



Negotiations at a Standstill

“The Board has absolutely no interest in giving up its authority to settle the contract,” June Keel, School Board Spokesperson.

In a valiant effort to reach agreement on next year’s contract, MNEA’s Negotiations Team agreed to accept the Board’s salary proposal of 1.58% effective July 1, 2006 which includes the state’s 2% increase spread across our indexed salary schedule. The agreement, accepted by the Board’s team, also says that “any state raise above 2% will be placed on the salary schedule at a ratio of a state raise of 2% being equal to a 1.58% MNPS raise.” Any one-time bonus approved by the legislature will be in addition to the scheduled salary increase.

In a resolution package of articles proposed by MNEA, that left the only outstanding issue as MNEA’s proposal to delete the old contract language of allowing the school board to impose a contract on teachers if agreement is not reached at the bargaining table.

MNEA proposed simply following the law, the Education Professional Negotiations Act (EPNA), to resolve a bargaining impasse. That process has as its final step a fact finding hearing and advisory arbitration with bargaining continuing if agreement is still not reached.

Board spokesperson June Keel said, “The Board has absolutely no interest in giving up its authority to settle the contract.”

Now, Keel and MNEA Chief Negotiator Erick Huth must deliver a written report to their respective boards outlining items in agreement and those in conflict and seek guidance from their boards in reaching a settlement. Either party can then call for a joint conference of both boards to try to reach agreement.

“This language was put into our contract way back in the 1960’s before the EPNA was enacted,” said Huth. “The process now outlined in the law is vastly superior to this old language because it recognizes teachers’ representatives as being on equal footing in this process with the school board and administration.”

MNEA President Jamye Merritt added, “I doubt the Board would see it as fair if the old language allowed MNEA to impose the contract on them.”

Erick Huth’s written report will be delivered at the Thursday, May 18 Representative Assembly. Your Association Representative will be able to give you details that Friday, and information will be posted at www.mymnea.org.

MNPS Teachers—Extended Contracts

Homework Hotline is accepting resumes for the 2006-2007 school year. Needed are friendly and kind teachers for after-school tutoring by phone.

MNPS teachers work 133 hours per year, usually as a 3.5 hour shift, one night per week. Teachers are paid \$16.76 per hour by MNPS as an extended contract. Homework Hotline is located in the Cohn Adult Learning Center in West Nashville. All books, materials, and motivated students are provided.

Needed are:

- Any bilingual teacher—especially those who speak Spanish, Kurdish, Arabic or Somalian
- High school science teachers
- High school math teachers
- Social studies, geography, history teacher (must be happy to handle all three subjects).

Please send a brief resume to:

homeworkhotline@earthlink.net or 4805 Park Avenue, Nashville, TN 37209. Please note, resumes with spelling or grammatical errors will not be considered.



**Here a test!
There's a test!
Everywhere a test
test!!**

Teachers are you testing more, teaching more or teaching more to the test(s)?

Is the massive amounts of testing getting you down? Are you and your students feeling overworked, overwhelmed?

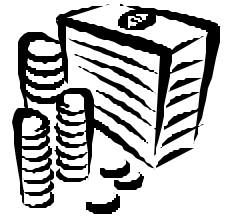
Let MNEA hear from you regarding your concerns, the amount of time, the support you have or do not have; the reaction of students, parents, etc. E-mail us at *mymnea@comcast.net*.

Staff Development Opportunity

Reading Recovery is a first grade intervention for struggling readers in first grade. Nine hours of graduate credit are available through TSU for the Reading Recovery training. Classes meet on Monday afternoons from 3:30—6:30 P.M. at Cora Howe Elementary School in east Nashville. Some scholarships are available! Cal Jill Speering at 262-6978 for more information.

Tax Exempt During Tennessee's First Sales Tax Holiday

In August of this year, Tennessee will hold its first annual sales tax exempt holiday, giving shoppers the opportunity to purchase certain school supplies, computers and clothing tax-free for a specific period of time, beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, August 4 and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, August 9.



As you plan for the 2006-2007 school year, you may want to let your students and parents know in advance what items they will need for school next fall. Items exempt from tax during the three-day holiday include school supplies, clothing and computers.

More information from the Department of Revenue is available from the following sources:

- Website: www.Tennessee.gov/revenue
- E-mail: salestax.holiday@state.tn.us
- Telephone: (800) 342-1003 8 a.m.-5 p.m., CST, Monday through Friday

The Slate is published during the school year by the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association, an affiliate of the Tennessee Education Association and the National Education Association.

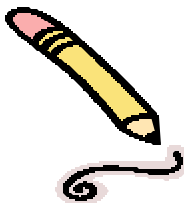
531 Fairground Court
Nashville, TN 37211
Phone: (615) 726-1499
FAX: (615) 726-2501

Jamye Merritt, President
Erick Huth, Vice President
Ida Barnes, Finance Officer
Nancy Holland, Secretary
UniServ Coordinators: Forestine Cole, Ralph Smith, Gloria Towner
MNEA Staff: Cathey Bartlett, Anna Ruth Day,
Jan Hardy, Teresa Hayes

TEA-Opposed Special Education Bill Fails to Advance

According to TEA this would have set up bureaucratic “hoops” and promoted lawsuits. This legislation which would have placed extensive new special education requirements on local school systems stalled in the legislature last week. In TEA’s opinion, SB 268, sponsored by Sen. Bill Ketron (R-Murfreesboro) would have been a “field day” for lawyers to sue school systems and educators. The legislation, which failed to be considered by a House Committee, was sent back to the Calendar Committee from the Senate floor. This effectively kills the bill for this session. In addition to TEA, the legislation was strongly opposed by the State Department of Education and The Tennessee School Boards Association.

MNEA COMMITTEE SIGN-UP



The committees of MNEA promote the association, submit recommendation, and perfect the details of almost every program we do. The payoff is curiosity satisfied, insights gained, and professional contacts with teachers across the county.

So, don't miss this opportunity to become an active part of an MNEA committee.

Please check each committee you would like to serve on and return the form to MNEA – Rt. 3.

NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

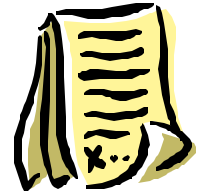
E-Mail _____

- _____ Budget & Finance
- _____ Building Trust
- _____ By-Laws
- _____ Human Relations
- _____ Instructional & Professional Development
- _____ Internal Relations
- _____ Membership
- _____ Minority Affairs
- _____ Public Relations
- * Read Across America
- * American Education Week
- * Scholarship

Know Your Contract

ARTICLE VII

P. OPTIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL PREPARATION PAY



The Board agrees to provide \$100 in recognition of extra work and preparation for those ten and eleven-month certificated personnel who are not on the administrative pay scale and elect to prepare classrooms or work areas prior to the start of the school year. Recognition pay will be included in the employee’s first full paycheck of the school year upon verification by the principal or supervisor that preparation has been completed. However, if verification is not received in the Payroll Department prior to the closing date for the first full payroll, the Board agrees to honor and pay any recognition verification it receives through the first 30 calendar days after school begins. (1999)

2005-06 Educational Agreement

MNEA Brings Home the Gold

This year’s session of the TEA Representative Assembly found MNEA nominees all winners.



Mayor Bill Purcell won the *TEA Friend of Education Award*, Individual category, the **Pencil Foundation** won the *Friend of Education Award*, organization category. **Stephen Henry, East Literature Magnet School**, shares the honor of the *2006 E. Harper Johnson Human Relations Award* in the Educator category and **Jill Speering, Reading Recovery Cora Howe, TEA Distinguished Classroom Teacher, Middle Tennessee**.

In addition, at the local level **Maurice Fitzgerald, coach/teacher at Pearl-Cohn High School**, was recipient of the *MNEA Ted Martin Human Relations Award* at the April MNEA Representative Assembly.

From the President

Tennessean “exposes” Association Release Time; Makes No Point and Misses Others

Most teachers would agree that it's a lot more work to be out of their classrooms for a day than it is to be at work to continue with the plan of study uninterrupted. But the Saturday, April 29 **Tennessean** reported on the number of Association leave days used by several MNEA leaders as if they were little more than vacation days spent frolicking along the Cumberland.

The article focused primarily on Erick Huth, Vice President and Chief Negotiator, who has, in fact, required 42½ leave days, which isn't excessive considering his two major MNEA responsibilities, and his national position as Central Regional Director for the National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA).

While School Board member Kathy Nevill, Director of Schools Dr. Pedro Garcia, and Human Resources Director/Board Chief Negotiator Dr. June Keel “tsk-tsked” about leaders' absences, they failed to note that the majority of the days used were at the district's request for MNEA expertise and input into district projects AND for collective bargaining sessions with the Board's team.

MNEA Bargaining Team member Dr. Vaughn Hales, McGavock High, said, “I have no problem meeting with the Board's team after school hours, on weekends, or during the summer. They're the ones who want to meet during the work day, and on top of that, they drag the process out by coming to sessions less prepared and empowered than the MNEA team.”

The article did note that all leave days were approved by Dr. Garcia. So, was the point of the story to criticize administrative decisions? No, the reader was left to believe that somehow MNEA did something wrong.

Adding insult to injury, the report included a chart listing individual's names, days used, annual salary, and the estimated cost of substitute pay—never mind that several people on the list are not allowed a substitute in their absence. And, said MNEA Secretary Dr. Nancy Holland, “Never mind that the administrators absent for most of the very same meetings pull down salaries that are two or three times that of their teaching counterparts!” One individual listed in the chart used fewer than three days of the ten that were listed with her salary and a number of Association Leave days were used on non-instructional days, which require no substitute teacher.

Representing you is both an honor and a responsibility. Your voice is vital to the success of our students, and MNEA is that voice. The excellent training and experience we have through TEA and NEA give us knowledge and skills we use to help improve Metro schools and advocate for you and our students.

People who don't develop a thick skin over the years are sure to be stung by sticks, stones, and words. I don't apologize for the Association leave that your leaders have used. I do, however, regret that one local newspaper continues to push the agenda of a few loose cannons and has failed to become a model of journalistic excellence.

Remember: Advocacy Doesn't Cost, It Pays!!

Jamye



More details and up-to-date information at www.mnea.com