

Professional Development Plans for October 28

The October 13 issue of Thursday Updates from Supt. Thornton had a summary of options for school-led professional development (PD) on October 28. We've posted this menu of PD activities at mtea.org.

If you have questions about the plans for your school, please check with your BR. On October 18, MTEA President Bob Peterson emailed our union's views on the use of the PD day to all BRs.

Background Notes

◆ Thursday Updates offer a variety of information from central office departments each week. Go to "Administrative Resources" on the MPS website.

◆ October 28 is one of the two districtwide PD days replacing the traditional teachers' convention. The second one is on February 17

Aesop Begins

On October 17, MPS started a new, automated system for dispatching substitute teachers.

Teachers now report absences online at aesopeducation.com. If you prefer, you may call and leave a message at 773-9937.

As in the past, please make sure you report your grade and subject, when entering the details of your absence online or leaving a phone message.

You'll need the pin number and ID number MPS assigned and emailed to you to access the Aesop system. If you don't have your numbers, call MPS Human Resources at 475-8224.

Help Reinvent Our Union

Why - Along with our students and schools, we are experiencing the harm caused by unprecedented cuts in state funding. And the defunding of MPS will continue with more cuts next year.

We have already lost the right to bargain any changes in our 2009-13 contract. The full impact of the new law will be felt after June 30, 2013 - when our contract expires.

What - We, the members of MTEA, must act now to reinvent our union. To remain the strongest advocate for educators and the students we serve, we must change. Our collective voice needs to be more focused on solutions and more forceful for improving our profession.

How - For starters, there are two new ways to get involved:

1. Four new school-level **MTEA Advocate** positions.
2. A **revitalized committee structure** to engage members systemwide in advocating for genuine improvements in teaching and learning.

Become an Advocate at Your School

The four new MTEA Advocate positions, in addition to the BR, are:

Democracy Advocate: Organize and inform members in your school about political races, recalls, legislative issues, and political actions.

Parent/Community Advocate: Work with parents and community organizations to collaborate on school issues and better your school.

Social Justice/Equity Advocate: Empower members in your school to address social justice issues that your students and the community face.

Teaching & Learning Advocate: Serve as your school's "go to" person on curriculum, professional development, and pedagogical issues.

Join Other Members for Districtwide Impact

Teaching and learning decisions made by the central administration need to be more student-driven and better aligned with classroom realities. To address this need, several new committees are being formed to focus on professional concerns. They will complement our union's long-standing committees, and offer members a wide range of involvement options.

As part of restructuring MTEA committees, a Teaching and Learning Committee is being formed. It will bring together educators from different grade levels and subject areas to address issues impacting classroom practices throughout MPS. As needed, subgroups may be formed for subject areas such as math, science, language arts, social studies, etc.

Make a Difference at Your School and Systemwide

Please sign up now at mtea.org or on the "Help Reinvent the MTEA" form by **Friday, October 28**. Together, we can reinvent our union!



Representatives on Our Union's Board

The two intermediate (grades 4-6) vacancies on the MTEA Executive Board have been filled:

Kelly Dawson Salas, Spanish Immersion, is now serving in the six-year position.

Michele Hilbert, Grant, is in the two-year seat.

Congratulations to both classroom teachers. They took office at the October 12 union leaders meeting.

Four-Way Race

There are four candidates for the six-year kindergarten-primary (grades pre-school - 3rd) vacancy:

Alaura Cook -
53rd Street

Rozalia Harris -
Hi-Mount

Monica Lopez -
Clement Avenue

Brenda Pullen-O'Donnell -
Engleburg

The election will take place in November. Only members in regular education at the primary grades are eligible to vote.

Don't Transport Students

You should **not** transport students in your car because of the risks. If an accident occurs, the primary coverage will be the responsibility of your personal auto insurance carrier. The School Board's liability insurance provides strictly "excess" coverage. As such, the Board will not pay for any claims unless your auto insurance coverage limits are exhausted.

The fact that you are on authorized school business - such as taking home students who missed their bus - does **not** relieve you of responsibility if an accident occurs.

Represent Our Local as a Delegate to WEAC and NEA RA Meetings

As a local affiliate of the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) and the National Education Association (NEA), the MTEA participates in the governance of both organizations. Most major policy decisions of WEAC and NEA are made at their annual representative assembly (RA) meetings.

Delegates Are Elected to Two-Year Terms

The MTEA Constitution sets the procedures for electing delegates to the WEAC RA and the NEA RA. To provide continuity of MTEA representation, delegates are elected to two-year terms.

WEAC RA in Spring of 2012 and 2013

The WEAC RA will be held in Wisconsin Dells the weekend of April 20-22, 2012. In 2013, the WEAC RA is in La Crosse on April 26-28.

NEA RA in Early July in 2012 and 2013

In 2012, the NEA RA will be held in Washington D.C. on June 30 - July 5. The NEA RA will be in Atlanta in 2013, on July 2-7.

Delegate Expenses Reimbursement in 2012

In 2012, the MTEA will reimburse the expenses for up to 55 delegates to the state meeting (\$235) and 24 delegates to the national meeting (\$1,344). The amounts are based on costs for travel, meals, and lodging expenses normally incurred by delegates from our area.

Delegation Reflective of MTEA Membership Sought

The constitutions and policies of both WEAC and NEA require efforts to achieve the participation of ethnic-minority members reflective of the state's general population. However, under the MTEA Constitution, our union's goal is a delegation that reflects the teacher membership, nearly 29% of which is currently comprised of ethnic minorities.

October 31 Deadline for Candidate Nominations

To become a candidate for a two-year term as an MTEA delegate for the WEAC RA and/or the NEA RA, you need to nominate yourself online at mtea.org. The online application includes a detailed description of the responsibilities and time commitment of delegates.

The deadline for receipt of nominations at the MTEA Building is Monday, October 31 (before midnight).

Call us at 259-1990 for a paper copy of the form if you are not able to submit your nomination online. You may fax it to us at 259-7801.
