



Public education in Massachusetts today

Public education underwent a radical overhaul in 1993. The focus of the system moved authority from the School Committees to the Superintendents and the Principals. The changes also brought about greater accountability for students through the MCAS tests as a condition of graduation. Educators must meet new standards for licensure and must recertify their professional license every 5 years . Much of this information can be confusing- never fear, help is here. The MTA's Office of Professional Development and Quality Assurance provides invaluable guidance for teachers – If you have a question, contact your local President, or call Steve Day at 8-00-479-1410. New questions are arising all the time, and there is never a guaranty, but we will try our best to help

DO I HAVE TO GET INVOLVED IN ANYTHING ?

The strength of your local is directly intertwined with the involvement of the members. Your first years are confusing, hectic, intimidating, and yet they can also be richly rewarding. You may not have the time in your initial years to get involved with the Union directly, such as being an officer, but please try and consider becoming a leader in the future.

Your work in public education is critical to the success and future of the students. The resources to pay for public education come primarily from a limited number of sources. They are:

- LOCAL TAX REVENUE
- STATE AID TO THE TOWN OR SCHOOLS
- GRANTS
- FEDERAL FUNDS

You may be asked, from time to time, to assist the local and your colleagues in making your voices heard about revenue issues or policy issues. There may come a time when the State legislature is considering a reduction of, or an elimination of Local Aid, which can have a devastating effect on your own livelihood as well as the quality of education that is available for the students. The issues may involve a Proposition 2 ½ override, the State budget or new regulations that may curtail your ability to teach effectively. Whatever the issue may be, please consider participating with your colleagues in making sure that the voice of educators is heard by your elected leaders. Often, taking a moment to email or call an elected leader, at any level of the democratic process can make a difference. So even if you don't have the time to become fully involved in your local, please consider participating should the need arise.