



NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, renamed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, established goals for the learning of all children. Many of the changes that we have seen in our schools since the start of this year relate to the demands that *No Child Left Behind* has placed on our system. While NCLB, is a federal law the enforcement at the school district level remains the responsibility of each state.

The National Education Association is in the forefront of efforts to improve *No Child Left Behind*. The NEA has developed a comprehensive *Positive Agenda for the ESEA Reauthorization* that spells out detailed recommendations to make the law better. Under the plan, NEA will focus on three priority areas in working with Congress as it considers the reauthorization of NCLB/ESEA. A link to NEA's *Positive Agenda for the ESEA Reauthorization* and other information can be found on the web at <http://www.nea.org/esea/policy.html>.

You're Invited

The MNEA Minority Affairs Committee (MAC) is making preparations to hold a Holiday Gathering at the MNEA Headquarters on Friday, December 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The event is open to all MNEA members and potential members. Show up for a good time and lots of fun, games, and prizes.

What: *MNEA Holiday Gathering*

When: *Friday, December 14, 2007
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.*

Where: *MNEA Headquarters
531 Fairground Court
Nashville, TN 37211*

MNEA-PACE VACANCIES

The Metropolitan Nashville Education Association Political Action Committee for Education announced the following vacancies at the November Representative Assembly: **DISTRICT 1**-George Thompson's School Board District, **DISTRICT 3**-Jo Ann Brannon's School Board District (two vacancies), **DISTRICT 4**-Steve Glover's School Board District, and **NEA CATEGORY 2 MEMBER** (NEA life member or administrator member). Please note that the above districts represent the school board districts in which members live and vote.

A map of school board districts is available at:

<http://www.mnps.org/Page1726.aspx>.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE VACANCY



At the November Representative Assembly, the MNEA Nominations and Elections Committee announced a vacancy for a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee in the Overton Cluster due to a resignation. **Petitions for all vacancies listed above should be received in the MNEA Office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 7, 2007. Original signatures must be delivered to MNEA-No facsimiles please!**

MNEA candidate petitions are available at www.mnea.com/mneapetition.pdf. Nominations will be accepted from the floor of the Representative Assembly on Thursday, December 13, 2007.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Tennessee's new accountability law "Public Chapter 376" requires that teachers be assessed two times every five years and be evaluated once during the same five-year period. MNEA shared with Association Representatives the schedule for evaluations and assessments, which MNPS Human Resources adopted and transmitted to principals via email.

There have been some question as to the accuracy of the chart. Human Resources has verified that the chart was correct. Assessments cannot be conducted in successive years, but an assessment may be conducted in the year following an evaluation. Thus, the adopted cycle is:

Evaluation...Assessment...Off...Assessment...Off

Below is the alphabetical breakdown (using the first letter of each employee's last name) by year:

YEAR	Evalu- ation	Assess- ment	Off	Assess- ment	Off
07-08	L-R	G-K	A-F	W-Z	S-V
08-09	S-V	L-R	G-K	A-F	W-Z
09-10	W-Z	S-V	L-R	G-K	A-F
10-11	A-F	W-Z	S-V	L-R	G-K
11-12	G-K	A-F	W-Z	S-V	L-R
12-13	L-R	G-K	A-F	W-Z	S-V
13-14	S-V	L-R	G-K	A-F	W-Z
14-15	W-Z	S-V	L-R	G-K	A-F
15-16	A-F	W-Z	S-V	L-R	G-K
16-17	G-K	A-F	W-Z	S-V	L-R

UPCOMING EVENTS

December

- 3** **TEA Member Assistance Program**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 4** **"No Name Calling Week" Workshop**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 6** **MNEA Executive Board Meeting**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 7** **Kathy Woodall Award entry deadline**
- 7** **Petition deadline for Nom. & Elec. Vacancy**
- 10** **Minority Affairs Committee Meeting**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 11** **School Board Meeting**
Bransford Avenue Administration Building
- 13** **MNEA Representative Assembly**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 14** **MNEA Holiday Gathering**
6:00-9:00 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 19-21** **High School Exams** (half days for 9-12)
- 21** **Last day of First Semester**
(half day)



January

- 7** **Assessment Day** (no students)
(7.5 hours, one-hour lunch may be taken off-campus)
- 8** **First Day of Second Semester**
- 10** **MNEA Executive Board**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 17** **MNEA Representative Assembly**
4:30 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 21** **Martin Luther King Paid Holiday**
- 29** **Diversity is a REC Workshop**
4:30 p.m. MNEA Headquarters

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.

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KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

Teachers are not required to give a reason for using Personal Leave except during the first two weeks and last two weeks of either semester. See Subdivisions 2 and 3 below. Emphasis added.

ARTICLE VII, Section E. PERSONAL LEAVE



Personal Leave shall be available to teachers under the following conditions:

1. All regular employees shall be eligible for up to two (2) Personal Leave days in each school year without loss of salary. Employees with less than ten (10) years of service shall be eligible for one (1) additional day with loss of the prevailing substitute's pay. Employees with ten (10) years of service or more shall be eligible for three (3) additional days with loss of the prevailing substitute's pay.

In order to recognize and reward extended loyal service to the school system, the Board of Education shall provide certificated personnel who have 22 years or more of service credit with one additional day of personal leave each year without loss of salary. (1997)

2. During the first two (2) weeks and the last two (2) weeks of each semester, on the day prior to or immediately following holidays, and on scheduled inservice days, this privilege shall not be allowed unless recommended by the principal and approved by the appropriate administrator. Personal Leave during the time indicated above will not be granted except for an emergency or more unusual circumstances.

3. Personal Leave may be taken for any purpose that requires absence during work hours. **No explanation shall be required.** Personal Leave shall not be used for extending a holiday or vacation. (2004)

4. No more than one (1) professional staff member or five percent (5%) of the teaching staff of an administrative unit, whichever is greater, may take Personal Leave at one time. If the number requesting leave exceeds five percent (5%), but the granting of such leave will not interfere with the school's program, the teacher shall have the right to take the leave within the provisions of this policy.

5. Application for Personal Leave shall be made with the principal at least three (3) days in advance, except in cases of emergency.

6. Fully paid personal leave days which remain unused at the end of the work year shall be credited to accumulated sick leave.

TEA DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR AWARDS PROGRAM



The Tennessee Education Association's Distinguished Educator Awards Program offers members the opportunity to nominate colleagues in one of the state's most prestigious recognition programs. This MNEA is re-instituting the practice of soliciting nominations directly from members. If you believe professional excellence goes beyond school accountability and test scores, MNEA invites you to nominate outstanding educators who inspire students, parents, and

fellow educators and promote public education in the community in addition to modeling strong teaching and leadership skills.

Since 1982, distinguished educators have been honored each spring. Last year MNEA member Dr. Deborah L. Smith was nominated and awarded. This year it could be you or someone you know. Originally designed to honor classroom teachers, the program has been expanded to recognize members from across the profession including classroom teachers, administrators, education support professionals, and higher education faculty members. Award winners are honored in the spring at a luncheon at the TEA Building and presented before the TEA Representative Assembly (RA). The award also includes a deluxe hotel accommodation package the evening of the RA in addition to special gifts from the business community.

The nomination form is available at <http://www.teateachers.org/teachctr/Honors/deapmain.htm>. Read the instructions for each category carefully. Highlight/select the form for the category for which you want to make a nomination, then select print. The Distinguished Educator Awards Guidelines are also available at the URL noted above. There are three categories of Distinguished Educator Awards recipients:

1. **Classroom Teacher**
2. **Administrator**
3. **Education Support Professional**

FROM THE PRESIDENT....

With *corrective action* and *restructuring* facing our district and many individual schools, the time is right for our district to listen to the criticism of many of its teachers. How often have we noted a complete deterioration of a school when a new administrator arrived on the scene? In their 1992 article "Creating the New American School: A Principal's Guide to School Improvement," Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker described school climate as the "feel" one would notice immediately upon entering a school. Countless studies have confirmed that the principal can have a tremendous impact on the climate of a school.



In Metro, teachers tend to feel as though they are largely victims of circumstance who have little say in the day-to-day operation of their school. Collaboration helps to build a positive school climate while autocratic bullying tends to deteriorate the faculty's professional and personal sense of being and only serves to compound the achievement problems. The Effective Schools research tells us, among other things, that effective schools tend to be those that have a good spirit of collaboration among the faculty.

Under Tennessee's new educational accountability law Public Chapter 376, the Commissioner of Education has a great deal more control over schools identified as needing some improvement under No Child Left Behind. The Commissioner sent MNPS some very specific directives relating to twelve Metro schools under *corrective action* or *restructuring*. The directives included investigating the effectiveness of specific individuals, addressing bus schedule issues negatively impacting instructional time, assessing the effectiveness of certain departments within a faculty, and making administrative changes at certain schools to improve the delivery of educational services to students.

However, the issue of school climate has been largely left out of the debate until recently when Dr. Connie Smith, the Executive Director of the Office of Accountability at the Tennessee Department of Education, met with the Board of Education. At that meeting, Dr. Smith made it clear that "fear and

intimidation" were not strategies she expected to be used. The time is now for the Board of Education, the director of schools, all Metro administrators, and the Nashville community to say "no" to the ineffective, demeaning use of fear and intimidation in MNPS! Let us all toss the phrase "onboard terrorists" on the trash heap of failed approaches to educational improvement. It is time to move into a new era of collaboration where teachers' opinions are valued and all administrators work for the good of students not personal aggrandizement.

NETWORKING IDEAS

Networking with other educators is a great way to build a sense of community and connectedness within our association. MNEA would like to help facilitate this effort by connecting members with like interests. If you have ideas for additional groups and would like to volunteer as a facilitator, please contact us at 726-1499 or email mymnea@comcast.net.

Calling all singers and musicians



For many years, "The Sunshine Singers" brought together educators with a joy for singing. This group served as goodwill ambassadors for the education community by spreading "sunshine" through music. If you are interested in

joining with other musical-minded colleagues to form a chorus, contact us at 726-1499 or email mymnea@comcast.net.

Calling all runners

Have you ever wanted to run or walk a marathon or half marathon? The Country Music Marathon is Saturday, April 26, 2008. MNEA Vice President and others are interested in helping fellow educators who have an interest in participating in The Country



Music Marathon. Join them and other educators in training and make this dream a reality! Contact us at 726-1499 or email mymnea@comcast.net.



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