

President's Message



Dear Association Leader and Friend:

Great public schools are a basic right for every child. By now, I hope every one of MSTA's 70,000 members recognizes this powerful Association message. Over the last few years, legislators and the public heard it every time they turned around! We said to them daily: Keep our state's historic investment in public education intact so that educators and students can continue the progress made with the help of Thornton funding.

Our Great Public Schools campaign has focused on protecting this top priority for MSTA. You saw and heard our message in articles, speeches, ads, *ActionLine*, online, and in your Local Association's communications. It's become MSTA's calling card.

Despite our past success and Maryland's current difficult economic and budget outlook, we cannot stop pushing for adequate funding now – our students and schools have so many unmet needs. And even though adequate tools and resources are essential to creating great public schools for every child in every community, much more is needed, as every educator knows.

Great public schools have strong support from educators, parents, and communities who work together and share responsibility for providing a high-quality education to every child in a safe learning environment. These schools have teachers, administrators, and support staff who understand the needs of a diverse and changing student population. In an era of high-stakes testing, they use data to address students' individual needs, while still finding creative ways to instill a lifelong love of learning.

Yes, thanks to the additional resources and the hard work and dedication of MSTA members, many of our students are making real progress. If we truly believe that every child in Maryland deserves great public schools, we must all be champions of public education in our classrooms and school buildings, local communities, Annapolis, and Washington, D.C. I know that together we will be successful.

Thank you for all you do for the Association and our students.

Clara Floyd

Clara Floyd, President



MSTA Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives

The Maryland State Teachers Association dedicates itself to advancing high quality universal free public education built on quality teaching, high student expectations and a genuine opportunity to learn for each student; building a unified education profession with a powerful voice for the rights, professional interests and working conditions of educational employees; and working to enhance the rights of labor and human and civil rights for all.

Visit *MSTA OnLine*, www.mstanea.org, to find out more about the education issues that affect you and your students. Questions? Contact your Local Association, or MSTA, 800/448-MSTA.

GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS for EVERY CHILD

A message is a tool to help you stay focused on your priorities. When you're having a discussion about public schools, teachers, ESP or students, always come back to *Great Public Schools are a Basic Right for Every Child*. That means school employees need the resources, respect and support to provide them.

Here are some ideas to help you use MSTA's new message as you talk about the important issues that affect student achievement and your job.

We need tools and resources

A Great Public School for Every Child means:

- Students have updated texts and technology, smaller classes, access to quality early-childhood programs, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition.
- Teachers and ESP have the time and resources to teach, access to quality professional development, and adequate salary and healthcare.
- Parents and the community are informed and engaged stakeholders.

The world is changing ... fast

Educators must:

- Be prepared to meet the increased demands of higher standards and greater accountability.
- Meet the needs of more students with diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Have access to high-quality training in the latest research on cognitive development and learning styles.
- Be on the cutting edge of technology and its effect on how students learn and function in the world.

Responsibility + mutual respect = results

- Educators, parents, elected officials and the community share responsibility for high-quality public education in a safe learning environment.
- Working together, stakeholders can address every student's needs and ensure a sustained commitment to provide adequate resources.
- The school environment must promote respect for employees and students regardless of cultural or ethnic background or sexual orientation.

We must engage students

- Schools and communities enthusiastic about schools create engaged students.
- Students learn in different ways. Educators must evaluate student progress in multiple ways.
- Administrators must make sure the pressures of standardized testing do not stifle teachers' creativity or the students' ability to grasp content.

Weave your own experiences and examples into the talking points above so the message makes sense for you, your students, your school and community. Visit *MSTA OnLine*, www.mstanea.org, for more about the *Great Public Schools for Every Child* message.