

# REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- TREASURER

## **This Moment Demands a Movement**

In 2019 the MTA adopted five strategic priorities as a blueprint to grow collective power. These priorities continue to guide and inform the planning and work of the MTA. In many ways, MTA’s inspiring ballot campaign to win Question 2 and eliminate high-stakes testing addressed many of those priorities. (More on that in divisional reports below.)

However, this annual report would grossly misrepresent this historical moment if it did not begin with a brief recounting of the threats from the federal administration coming at our democracy, public education, unions and the MTA. And further, this report would be remiss if it did not describe the MTA’s role in the fightback against those threats, as well as our role in the fight-forward to continue to organize for a strong and equitable public education system and a robust democracy. Lastly, our great challenge is to carry on the fightback and the fight-forward, while also carrying out all the “normal” daily, monthly and yearly activities of the union.

The MTA and our nation are facing deep threats: threats to the civil liberties and due process rights of us all, whether citizens or not; threats to the existence of unions and collective bargaining; threats to academic freedom and free speech; and threats to the autonomy of educational institutions and educators alike. As this Delegates Handbook goes to print for the 2025 Annual Meeting, the Trump administration continues an ever-escalating campaign of dismantling the federal workforce and federal unions, while freezing or cutting funding in core areas ranging from civil rights to education, from health care to scientific research, and much more. The Trump administration is attempting literally to erase history, as government murals, websites

and archives are scrubbed of references to oppression of — or achievements by — marginalized communities, or anything that falls into the undefined, amorphous categories of DEI.

Elon Musk and other key advisors in the administration are setting the stage for large-scale privatization of government services by devastating entire agencies through mass layoffs of thousands of workers and diverting or freezing funding. The resulting inability of each agency to carry out their mission and serve the public becomes the self-fulfilling argument for accelerating privatization schemes. While private equity and Wall Street investors have long chipped away at the margins of public education — promoting charter schools, testing schemes, curriculum in a box, etc. — they now see the possibility of wholesale privatization through voucher programs and direct public funding of private schools, whether religious or secular. Rather than nibbling at the edges, the oligarchs want to feast directly on the more than \$1 trillion dollars spent on public education each year. The billionaires populating Trump’s cabinet now are undertaking what is arguably one of the greatest grifts in our nation’s history. However, the even-greater threat is the administration’s seemingly chaotic, though deeply intentional, march toward authoritarianism and fascism.

## **Fighting Back, Fighting Forward, Uniting for Our Schools, Colleges and Democracy**

In response, MTA leaders, members and staff are organizing to protect our schools and colleges, our communities and our democracy. Starting this winter, the MTA, along with dozens of immigration rights groups and worker centers, began a series of meetings for mutual support and defense. After the first such meeting MTA printed over

100,000 “Know Your Rights” cards in a dozen languages for distribution to locals and community groups. Those meetings have now evolved into a larger coalition including many other unions and civil rights and immigration groups. This coalition serves as a clearinghouse for information sharing. Additionally, a group of MTA members and staff meets regularly to support locals experiencing the greatest threats to immigrant families, with the goal of sharing information about legal rights, access to community resources and mutual aid.

Higher Ed faculty, staff and students have been organizing book groups, teach-ins, walk-ins and pushing their administrations not to capitulate to White House demands that prescribe speech and academic freedom.

On March 4, dozens of MTA locals joined with hundreds of NEA and AFT locals across the country in 10-minute meetings and walk-ins to build solidarity and amplify the call to protect public education and democracy. That was followed by more walk-ins, teach-ins and webinars throughout the month, culminating in massive rallies across the country on April 5, as well as actions across Massachusetts colleges on April 8. Walk-ins and rallies continue to be planned across the state and country with a focus on the week of May 1. To that end, MTA delegates, members and community allies will hold a march and rally in Springfield on May 3 immediately following MTA’s Annual Meeting.

Against these threats and challenges, MTA committees and workgroups including EMAC, the Anti-Racism Task Force, LGBTQ+ Committee, Safe Schools Task Force, Environmental Health & Safety Committee, ESP Committee and many more formal committees, as well as ad-hoc groups, continue to advance the priorities of educators across the state.

All of these actions are necessary, but insufficient. Ultimately, MTA members will have to join with union members across all sectors and all workers — whether union or not — to create strategic disruption and a halt to the assaults on public education, the common good and democracy.

### **MTA Blueprint and 2024-25 Division Reports**

Over the last year, MTA members and locals — supported by MTA staff — have continued to advance the 2019 MTA Blueprint priorities. MTA’s staff are organized into nine divisions and with MTA Benefits. What follows are the Blueprint Summary, along with brief Division Reports:

## **BLUEPRINT PRIORITIES SUMMARY**

- 1. Connect members to the life of the union.**
- 2. Cultivate and support leadership at all levels of the union.**
- 3. Maximize our bargaining power.**
- 4. Advance policy solutions and campaigns.**
- 5. Lead on economic, social and racial justice.**

### **Field & Organizing Division**

This division includes 95 field staff working out of the six regional offices, as well as the higher ed team. These field rep-organizers, regional organizers, specialty organizers, strategic researchers, support staff and managers all provide direct, day-to-day support for locals as well as for contract campaigns, issue campaigns, advocacy and organizing training and support for bargaining councils, override campaigns, etc. The F&O Division continues to support the ESP and Adjuncts Living Wage campaigns, the Safe Schools Campaign and Task Force, the expanding Summer Member Organizing Program, the Membership Program, Environmental Health & Safety work, the New Member and Student Members committees and activities and the Retired Members programming.

### **Contract Campaigns and Democratized Bargaining**

The field staff added over the last three years has meant greater support for locals in contract campaigns and bargaining. Democratized bargaining is becoming a norm as more and more locals across the state engage in some elements of this, such as expanded bargaining (silent reps), a bargaining platform, a CAT team, bargaining for common good proposals, coordinating bargaining among different units, and organizing escalating contract campaigns. A sampling of locals that currently are using silent reps in ongoing negotiations include: ALL higher ed bargaining units, Springfield, Chicopee, Northampton, Southern Berkshire, Agawam, Holyoke, Amherst-Pelham, Longmeadow, Clarksburg, Florida, Rowe, Savoy, Erving, Greenfield, Leverett, Swift River, South Hadley, Belchertown, Southwick-Tolland-Granville, Frontier Regional, Central Berkshire, Mohawk, Union 38, Quabog, Leicester Paras, CMCU Paras, SWCEC, Berlin-Boylston, Sutton ESPs, Keefe Tech secretaries, Blackstone-Millville, Westford, Hudson Paras, West Boylston, Maynard ESPs, Clinton, Winchendon, Freetown-Lakeville, Fairhaven, Mansfield, Middleboro, Halifax, Plympton, Easton, Franklin, Bristol-Plymouth, Norton, Acushnet, Mashpee, Dartmouth, Rochester, Barnstable administrators, Upper Cape Tech, Wareham,

Dighton-Rehoboth, Haverhill, Malden, Quincy, Watertown, Belmont, Somerville, Canton, Dedham, Waltham, Westwood, Braintree, Abington, TECCA, Pembroke, Cohasset, Weston ESPs, Foxboro, and many more.

**Highlights of Settlements since last Annual Meeting:**

In **Fall River**, Fall River Educators Association members held huge rallies, walk-ins and school committee speak-outs over many months and reached an agreement that includes salary increases of 7-8% / 5% / 5% over three years; four weeks of paid parental leave with the remaining paid through sick time; and 10 days from the parental leave bank if accumulated leave has been exhausted.

In **Beverly, Marblehead and Gloucester**, members struck for almost three weeks. BTA members held the line through a three-week strike (12 work days) and won a \$15,000 raise for ESPs (starting salary by the end of the contract of \$33,756), a 16% increase for top-step teachers, six weeks of paid parental leave, 60 accumulated sick days for family illness, an additional personal day and other contractual wins.

In **Marblehead**, MEA members won job security protections for ESPs; three weeks of paid parental leave, plus 12 weeks overall through sick leave; a joint committee on school safety; increased tuition reimbursement; the elimination of prior language that allowed the school committee to renege on bargaining obligations for ESP units; 16% for top-step teachers, 10.5% across-the-board over four years; and instructional assistants moved from the para unit to the instructional assistant unit will realize 19-51% increases over the contract.

In **Gloucester**, members recently merged units and won historic contractual gains. UGE members achieved seven weeks of paid parental leave; increased family illness time to 10 days; 11.75% increases for the teacher unit over four years; an approximate 26% increase in starting pay for ESPs with a starting salary for 35-hour employees by the end of the contract of \$32,562; additional prep time; timely responses from management to emails; AND a unified expiration of the contracts for the next cycle of battles.

**Higher Ed.** Last year, Higher Ed members led a statewide coalition to win salary/wage parameter increases of 20 percent-plus over four years from the governor. Now, almost every one of our higher ed locals is negotiating its contracts across the UMass, state university and community college systems. MCCC is waging its statewide campaign to win fair wages for faculty and staff, who are paid far less compared to peers at community colleges in other states. Democratized bargaining is taking place in every one of our higher ed locals.

**A sampling of other contract campaign settlements:**

**Fitchburg** – the FEA engaged all four of its units in coordinated bargaining using expanded bargaining that involved hundreds of members attending bargaining sessions and participating in contract actions. FEA members won 17.5% over three years for 75% of teachers at the top step; more teacher-directed prep time and fewer PD days; ESP raises of 21-26% over three years between time changes and wage increases; paid lunch for clerical members; custodial increased scheduling flexibility and clothing allowance improvements; two weeks of paid parental leave; health & safety language improvements.

**Everett** - ETA won 5%, 3%, 3% over three years for the teachers' unit and percentage increases ranging from 34% - 52% for ESPs. In addition, the ETA won four weeks of paid parental leave, plus 50% paid for the following eight weeks.

**Bedford** - The BEA organized over 500 residents to show up for the special town meeting in November that resulted in the community voting 401-91 in support of raising the school budget to support the BEA's contract demands (a nonbinding vote). In sum, BEA members won 5%, 3.25%, and 3.25% (plus 2.5% added to the top steps in years two and three) and 10 days of paid parental leave.

**Westford ESPs** won their settlement that includes Year 1: remove step 1; 2.5% on steps; new top step 9 at +\$1.50; Year 2: 3% on steps 2-8; +\$1.50 on step 9; three more paid holidays; Year 3: 3% on steps 2-8; +\$1.50 on step 9; three more paid holidays. In 2022, this unit had a pay range of \$16,000 to \$25,000. By 2028, the pay range will increase to \$26,000 to \$38,700.

**Southbridge** - on Oct. 24, SEA members won their contract fight realizing 11% salary increases over the life of the contract, along with major improvements to sick leave and personal leave. They continue to organize to move out of receivership.

**Douglas ESPs** - reached an agreement after a contract campaign that included bargaining sessions attended by more than 70% of the bargaining unit, resulting in an immediate increase of 13.5% to 19.5%, with a potential increase of up to 33% over three years for those with associate's degrees. Top pay will increase from \$23,000 to \$30,000 for members with a bachelor's degree and increase from \$30,000 to \$39,000 for members with bachelor's plus an ABA. The settlement also includes increased longevity pay and additional holidays, sick and personal days; **Somerset** - members ratified a breakthrough contract settlement for Units A & B that resulted in an average 14.7% salary increase over three years and four weeks of guaranteed parental leave paid from accumulated sick

leave for all parents; **Hingham** - three units bargained together and organized an escalating contract campaign to build the union and won: 12.5% over four years, plus 0.75% and a \$1,000 longevity pay for Unit A; 12 weeks of paid parental leave (eight paid by the district; four paid by the district through use of individual sick leave); unlimited sick time use for family illness; 50-60% wage increases for ESPs moving to \$26.52 - \$30.24/ hour by the end of the contract and increased longevity pay; and a first contract for administrative assistants with significant financial improvements, tuition reimbursement and health and safety protections.

**Cambridge** – ESPs won two-year settlements for three units (para, sub, clerk) that now align with the other CEA units; 20% over two years for ESP paraeducators (13.5% for 8.5% increase in time plus 3.5% and 3% COLA increases - \$31,753 starting salary and \$56,431 top salary as of Sept. 1, 2025) and many additional stipends ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 depending on assignment; **Wakefield** -14% increase over four years (3%, 3.5%, 4%, 3.5%). They also won an increase in annual family illness days from seven to 12; and won increased parental leave (10 weeks paid; up to four weeks paid by the district with no use of sick leave.)

**Pathfinder ESPs:** 17% increase over three years (combination of COLAs and add/drop of new steps each year); also won health and safety language, parental leave (20 days) and bereavement leave.

### **Budget Organizing fights**

In over 35 districts across the state, Field and Grassroots staff are working with members on override campaigns, as well as on budget campaigns in even more districts. Fiscal crisis workgroups have been organized and are working with LPPA staff to address manufactured funding shortfalls across the state.

### **YES on 2 Campaign**

Field staff worked with the Grassroots team, along with SDCs, local leaders, and rank-and-file members, to collect the ballot initiative's second round of over 25,000 signatures last May, just after the Annual Meeting. In the fall, Field staff worked with local leaders to organize over 537 canvasses, phone banks and back-to-school nights that featured YES on 2 outreach events.

### **The Membership Campaign**

Field and Membership staff are increasing their work with locals to ensure list accuracy (especially the regular acquisition of full-unit lists from the employer) and to sign

up potential members. The New Member Liaison program will increase its focus on recruitment of potential members. A new online application simplifies this process.

### **Retired Member-New Educator of Color Mentorship Groups**

The Field staff support the Retired Members Committee and its new pilot mentoring program, in which retired members of color are paired with new educators of color.

### **Staff Training and Development**

The Field staff hold regular meetings for planning work and to learn from colleagues and others. Additionally, field managers and staff have developed a set of 12 training modules for all new staff on organizing and negotiation topics such as the economics of bargaining, contract language analysis and development, bargaining document management and organizing tools.

### **Legislation, Policy, and Political Action Division**

This division was newly formed last year by merging the former Government Relations, Center for Education Policy and Practice, and Grassroots divisions into one combined group. The division's core functions include grassroots political action (ballot initiatives, overrides, local elections and in-district meetings), policy development and analysis, and lobbying. This year's highlights include the following:

The **18-month YES On 2 campaign** resulted in the elimination of MCAS as a high school graduation requirement and a major transformation of Massachusetts' high-stakes testing policies. This victory was even more remarkable since it was achieved despite the drumbeat of opposition from the governor, legislative leadership, Chamber of Commerce groups and Boston Globe and Boston Herald editorials. This campaign showcased the Grassroots team's organizing and coalition-building strengths. The division also engaged in extensive policy research and recruitment of state and federal elected officials to support the campaign.

The division worked with members to advocate for MTA priorities with the state Legislature and, in so doing, won free community college and expanded student support services at colleges, as well as increased education aid for districts across the state — although less than what is needed. A broad-based campaign of members and allies is organizing now to win more in FY26 and beyond.

The division staff also worked with members and the Legislature to achieve the enactment of legislation that

will expand and diversify the educator pipeline by allowing alternatives to the MTEL exam for educator licensure. Also, through the active engagement of members in policy work and advocacy, the MTA was able to stop harmful legislation on the deceptively named “science of reading.”

At the federal level, the division worked with MTA and NEA members and locals across the country to end the GPO-WEP laws that unfairly reduced Social Security benefits for those who receive public pensions.

Over the past year, the Grassroots team has achieved significant electoral milestones, strengthening educator influence across Massachusetts. Through organizing with local unions in 35-plus municipal elections, members were able to secure numerous electoral victories and play a central role in shaping local policy and leadership.

In addition, the division has significantly expanded its reach by **bringing on a large and diverse group of new educators as SDCs**, further strengthening its capacity and representation. This growth reflects the division’s ongoing commitment to building a stronger, more inclusive, and influential network of educators.

### **Division of Legal Services**

The Legal Division provides stellar legal services and representation to individual members and local union affiliates on over 1,000 cases annually in a wide array of labor and employment matters ranging from DLR/CERB proceedings to contract disputes to disciplinary proceedings. Additionally, the division continues to assist locals during negotiations, public records requests, local incorporation, etc.

The division has had a year of staff transitions: a new general counsel; a change in the key administrative role of case manager; the hiring of two new paralegals; and filling two staff counsel positions. All staff stepped up in major ways to ensure smooth transitions and minimize the impact of these changes on the delivery of legal services to members and locals.

The class-action lawsuit filed by parents against the MTA, Newton Teachers Association, NEA and UAW continues. Multiple motions to dismiss and Anti-SLAPP motions were filed on behalf of all the named defendants, and a large motion hearing was held in Middlesex Superior Court in March 2025. We are awaiting a decision from the court.

The simultaneous strikes by three locals on the North Shore presented new challenges to the division. Multiple teams worked diligently to advise locals who were in contract crises and represent the ones that went on strike

through the strike petition before CERB and the injunction proceedings in Superior Court. CERB and management invoked unprecedented legal strategies including (1) a second strike petition filed against union leaders in one local who were not named individually in the original petition; and (2) CERB granting a second order in another local obviating the school committee’s obligation to continue good faith bargaining while the union is on strike. The ramifications of these developments remain to be seen.

Most recently, the general counsel and staff counsel have been reviewing, analyzing and collaborating with other divisions in disseminating information on the barrage of executive orders from the Trump administration, as well as the various legal challenges to them. Legal is involved in MTA work groups addressing some of the impacts of these orders, is meeting with external representatives like the attorney general, as well as coordinating with the NEA on responses to the executive orders and potential legal challenges.

The deputy general counsel and administrative staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that Legal obtains maximum reimbursement from NEA on eligible cases (something that has been a challenge after NEA converted to a new system), as well as find ways to cut costs by culling unused and underused subscriptions.

Through all these internal transitions and external challenges, the “regular” work of Legal in representing MTA’s locals and members continues with expertise and enthusiasm.

### **Communications Division**

The Comms Division provides communications support for locals and for MTA leadership and develops and implements public relations strategies and campaigns. Communications staff maintain and support the various communications platforms (MTA Today, MTA weekly Union News, social media, etc.) Communications staff also develop relationships with reporters and editors across the state to ensure that the MTA and local stories are covered, always with an eye to amplifying members’ voices.

MTA Communications staff assisted local contract campaigns across the state by driving the public narrative and centering educators as sympathetic through social media outreach, member communication, media training and press. Local spokespersons and members active on social media received training, coaching and support from MTA staff. This work was especially amplified in some of the high-profile contract campaigns on the North Shore, in Fall River, and beyond. This has helped locals build their

communications capacity and strategy for work that lasts beyond the contract fights, such as in override campaigns and municipal elections. The division played an integral role in winning Question 2. Comms staff worked on all aspects of the campaign, including widespread press outreach and landing strong stories, guiding consultants who cultivated strong relationships with Massachusetts media, and driving groundbreaking social media coverage. Highlights included a beautiful campaign video and supporter videos on social media (including Matt Damon’s endorsement). The division also landed Spanish language coverage of the campaign in *El Mundo* and *El Planeta*, the major Spanish-language newspapers for the Latino communities in the Boston area, as well as coverage on Spanish-language radio. Latinos were a key voting group in winning Question 2.

In the fall of 2024, Communications staff began implementing the MTA Board’s charge to create a new logo and tagline (A Diverse Union of Education Workers). The division is continuing that work by building a new and uniform brand for all of MTA’s communications. Just after this year’s Annual Meeting, the division will begin the process of moving to a new web platform. The design and implementation process should be complete by year-end.

The division edits the weekly Union News email sent to members from the president and vice president and has added an “Actions Map” so that members can see where and when actions are taking place across the state. This tool helps locals and members support each other’s work and increases awareness of important, upcoming events. The open rate on the weekly Union News is very high for blast email communications and has increased to nearly 30% this year.

Finally, the MTA communications team won multiple awards from NEA’s annual convening of union communications staff. Kudos to the entire staff for their award-winning work!

### **Training & Professional Learning Division**

The TPL Division plans and administers major events and conferences, as well as professional development, topical forums, trainings and workshops throughout the year. Since last Annual Meeting, TPL has provided over 30 professional development courses with hundreds of members participating. TPL, in partnership with CEPP, continues to deliver Licensure Workshops, the Next Generation series of leadership development, and treasurers’ trainings (along with staff from Finance and Field).

Conference attendance continues to grow. Last summer had the highest number of attendees at Summer

Conference since 2018 and provided more opportunities for interaction and celebration as well as over 100 workshops. The conference included an “Unconference” event, which also was well attended. This year’s Winter Union Skills Conference was the largest ever and was combined with the Bargaining Summit. The high attendance was matched by high energy as the Newton Teachers Association band – Fair Contract – got everyone on the dance floor at the Friday evening reception. TPL also supported a youth summit with several hundred high school students, organized in conjunction with Team Harmony.

The first issue of TPL’s first-of-its-kind, open-access, education policy and practice journal, *Revolutionizing Education: A Journal of Education Policy & Practice*, will be out soon. Members are encouraged to submit articles for review and consideration.

Last summer, TPL organized a statewide Full-Service Community Schools Summit in collaboration with AFT, BTU, MEJA and the United Way. The summit attracted national speakers and participants and launched MTA’s Campaign for Community Schools. Several districts and schools (Framingham, Brockton, Worcester, Springfield) are advancing elements of the community schools strategy and are meeting together to advance this work.

TPL staff continue their own professional development through conferences and workshops with peer groups, advancing their expertise and certification in subjects related to TPL.

### **Finance and Accounting Division**

The F&A Division carries out all the routine and extraordinary financial, accounting, purchasing, payroll and membership functions for the MTA. Though much of this work is behind the scenes, it is crucial for the success and sustainability of all of MTA’s programs. The division provided **training and membership** support for locals and processed and reconciled thousands of files sent in from locals in the fall and winter. The division successfully completed **audits and reports** with increasing regulatory complexity and managed all the complex financial operations and reporting requirements associated with the YES on 2 ballot initiative.

Division staff implemented new protocols for all MTA check payments and vendor/contractor payments, resulting in significantly enhanced security. F&A also processes multiple payrolls for over 400 employees (regular full-time staff as well as SDCs, summer member organizers, etc.) in the course of each year. The division

successfully onboarded four new staff members and continues to develop training for new staff and succession plans for retiring or departing staff.

### **Division of Governance and Administration**

The division manages all Governance-related meetings and events, including the Annual Meeting of Delegates, Executive Committee and Board of Directors' meetings, All Presidents' and Regional Presidents' meetings, among others. The division also coordinates and manages the Massachusetts delegation's attendance at the NEA Representative Assembly. The division oversees all MTA elections and provides day-to-day assistance to MTA officers, the Executive Committee, the Board, member committees and local association leaders. Key activities this year included:

- Oversaw and implemented the formation of multiple new committees and task forces.
- Provided consultation and support to multiple committees including the Annual Meeting Task Force, the Policy Review Task Force, the Bylaws and Rules Committee, the Credentials and Ballot Committee, the Electoral Review Committee, the Committee to Evaluate the Executive Director-Treasurer, the Human Relations Committee, the Hearing Committee, the NEA Convention Planning Committee, and various Board Subcommittees.
- Seamlessly executed 10 Board of Directors meetings, 12 Executive Committee meetings, two All Presidents' meetings, six Regional Presidents' meetings and two all-member meetings.
- Navigated the challenge of the 2024 NEA Representative Assembly crisis, which was canceled due to striking workers.
- Successfully and smoothly transitioned new policies passed by the Board of Directors, Executive Committee and Annual Meeting of Delegates into practice and adjusted workflows for compliance.
- Worked closely with archivists on the MTA History Project.
- Planned the 2025 Annual Meeting of Delegates.

### **Information Technology Services and Printing & Mailing Division**

The two departments within this division provide printing and mailing services for locals and the MTA and provide IT support for staff and MTA technical infrastructure. Each department continues to search out and implement ways of saving costs, while delivering high-quality services to MTA staff and members.

**The IT Department.** During the past year, two new staff members joined the department: an IT trainer and a systems support specialist/division coordinator. They have brought fresh perspectives and great skill sets to the department and organization as a whole. The division collaborates with all other MTA divisions to ensure that technological needs are met and that the association uses its internal resources to the greatest extent possible. It is responsible for the implementation, support and maintenance of all major computer applications, as well as more than 200 laptop and desktop computers, printers, servers and internal and cellular telephone systems. The division's work ensures the smooth operation of technology systems that are woven through all parts of the organization and are essential to maximizing efficiency and productivity.

The **Printing and Mailing** department fulfilled 1,190 job requests during calendar year 2024 to meet print requests from all MTA divisions, locals, coalition partners and other outside clients. Local associations accounted for 352 of these requests, which involved the printing of materials such as contracts, fliers, newsletters and postcards. We continue to see an uptick in the use of the wide-format printer for banners, large posters and signs.

Large projects include the production and distribution of membership materials and cards, NEA-RA elections, candidate recommendation materials and mailings, and materials for various conferences including the Annual Meeting. As part of the MTA's ongoing history and archives project, the staff continues to scan historical MTA documents creating structured, searchable PDFs.

### **Human Resources Division**

The re-established HR division is finally fully staffed this year and successfully is addressing many systems and processes that have been in need of repair and development. In particular, plan documents, policies and benefit SPDs have been updated and brought into compliance and all state and federal filings are being generated now on a timely schedule. Staff training opportunities and needs are being addressed and implemented. Staff recruitment for vacancies is being promoted now through a broader range of websites and recruiting sites in order to diversify the candidate pool for positions. Also, a robust onboarding process has been implemented to ensure that new hires are provided with an orientation and training. Lastly, contracts with vendors – especially benefits providers – are thoroughly reviewed and negotiated to provide cost savings for MTA, while preserving excellent benefits for MTA staff.

## **MTA Benefits**

MTA Benefits recognized its 56<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 1, 2025. MTAB's mission of creating premium benefits to offer economic resources, discounts and services that help members live their fullest lives is as impactful today as it was in our early years.

Over the past year, MTAB has focused on providing education to help members cope with major stressors in today's world. MTAB partners have come together to address financial and physical health and wellness. Examples of programming include in-person presentations, webinars and videos on retirement, stress and burnout, debt management and addiction.

MTAB advanced its outreach to new presidents this year, ensuring that local leaders know they can count on MTAB to send benefits materials and host webinars to educate their members on all that their MTA membership has to offer them. To that end, MTAB has made an important benefit free to all members going forward: an identity theft protection plan.

Each year, the MTA Disability Insurance program hosts an open enrollment period for all members in participating districts, as well as for all new members regardless of district. MTAB has continued unprecedented growth for the second year, adding new locals to the program and providing even more members with access to crucial paycheck protection.

MTAB conducted a focus group to guide its efforts in best communicating the benefits of membership, as well as ascertaining the level of awareness and relevance of MTAB programs among members. Overwhelmingly, members feel supported by MTAB and its many programs.

An enormous demonstration of MTAB's commitment to championing members' well-being was a contribution of \$100,000 to Mass Child and a set-aside of another \$100,000 to help MTA support immigrant rights, workers center and other similar organizations that are struggling with finances as they defend the most marginalized in our society.