on the FY13 Operating Budget*** 7:00 p.m., FCPS Central Office Building Board Room
February 2	FCTA Representative Assembly 4:30 p.m., Gov. TJ High
February 8	Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
February 17	2 Hour Early Dismissal - Teacher Directed Work Time
February 20	Presidents Day - FCTA Office Closed
February 22	Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
February 23	FCTA Board of Directors
February 27	FCTA Lobby Night in Annapolis***

***All Members Encouraged to Attend



January 2012
Hot Deals and Discounts from
NEA Member Benefits



NEA Click & Save "Buy-lights" for January 2012

NEA Click & Save, the online discount buying service for NEA members, highlights select retailers and merchants each month. Check out these featured "**Buy-lights**" for the New Year:

- Priceline.com:** Up to 50% off
- New Balance:** Get 15% off
- HP:** Get corporate pricing
- Blue Nile:** Get 10% off + free FedEx shipping
- PetCare Rx:** Get 15% off

Join the 220,000 NEA members already registered for NEA Click & Save. Go to www.neamb.com/clickandsave and start shopping today!

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H&R BLOCK®

Beginning in January 2012, download a coupon for special NEA member discounts! File a federal form 1040EZ for FREE (through February 29, 2012) or save \$20 to \$99 on tax preparation at a participating H&R Block tax office or online at Block Live™. After January 3, 2012, visit www.neamb.com/hrblock or call 1-800-786-3429 for details!

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Costco Means Savings for NEA Members!



As a Costco member, you can save money on thousands of brand-name items every day. To become a new member of Costco, simply login and register at www.neamb.com, go to the Everyday Living tab and the Costco discount page, and then complete and print the special Costco membership application. Present it at any U.S. Costco location when you register to become a new member—it's that simple!

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Save on a New or Used Car with NEA Auto Purchase Advantage!

The **NEA® Auto Purchase Advantage Program**, a free NEA member benefit, guarantees you a low price—in writing—that our carefully selected network of Dealers will honor. In other words, you won't experience any haggling or pricing games at the dealership. And, you save an average of \$4,441 off the MSRP*. Before you even set foot on a car lot, check out NEA Auto Purchase Advantage Program at www.neamb.com/autobuying—nothing ventured, nothing gained!

*** Savings off MSRP on new cars including incentives. Based on actual customer transactions. Please note: While new Certified Dealers are continually being added to the NEA Auto Purchase Advantage program, the program is currently unavailable in certain areas of the US, including AK and HI.**

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LOFT loves Teachers

Join the LOFT Teacher Community and enjoy 15% off your full-price purchases any time you shop in-store with a valid teacher ID. Visit **LOFTlovesTeachers.com** to register today. Like us on Facebook to learn more.

Link here: <http://f.mail.loft.com/i/36/1566646063/LOFTLovesTeachers.html>

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Jo-Ann Teacher Rewards Program

At Jo-Ann, we appreciate the hard work and dedication of teachers and home school educators. We are proud to offer the Teacher Rewards Discount Card. You'll receive 15% off every purchase you make, both in our stores and at www.Joann.com®. **Sign up** for one today!

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NEA Academy

Save on professional development!

Check out our courses from Learning Bridges, all with \$100 savings for members! Go to www.neacademy.org to learn more!

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