



# New Members Bulletin

*Terms and Conditions of Employment  
What Teachers Need to Know  
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**The Great Neck Teachers Association**  
343 Lakeville Rd. Great Neck, NY 11020

**Probationary track**  
**Long-term substitute**  
**Part-time**  
**Hourly positions**

What terms and conditions apply to each category? These articles will help you understand the language of the contract and how it applies to your particular position.

You should pay particular attention to dates for evaluations, responses, and notification. If you are unclear about your status, your rights, or responsibilities, be sure to contact your BRC Representative or contact the GNTA office at The Cottage.



## Employment Status

By Sheila Henchy, GNTA President

The school board determines the number of permanent positions in each year's school budget. A probationary position is an appointment to an unencumbered permanent position. A probationary appointment must be made when filling any vacant, unencumbered full-time position. The Board has no legal authority to make a temporary appointment in order to evade the provisions of tenure laws.

**A probationary teacher** is a teacher employed by the Great Neck Schools during a period of probation, which usually lasts four years. The probationary appointment allows districts to evaluate the competency of a teacher prior to making an appointment to tenure.

**A long-term substitute** is someone who is appointed to a position that is encumbered by someone who is on leave. The appointment is for no more than a year, but it can be renewed. Full-year long-term substitute service counts toward seniority, since the Commissioner of Education has defined seniority in terms of length of actual paid service within a tenure area to a school district.

Our contract says that "before any probationary opening is advertised outside the district, current long-term substitutes who have been recommended for employment by a teacher selection committee shall be considered for such probationary appointments provided building teacher evaluation committees and principals recommend the teacher for re-employment. Recommendation for probationary appointments shall be made to the Superintendent by the appropriate selection committee. If there are more such long-term substitutes than probationary vacancies, the teacher selection committee shall interview the candidates"

If no candidate is selected from this group, the contract outlines

procedures to be followed.  
**(Art.42 A 1 g- GNTA Contract).**

**A part-time teacher** is someone who is hired to teach less than a full teaching schedule. On the secondary level, this would mean teaching fewer than five classes. For example, a teacher may be hired for a two-fifths position, meaning the teacher teaches two of the five classes a full-time teacher would teach.

**An hourly employee** is hired on the hourly salary schedule. Some examples of hourly employees are Special Individualized Reading (SIR) teachers, teachers of the homebound, some special education teachers, and some TESL teachers.

Some teachers are under the impression that long-term substitute positions "turn into" permanent positions or that an hourly position "turns into" a full-time position. This is not the case. State law and the GNTA contract clearly define these positions and the procedures to be followed in filling them.





## Did you know that...

Signing your observation, evaluation, or APPR does not mean that you agree with it. It merely means that you acknowledge receipt of the document and have read it. If you disagree with any written document in your file, you may sign the document and attach a note indicating that a written response will follow. Of course, always consult a BRC representative!

When the response is written, give it to your supervisor stapled to a cover sheet stating, "please attach to any and all copies of the (observation/evaluation/APPR) dated (date)."

If the document is online in My Learning Plan, the same applies: acknowledging receipt does not imply agreement, and if you wish to respond, you may do so in the Teacher Comments section of the document. You may also write "response to follow" and do so later. There is no time limit on writing a response.

## APPR....

By Sheila Henchy, GNTA President

The Annual Professional Performance Review plan for all teachers is mandated by New York State law. Effective September 1, 2012, all school districts in the state were required to have plans in place. These plans had to be negotiated by the districts and the unions, had to include minimum requirements set forth by the State Education Department, and had to be approved by the SED.

Great Neck began working on this process in the spring of 2011. An APPR Committee was established, comprised of eight GNTA members selected by then President Nancy Chauvin and eight administrators selected by Superintendent Thomas Dolan. Interestingly, the committee was united in its repugnance for the task: neither teachers nor administrators in this District believe that teachers' evaluations should be based in any part on the standardized test scores of their students.

As a result, the primary goal of the committee was to devise a plan that would, as much as possible, shield teachers from harm and leave them free to concentrate on good teaching rather than on test preparation. Our approved plan was successful in that, during the first year of its implementation (2012-2013), every teacher in Great Neck was rated either Highly Effective or Effective. There are some features of the plan, such as the rubrics used for observations and the APPR evaluation itself, that the committee believes are useful tools for achieving the shared goal of improving instruction.

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Changes in Education Law since 2012 require that school districts re-negotiate their plans for approval. Because these changes are unclear, the district applied for and received a waiver giving us an additional year to make changes to our plan.

The particulars of the current Great Neck APPR plan can be viewed on the Great Neck Teachers Association website by going to [gnteachers.net](http://gnteachers.net).



## Tenure

By Pete Lanzo, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist

What is tenure? Tenure is an employment status earned by a teacher who successfully completes a period of probation. Upon the completion of this probationary period, two things must happen in order for a teacher to attain tenure. First, the Superintendent must recommend the granting of tenure to the Board of Education. Second, the Board must grant tenure. A teacher who has attained tenure has earned the right to keep his or her job, free from discipline or dismissal, except for just cause. In other words, there are due process rights attached to tenure. Probationary service, granting of tenure, and the due process aspect of tenure are all matters covered by Education Law.

Your contract provides other information important to probationary teachers. Article 42 D requires that probationary teachers receive two evaluations per year, the first by January

31<sup>st</sup> and the second by May 31<sup>st</sup>. It requires that probationary teachers receive copies of any written evaluations and written observations within a specific time period.

This is to ensure that probationary teachers are kept apprised of progress and deficiencies, areas of strength and weakness, suggestions for improvement, and acknowledgement of improvement.

The Great Neck Teachers Association has incorporated these safeguards into the contract to provide for a meaningful period of evaluation without surprises. A teacher has a right to respond in writing to any written document that will go into his/her personnel file.

Take time to familiarize yourself with the provisions of Article 42. The contract is there to assist you as you proceed towards tenure. Good luck!





### Where in the contract is...?

Great Neck Teachers have an excellent contract, but it can be a little difficult to navigate. Here is a guide to some of the articles you may wish to consult as questions arise.

-Can long-term substitutes be assigned to probationary positions?

**(Article 42 A, 1f and 1g )**

-When can I expect to receive my observation reports?

**(Article 42 D 2)**

-Under what circumstances can my probationary position be terminated?

**(Article 42 D 3)**

-Under what circumstances can my hourly-compensated position be terminated?

**(Article 58 A)**

Take some time to review your contract.

## Important Dates

Evaluation and supervision of teachers differ somewhat depending upon whether you are a probationary, long-term substitute, or hourly compensated teacher.

We hope that the following dates will help you figure out what should be happening and when it should happen. If you are concerned that something may not have occurred when it should have, speak to your BRC Representative.

### January 31:

Probationary teachers should have received their first evaluation. A written evaluation should be received within five days of its preparation. The teacher shall receive a copy of a written classroom observation report within ten school days of the observation. **(Article 42 D 1, 2)**

**February 1:** Request for extension of an unpaid leave of absence for the following year. **(Article 30 E)**

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**February 15:**

Notification of the district by any teacher on an unpaid leave of absence of his/her intention to return during the next school year.

**(Article 30 E)**

**March 15:**

Applications for summer school positions are made available.

**(Article 53 B)**

**April 1:**

Notification to the program supervisor by any hourly compensated faculty who is not interested in the program for the following year. (Article 42 K 5)

Notification, insofar as possible, to any teacher whose position is eliminated.

**(Article 57 A)**

**May 1:**

Principal shall meet with any probationary teacher regarding his/her probable recommendation regarding tenure or termination of probation. (Article 42 D 3)

Notification to any teacher, whose position was eliminated, of anticipated termination of employment at the end of the school year.

**(Article 57 A)**

Notification to the principal by any coach or sponsor who chooses not to continue in an activity for the next school year.

**(Article 8 A 2)**

**May 10:**

Lists of expected vacancies for the next school year will be made available to the faculty. A teacher interested in transferring to one of these vacancies that may occur should notify the appropriate Assistant Superintendent within two weeks.

**(Article 42 G 2)**

**May 15:**

Notification to hourly-compensated faculty of their eligibility for reemployment by the program supervisor. (Article 42 K 6)

Notification of action taken with regard to summer school positions. **(Article 53 B)**

**May 31:**

Probationary teachers should have received their second evaluation. A written evaluation should be received within five days of its preparation. The teacher shall receive a copy of a written classroom observation report within ten school days of the observation.

**(Article 42 D 1, 2)**

**June 1:**

Notice of involuntary transfers for the following school year is given to transferred faculty members. This occurs only after consultation between the faculty member and the appropriate Assistant Superintendent. **(Article 42 G 3)**

For coaches and sponsors, notification by the principal of his/her intention to recommend for rehiring in the extracurricular activity for the next school year. **(Article 8 A 1)**

**June 15:**

Notification to faculty of probable assignment for the following year. **(Article 42 F)**



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## GNTA is Online!

[www.gnteachers.net](http://www.gnteachers.net)



(New Members Coordinator and Bulletin  
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