



## **RA Votes “No” to Second Voting**

The October Representative Assembly was full of emotion, speculation, and heated debate. Delegates deliberated at length while the local media awaited the outcome of a motion that would have authorized a second ratification election on the Board’s diversified pay proposal.

During the debate, there was a great deal of discussion surrounding the diversified pay issue and the negative vote on ratification. Erick Huth, Negotiations Chair, reviewed the process of negotiating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); the subsequent voting process; the failure of the MOU to be ratified by the membership; and continuous correspondence between the Board and MNEA. On behalf of the MNEA Executive Board, Huth moved that “the Representative Assembly resubmit the MOU to membership for ratification.” Association Representatives, including school psychologists, itinerants and other teachers, shared concerns that many of them did not have the opportunity to vote for various reasons. After over an hour of discussion and debate, the motion to conduct a second ratification vote on the diversified pay plan failed overwhelmingly.

A second motion was introduced to return to the bargaining table for the purpose of amending the MOU relative to the Nashville Alliance Award Initiative. Members were reminded prior to the vote that MNEA negotiates with the Board of Education, not the alliance or the donor. That motion passed. Additionally, a motion with several proposed changes to MNEA’s ratification process was debated and referred to the Nominations and Elections Committee.

Other pertinent issues of concern addressed by Association Representatives included the following:

- EduSoft Problems
- District Assessments and the time they take away from teaching and learning
- Mid-year Principal Transfers and the impact on instruction and school climate
- Highly Qualified (HQ) Teachers being assigned to teach a subject for which they are not certified or for which they do not have HQ status
- Supplements – All employees expecting supplements will receive payments in a separate check.
- Addie Massey, Hillwood H.S., was elected by acclamation to serve on MNPS Administrative Retirement Committee (the committee that administers the closed Metro Teacher Retirement Fund).
- The Director of Schools’ Salary Increase and the Evaluation Process

## **School Board Not Empowered To Act**

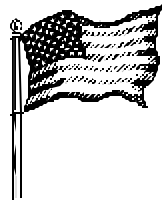
Following the vote of the Representative Assembly (RA) on the Diversified Pay issue, Erick Huth, MNEA Chief Negotiator contacted Dr. June Keel, School Board Chief Negotiator, to relay the results of the RA’s vote to return to the table for the purpose of amending the MOU. Dr. Keel after checking called MNEA President Dr. Jamye Merritt expressing regrets that there was no interest on the part of the donor in amending any part of the offer previously on the table.

## Apply Now for NEA Foundation Grants

The application deadline is approaching for the NEA Foundation's December and February Grant Review. Grants are available this year to secondary (grades 6-12) school art specialists through the local NEA affiliate, MNEA. These grants allow educators to create and implement fine arts programs that promote learning among students at risk of school failure. The grant amount is \$2,000. At least 10 grants will be awarded. Grand funds may be used for resource materials, supplies, equipment, transportation, software, and/or professional fees. Funds may not be used to pay indirect costs, grant administration fees, or salaries or for lobbying or religious purposes. A majority of the funds may not be used to engage an artist-in-residence.

Applications are due by December 15, 2006. The NEA Foundation will notify successful applications by mail no later than June 30, 2007. For more information on eligibility, and application forms, visit [www.neafoundation.org/programs/finearts.htm](http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/finearts.htm).

## Attention Eligible Veteran Educators



Do not miss the December 1, 2006 deadline to apply for state salary schedule experience credit. Metro will allow up to 5 years of additional credit on the salary schedule for all military experience for this current school year. Veterans need to have their paperwork in to the payroll office at MNPS with enough time for the local office to get it to the state by December 1<sup>st</sup>. If the paperwork is received on time, veterans will receive experience credit retroactive to the beginning of the 2006-07 school year.

The veteran will not receive any type of confirmation from the state. To check to see if the experience has been applied, veterans need to go to the local payroll keeper at their school or worksite and ask for a printout of their experience. If you are encountering problems or need additional information, you may call Harrison Farthing, TEA UniServ Field Organizer at 242-8392, ext. 233, or MNEA at 726-1499.

## President's Message: Join us in Celebrating American Education Week



Dr. Jamye Merritt

Thanks educators for all you do to provide a quality education for all our MNPS students and our community. American Education Week (AEW) is a time set aside to celebrate public education through events and activities.

Our theme this year, "*Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility*," highlights the importance of bringing together educators, school staff, parents, students and the community in a united effort to build great public schools.

We thank Councillady Vivian Wilhoite for sponsoring a Metro Council Resolution recognizing AEW.

Don't forget to share with MNEA your successful AEW activities. Send us pictures and other documentation of your events, including schoolwide, classroom, community and parental involvement events. You may chose your own sharing format. For example: poster, video, scrapbook, etc. Bring these to MNEA by 5:00 P.M. Wednesday, November 29th, 2006. All entries will be judged. Winners will be notified and cash prizes awarded for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners!



**\$125.00**



**\$100.0**



**\$75.00**

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## National Inclusive Schools Week

The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual National Inclusive Schools Week, December 4-8, highlights the progress our nation's schools have made in using inclusive practices to ensure a quality education for an increasingly diverse student population, including students with disabilities, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and English-language learners. This year's theme is "Charting an Inclusive Journey Through School, Work and Life: Successful Transition Planning for All Students".



The event will highlight resources that educators and families can use to prepare students to manage and embrace changes, as well as tools to teach self-advocacy and self-determination skills. Numerous resources, materials, and products are available on the web site throughout the year to help schools plan for the week and spread the message that inclusive practices benefit all students. Go to [www.inclusiveschools.org/default.asp](http://www.inclusiveschools.org/default.asp) for information, including a organizing kit with free and reproducible materials.

## Metropolitan Council Education Committee Calls Metro School Board to a Special Meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2006

Metro Council Education Committee held a joint meeting with the Board of Education for the sole purpose of discussing the renewal of the Director of Schools' contract, the subsequent salary increase and the "C" evaluation grade.

## Evaluation Workshop

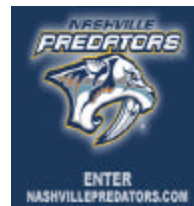
MNEA will offer a second Evaluation Workshop on Tuesday, December 5, 2006 from 4:30—6:30 P.M. at the MNEA Building. To make your reservation, call 726-1499, e-mail [mymnea@comcast.net](mailto:mymnea@comcast.net) or fax your reservation to 726-2501. Light refreshments will be served.

## Congratulations to MNEA members serving on TEA State Committees 2006-07

**Debra Smith**, Administrator Task Force  
**Julie Hopkins**, Status of Women Committee  
**Mary Jordan**, Status of Women Committee  
**Jane Walling**, State Board of Education Contact Team  
**Erick Huth**, Retirement and Insurance Committee  
**Nancy Holland**, Resolutions Committee  
**Betty Crowe**, New Teacher Committee  
**Dorcel Benson**, Membership Committee  
**Theresa Wagner**, Legislative Editing Committee  
**Dr. Mary Bailey**, Instruction and Professional Development Comm.  
**Gladys Lake**, Instruction and Professional Development Committee (TEA Board Liaison )  
**Stephen Henry**, Internal Organizational Needs (Chair)  
**Dr. Jamye Merritt**, Internal Organizational Needs  
**Christian Sawyer**, Human Relations Committee  
**William Stauffacher**, Human Relations Committee

## Predator's Teacher Appreciation Night

November 11<sup>th</sup> was designated as **Teachers Appreciation Night** at the Nashville Predators hockey game. We applaud the following MNEA members who were among the Tennessee educators honored:



**Suzanne Frensley**, Tennessee's 2007 Teacher of the Year! Suzanne teaches Advance Placement (AP) Art History, Art Survey and World Geography at **Hillsboro High School**. She recently became the fourth Metro Teacher named to this honor in the 46 year history of the recognition program.

**Jill Speering**, TEA 2006 Distinguished Classroom Teacher and nationally known Reading Recovery leader.

## Thanks AR's!

We applaud all our Association Representatives who attend the monthly meetings of the MNEA Representative Assembly. Take time to thank your AR. Representation ensures that you are not missing the first-hand account of reports, actions and issues being discussed and voted on. We don't want anyone to miss out. Make sure your school's voice is heard.

## National Teacher Incentive Fund / Grants Awarded

The U.S. Secretary of Education office announced in October the first grant recipients of the “Teacher Incentive Fund”, a program that provides bonuses to teachers and principals who raise students achievement in low-income schools. The Teacher Incentive Fund will eventually distribute \$99,000,000 for grants to local and state education agencies over the next 4 years. An initial 16 grants totaling \$42,000,000 will be awarded ranging from \$1,000,000 to \$30,000,000 to selective school districts. Since the announcement many groups have responded to this “cloaked merit pay” incentive plan.

According to NEA, the incentive fund is long on politics and short on substance. NEA President Reg Weaver says the program “hurts those who it purports to help: children”. The National Education Association considers the program “unnecessary and duplicative” and has called on the administration to resist diverting funds into this unproven experiment and instead target existing programs such as Title II Teacher Quality State Grants, which already allows states and school districts significant flexibility to utilize the funds for activities that best meet their needs. Other comments from ABC News Report follow:

- “It’s always a little suspicious when you have these things come out just before the election, allowing members of Congress in tight races to get some money for their district,” said Joel Packer, a lobbyist for the National Education Association.
- “Using the old-fashioned incentive of cash, President Bush’s program encourages schools to set up pay scales that reward some teachers and principals more than others. Those rewards are to be based mainly on test scores, but also on classroom evaluations during the year.”
- Secretary of Education, Spellings, though, says the money will be a good recruiting tool. The most qualified teachers tend to opt for affluent schools, that “these grants will work to fix this by encouraging and rewarding teachers for taking the tough jobs in the schools and classrooms where our children need them the most.”
- Rob Weil, deputy director of educational issues for the American Federation of Teachers, says that done in isolation, performance pay “have very little chance of having impact,” said Rob Weil. “You have to prepare teachers properly, have mentoring and professional development and professional standards. If you don’t have those things, it doesn’t matter what you do with compensation.”
- According to the NEA news release, “struggling schools have been deprived of the tools and resources they need to succeed. Instead of diverting \$99 million to another experiment, we should be investing in teacher mentoring and improved teacher recruitment through No Child Left Behind’s Teacher Quality State Grants, which are severely underfunded. The Teacher Incentive Fund is a flawed concept that reduces teaching to a class system of winners and losers. Teachers understand that politically motivated panaceas do nothing to improve teacher quality.”

For more information on the Teacher Incentive Fund, visit [www.nea.org/lac/letters/705Hincentive.html](http://www.nea.org/lac/letters/705Hincentive.html).

### Dates to Remember!

Nov. 22—Unpaid Holiday—10 mo./No students  
Nov. 23, 24—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS!  
Nov. 28 – Retirement Planning Workshop



### Quote of the Week

*“Correction does much but encouragement does more”*

- Goethe



More details and up-to-date information at [www.mnea.com](http://www.mnea.com)