

The Can't 2021 Just Get Over With Already Edition

*I should start by apologizing. This should be the holiday edition of JETA news, but I tend to be pretty grinchy at this time of year—and many people who know me well are saying that I'm lying when I say "at this time of the year." Remember last year when we thought the plague would be over soon? Good times. So **Ho Ho Ho** and all that.*

As we've previously mentioned, **the contract** for 2021-2024 is done and signed. People who requested hard copies should be getting them through our super-efficient distribution system soon. (By super-efficient, I mean harried teachers with enough other stuff to do, so thank you, building reps.) Stuff one in your Christmas stocking. It makes a great gift.

One of the nicest things about this contract is that as of next year, school nurses will be paid at the same rate as teachers. This is the culmination of six years of negotiating work to get nurses more equitable pay, and we couldn't be happier. Please hug your school's nurse from a nice, safe, non-contacting sort of distance today.

Starting in January, we're going to go back to the district with some lingering issues that we didn't get to finish last time. We're looking at ways to get two courses covered for tuition reimbursements and doing something to improve pay for our coaches, who have been neglected for years as we've pursued higher salaries for teachers. Please bring any issues to your school's negotiating team member (Ben, Drew & Ryan, Jen & Natalie) that are district-wide (which is to say ones that can't be addressed at the school level) so that we can have a strategy prepared before the meeting.

Shirt orders have been placed. I have no idea when they're coming in. Thanks for your patience. We love our JETA swag, but it's a bit chaotic every year. Anyone want a JETA job as swag coordinator? Their pay is terrible and the working conditions are lousy, but it's also stressful, so it's actually no worse than your sixth period class.

This year, we asked for a new slogan that would best symbolize our reaction to the pandemic, and about twenty people made suggestions. We'd like to once again thank our winner, high school art teacher Katie DeLorenzo, for her slogan and design **CHALLENGE ACCEPTED**.



Last month's request for someone to help people get out of their **student loans** fell with a thud. It doesn't look likely that the current administration is going to take direct action against student loans, so you may have to take a more individual approach. One third of our annual dues goes to the national union, the American Federation of Teachers. Their SUMMER program for student loan relief looks like it can make that money well spent. Please check it out and tell us your success stories!

I have a couple of updates to report on the Baby Front. While I wanted to have a Cute Baby Off, I wasn't sure what that actually was, so instead I just want to let their proud moms say Kayla and Jessica say that

Kendall Crowley (6 months old) has learned the art of "crawling" backwards, on her back, by using her legs to push her hips in the air and scooch back. You can imagine how difficult nap time has become when she does not want to sleep 😊

My family feels so blessed this Christmas, and a lot of that has to do with the support we've received from the JEMS staff and the Jordan-Elbridge school community as a whole. The MS gave us such an incredibly generous gift to help with medical and travel expenses for the care of our beautiful daughter, **Ellie**. The prayers and positive vibes have also made such a lasting impact on our lives. I also feel so lucky to have colleagues who have picked up my slack in myriad ways on days I wasn't physically present at school. I just want everyone to know that I will forever be grateful! Sitting in the hospital day after day watching oxygen level monitors this summer, I kept thinking about Christmas-- having the tree lit up and playing on the floor with my daughter, and now IT'S HERE. I could not ask for a better gift. I wish for you all to feel as much hope and promise as we do this holiday season! XOXO Jess Killian

I wish I had made you all

your favorite Christmas cookies,

But instead

I just took a nap.

I hope you understand--

--I know you understand.

**Have a wonderful, restful joyful Christmas Break
and Happy New Year.**

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