

NEGOTIATIONS

On May 6, the Negotiations Council met, using a collaborative approach, to deal with issues brought to the table by MNEA and MNPS. With the political reality of the state and city's budgetary shortfalls, the Council focused on contract, policy and operating procedure changes. MNEA representatives are Stephen Henry, Jamye Merritt, Kenny Martin, Diane Jarrell, Yvonne Jackson, Carrol Trusty, Renee Fox, Jeannine Renfro, and Chris Prosser. MNPS representatives are: June Keel, Sandy Tinnon, JoAnn Brannon, Ralph Thompson, Lance Lott, with additional input from Director of Federal Programs Keisha Raye and Pat Ashcraft from the State Department of Education.

The Negotiations Council has tentatively agreed to a number of changes noted below. **The agreements listed below are not yet final.**

Job-Sharing Guidelines. Tentative language requires attendance for in-service and planning days only on those days a job-sharer is assigned to work.

Non-Discrimination Policy. Make language more inclusive.

(Continued on page 4)

NATIONAL TEACHER DAY BANQUET

On National Teacher Day, May 6, 2008, MNEA held a special recognition of retiring MNEA members and MNEA's 2007-2008 award winners. Individuals recognized include Antioch High School student Brittany Hummer (Johnella H. Martin Scholarship Award Recipient) and Martin Luther King student Lauren Stump (MNEF Scholarship Award Recipient).

Stephen Henry (Creswell) was recognized as the 2007-2008 Kathy Woodall Association Service Award Recipient, and MNEA acknowledged the achievement of Christian Sawyer (Hillsboro), who received the 2008 TEA Distinguished Classroom Teacher Award at a luncheon at TEA Headquarters on May 9, 2008.

Marie Yavarone, Association Representative at Donelson Middle School, received the MNEA President's Award, also known as MNEA Association Representative of the Year. Marie was recognized for her dedication to member recruitment and support.

Janet DeSha was presented the 2008 Ted Martin Human Relations Award. The award is named in honor of Theodore "Ted" R. Martin, the first and only African-American male to serve as President of MNEA (1970-1971). Ted always maintained a special interest in improving the relationship among all educators and improving working conditions for Nashville's teachers. MNEA's annual human relations award was created to honor the principles embodied in Ted Martin.

The 2008 MNEA Friend of Education Awards were presented to Nelson Andrews, former Chair of the Tennessee Board of Education, and to the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, accepted by Executive Director Pam Garrett. MNEA Friend of Education Awards are given to an individual and to an organization whose leadership has contributed significantly to the improvement of public education in Nashville and whose actions reflect belief in a strong, high quality system of public education.

TEA ANNUAL MEETING



Suzie Clark-Carter

On May 9 and 10, teachers from across the state gathered at the Nashville Convention Center to conduct the business at the annual Tennessee Education Representative Assembly (RA). Highlights of the RA include adoption of the 2008-2010 TEA Legislative Program and changes to the TEA Resolutions. One change of note was the strengthening of language on English Language Learners.

MNEA Member Suzie Clark-Carter (Una Elementary) was elected to a three-year term on the TEA Board as the New Classroom Teacher Member. Suzie received a sizable majority vote in a three-way race. Congratulations, Suzie!

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT

Workshop Pay

Article VIII, K. Voluntary Workshops and Training Activities

All voluntary workshops and training activities beyond the regular school day will be compensated at \$85.00 for a 7.5-hour day, effective May 24, 2003. An individual who serves as a presenter will be compensated at \$200 per full day. Half days will be paid at half the established rate of pay. (2003)



Preparing Your Room for Start of School

Article VIII, 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)

Pay for **REQUIRED** Summer Work

Article III, R. Extended Work Year

The Board agrees, beginning July 1, 1997, to pay the daily rate for teachers who work beyond their contract year as directed by the administration and approved by the Board (i. e., guidance counselors, community education coordinators and psychologists). This provision does not apply to teachers who perform work beyond their normal contract year and outside their normal job assignment. This provision will not impact summer school pay as defined in Article III, Section A, Subsection 6 of this contract and other assignments such as, but not limited to, principals doing interviewing "off contract." (1997)

UPCOMING EVENTS



May

- 20-22** High School Exams
- 22** Last Day of School for Students
(half day for students Pre-K to 12th grade)
- 23** Last Work Day for Teachers

June

- 2** NEA Delegate Briefing
2:00 p.m. at MNEA Headquarters
- 12-13** TEA Summer Leadership Academy
Embassy Suites Hotel, Cool Springs
- 16-19** TEA Political Academy
Paris Landing State Park
- 26-29** NCUEA Summer Conference

July

- 1-6** NEA Representative Assembly
Washington, DC Convention Center
- TBA** New Teacher Orientation
- TBA** MNEA Association Representative Orientation
MNEA Headquarters

August

- 6** Teachers Report
- 6-8** Inservice
- 11** Students Report

SUMMER JOB OPENING

The Brighter Days Summer Program of the Edgehill United Methodist Church has an educational recreation worker position available from June 2 through July 18, 2008. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The position requires active involvement with children ages seven through eleven. Applicants must be available for the entire seven week period. For information, contact Nancy Crutcher 254-7628, #3 ncrutch@bellsouth.net.

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TIPS FOR LOWERING YOUR AUTO INSURANCE

These days, every dollar counts. If you're looking to trim your auto insurance budget, you can save some money by making a few changes. Here are some tips from the Insurance Information Network of Northern California.

Consider raising your deductible. If you take on a higher deductible – or the amount of money you will pay before making a claim – you could reduce your premium. For example, by raising your deductible from \$250 to \$500, you could cut your collision and comprehensive cost anywhere from 15 to 30 percent.

Ask about discounts. Does your insurance company offer discounts if your car has air bags or anti-lock brakes? Anti-lock brakes improve steering control and stability when stopping and having this safety feature may help lower your insurance rates.

Drop collision and/or comprehensive coverage on older cars. If your car is worth less than \$1,000, it may not be economical to carry these coverages on the car. To find the value of your car, check with an auto dealer, bank or Kelley Blue Book at www.kbb.com.

Shopping for a new or used car? Check into insurance costs before you settle on a particular make or model. Some are less expensive to insure because they are not a target for thieves or are not as expensive to repair following collisions. To find out which are safer, check out the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety's Web site at www.iihs.org.



"I saved 50% on our auto insurance with A Plus! My husband and I are extremely pleased with the savings and with the customer service!" LaVonne Thomas TEA

1-877-999-8927

Call us if you have questions or want your free comparison rate quote.

Jennifer Kremer, Field Representative
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HOMEWORK HOTLINE NEEDS TEACHERS

Homework Hotline is accepting resumes for the 2008-09 school year. The Hotline needs personable teachers to provide 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 by MNPS using extended contract funds.

Homework Hotline is located in the Cohn Adult Learning Center in West Nashville. All books, materials, and motivated students are provided.

Specific needs include:

- Any bilingual teacher - especially those who speak Spanish, Kurdish, Arabic or Somali.
- High school science teachers
- High school math teachers
- Middle school teachers comfortable with math

If interested, you may send a brief resume (with subjects and grades taught) to:

homeworkhotline@earthlink.net or
 4805 Park Avenue, Nashville, TN 37209.



615 298-6636
 toll free **888 868-5777**



UNIVERSITY OF MNEA SURVEY

The Instruction and Professional Development Committee of MNEA, which oversees the activities of the University of MNEA, has posted a survey designed to determine the professional development interests

of MNEA members. As an incentive for completing the survey two gas cards will be awarded on or about June 15, 2008.

To take the survey go to the University of MNEA Homepage (www.mnea.com/uofmnea).



FROM THE PRESIDENT....

Change is an unavoidable consequence of the human condition. Change, however, is not always easy to achieve nor is it always greeted with enthusiasm. Many of Nashville's teachers have rejoiced at the prospect of new leadership at the top of MNPS.



Unfortunately, at a departure reception hosted by principals, the former Director of Schools proudly called those assembled his "legacy." He encouraged the principals present to "carry on the cause." One must stop and reflect upon exactly what the cause might be. Clearly, Dr. Connie Smith, the Executive Director of Accountability for the Tennessee Department of Education, must have feared the cause to be less than noble when she issued her "cease and desist order" concerning "fear and intimidation."

Smith, unlike some administrators in MNPS, understands making improvements in student achievement is dependent upon the district's ability to create a positive atmosphere in each of its schools. The Board and the new Director of Schools must take up the cause of school climate. Gone must be the days when the Director of Schools announces to prospective principals, "If your teachers are happy, you're not doing your job."

Inaction on the part of the administration can only be perceived as tolerance of fear and intimidation. The challenge facing the next Director of Schools is to systematically dismantle the network of fear, intimidation, hatred, and disrespect the previous administration established. Let's make trust, order, caring, and respect our legacy and throw the former approach to running MNPS on the rubbish heap of failed educational experiments.

*I have decided to stick with love.
Hate is too great a burden to bear.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Correction: In my editorial in the last *SLATE*, I listed Karen Johnson, Jo Ann Brannon, and David Fox as the Board members on the Metropolitan Professional Employees' Insurance Trust. Dr. Brannon serves as a trustee on the Administrative Retirement Committee of the Metropolitan Teacher Retirement Fund, not on the Insurance Trust. Gracie Porter, Karen Johnson, and David Fox serve on the Insurance Trust. I regret the error.

(Continued from page 1)

Flexing the Parent-Teacher Conference Day. Language will allow scheduling of conferences at times other than the day listed in the Administrative Calendar.

Credit for Prior Teaching Experience. Language will be reinstated to the contract guaranteeing up to 10 years of service on the pay scale when entering the district. A study will look at the possibility of allowing full credit for years taught in accredited systems.

Differentiated Pay Plan. A plan will be established to provide a one-time \$4,000 bonus for newly hired math, special education, and ELL teachers. Additionally, the system will reimburse the registration and testing cost for teachers who pass the Praxis test for math certification. The system will also reimburse the cost for course work required to achieve ELL certification.

Contract Clean-Up. A committee will convene to clean-up language for consistency.

Additionally, certain District Policy changes were discussed: (1) The district will add language to the Code of Student Conduct detailing consequences for students who make false accusations against teachers. (2) The administration will review policies and procedures to ensure consistent reporting and investigation of teachers accused of serious policy violations. Principals will be trained in effective investigation techniques. (3) MNPS will develop a policy on faculty meetings to deal with the misuse and frequency of faculty meetings. (4) A subgroup is working on a process to address Association claims of violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of pertinent law, policy or contract language. (5) The system will develop procedures and guidelines for appropriate teacher evaluations. Principals will be trained to conduct appropriate and fair teacher evaluations. (6) Reviewing professional, code 10 and 16 leaves. Additional pre-approved code 10 leaves will be added. (7) Developing safeguards for teachers and administrators who confiscate personal electronic devices. The current cell phone policy indicates that schools are not liable for confiscated cell phones, but MNEA is interested in expanding the policy to other electronic devices. A system-wide policy will be developed banning electronic devices during school hours.

Some issues to study still remain to be addressed:

Testing and Assessment. The system will study the issues of testing including aligning district assessments with state standards and eliminating redundancies.

Calendar. ½ Days for TCAP Testing in 2009-2010; Flexible In-Service Days (Can be scheduled other times beyond the school day); Professional Development Days (The State is recommending some changes to the planning and assessment days currently in the calendar to allow for more meaningful, targeted professional development.)



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