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Are You a Member of The Catastrophic Leave Bank? The Deadline to Donate for 2019-2020 Is November 15

The Catastrophic Leave Bank (CLB) allows certificated employees (MTA & AMSA) to donate sick days to colleagues with catastrophic illnesses. The form is available on MontebelloTeachers.org/forms.

- You may automatically donate 1 day per year by checking the appropriate box on the form.
You are eligible to participate in the CLB during any year in which you donated at least 1 day.
- Withdrawals are made in 20 day intervals with a maximum of 60 days.
- All those eligible for the days receive the days.
- The deadline to donate days is **November 15**.

Class Size Committee To Discuss Class Size Reduction

The new Contract states:

The District and the Association recognize that reasonable student teacher ratios are vital to meaningful learning. To this end, a class size reduction committee for both General Education and Special Education will convene no later than September 1, 2019 for the purpose of recommending class size for subsequent years.

District has 15 Days to Correct Class Size Contact the MTA Office with Concerns

Beginning fifteen days from the first student day, if class size limitations are exceeded, the administration shall have twenty working days in which to correct the situation by reassigning students, providing additional teachers, or providing an additional instructional aide upon request. **The Bargaining Unit member and the administration may also agree to the class size overage stipend.**

This year the fifteenth day of school is **Monday, September 9**. Thus the 20 day counting begins **Tuesday, September 10** and concludes **Tuesday, October 8**. **Complete the "Class Size Violation Form" on MontebelloTeachers.org/forms. Send the letter to your site principal and copy it to MTA Executive Director Kathy Schlotz.**

If the stipend is not agreed upon by both the Bargaining Unit member and the principal, Bargaining Unit members may initiate the grievance process **Wednesday, October 9**.



Yvonne Pasinato (MHS)
welcomes her science students
to the 2019-2020 school year.

Why MTA Dues are NOT Like Auto Insurance

By Lisa Quemada

Car insurance is NOT like a teacher's association. ***But man, I wish it were.***

If car insurance took care of me during the time I had it, and loooooong after I stopped paying for it, I might not mind paying car insurance premiums- I'd see it as an investment.

You see, car insurance is only useful while you have it. And, it is limited to emergencies. It doesn't help me when I don't have an emergency. It won't help me do my job better. It won't help fight for my safety before an accident occurs. And, car insurance pretty much gambles on drivers making mistakes and getting into accidents.

While teaching does have its emergencies and accidents, MTA doesn't bank on them. MTA supports a HEALTHY relationship among educational stakeholders, so that we can do our job. I teach. I teach all day. And then I do it again for many days in a row. I get to think and plan and worry about my job because there are MTA committees that think, plan and worry about all the other parts of my job that occur outside of my classroom. For example,

I want to do my job and not sacrifice my family's well-being if I stand up for students' rights.

I want to do my job and be adequately resourced for it.

I want to do my job and be trained in current and relevant pedagogy.

I want to do my job and not have to put my life on hold to work for free without parameters if I don't choose to do so.

I want to do my job and bargain collectively for my medical, vision, dental, and mental health benefits because I will get a better price than if I had to negotiate all these plans myself in isolation.

And there's more.

While I value the freedom and perks of merit, I also value the fact that my merit is not based on test scores, rather so on the work I do in the classroom. I'm glad I have a contract that details equality among members and my classes of ELD, Intervention, and Special Education do not define my teaching ability, but instead, highlight how I support their abilities. I'll thank my association for that.

I am glad that if I transfer to a different school site, I do not restart my seniority again from year one. I keep the years I served and spent gathering the experience that my new site will enjoy. I'll thank my association for that.

I am glad I can teach in a manner that benefits my class from period to period, day to day, and year to year. I might break pace from time to time to meet my students' needs, and I'll thank my association for protecting my right to do so.

I am glad I get a "heads-up" when a parent wants to walk in and talk to me.

I am glad I can provide input into district decisions, like how to spend money, or what kinds of training my school site is requesting without being punished for voicing concern.

I am glad students have support services available so that I can focus on teaching. I like when the nurse calls home. I like when the counselor calls home. I like when my VP calls home. It makes that phone call that I already made during my break time more impactful when my school supports my actions. After all, I have a contract to teach, and I'm glad my association protects my priority to do so.

Teaching associations do not solve every problem, but at least they help us prioritize our job. While associations are accused of "protecting bad teachers," we have to remember that none of us went into teaching because we were trying to work less or do a bad job. Our teaching responsibilities are large, our budget is small, and even though things may not work as well as we wish they would, the alternative is for us to teach during day and resource ourselves for our career and life on our own. True, MTA dues aren't sexy, and the benefits may not be obvious, but when I serve on a jury, take a sick day, ask for supplies, get my new text books, change medical plans, ask for training, and leave on summer break and know that I won't lose my position; I will be able to continue developing my craft. And, at the end when I retire, I'll have medical coverage through our association TRUST to lessen the financial burden of paying out of pocket until I reach Medicare age, I'll go ahead and thank my association, (not my auto insurance) for that, too.