
Special Education Certification Opportunity

The UWM-MPS Internship Program offers an excellent opportunity to earn teaching certification in special education. If accepted into this two-year program, you will receive teacher salary and benefits while earning certification.

You will have the support of a mentor during your internship - along with UWM course material and projects directly related to your classroom assignment.

If you are already certified in regular education, you may receive a \$1,000 tuition stipend. (If you are not already certified, a \$4,000 stipend is available for tuition support.)

Currently, this program is only available to individuals who have a four-year college degree.

Several information sessions on the program will be held during 2007-08. The first will take place at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, **October 8** at Educare, located at the Next Door Foundation site, 2545 North 29th Street.

For more details, please contact Tina Current, an advisor with the UWM Department of Exceptional Education, at currentt@uwm.edu or 229-4750.

Be a Delegate

Today's Team-Mate explains an opportunity open to all actively-employed members to serve as a delegate to the WEAC and NEA annual business meetings. The details are on pages 2 & 3. The self-nomination form is on page 4. The application deadline is **Wednesday, October 31.**

Misuse of EAs Must Stop!

For years, general educational assistants have been required to perform the duties of paraprofessionals and in some cases - teachers. Likewise, paraprofessionals have performed instructional duties of licensed teachers. This "cheap labor" misuse of our members has increased especially as schools struggle to deal with budget cuts year after year.

Many Attempts to Stop Illegal Use of EAs

Our union has tried repeatedly to stop the use of EAs as teachers and substitute teachers. We have filed several group grievances for violations of the EA, teacher, and substitute teacher contracts.

We have asked **all** members (EAs, teachers, and substitute teachers) to report contract violations. For example, in May of 2001, we sent a newsletter to **all** MTEA members with the headline article - "**Outrageous, Illegal Use of Assistants to Teach Classes!**"

Despite our efforts, the misuse has increased, especially in a number of elementary schools using Direct Instruction (DPI) to teach reading.

MTEA File Formal Complaint With DPI

In January of 2007, our union filed a formal complaint with the Wisconsin Department of Instruction (DPI). We asked DPI to investigate situations where the use of EAs violated state regulations and the federal ESEA law. The No Child Left Behind law spells out the "instructional **support**" duties which paraprofessionals "may provide under the direct supervision of a teacher."

MPS Directs Principals to Use EAs Appropriately

As a result of the DPI's action, the MPS administration has directed principals to utilize EAs appropriately. Below is the text of the September 20, 2007 letter, signed by Deborah A. Ford, Executive Director of the Department of Human Resources and Anita M. Pietrykowski, Director, Department of Administrative Accountability.

Reprint of MPS Letter

"Dear MPS Administrator:

"Over the past several years, the number of MPS schools that rely upon educational assistants (General Aides and Paraprofessionals) to teach reading and other subjects has increased. As the number of schools using educational assistants has increased, the manner in which these educational assistants have been used continues to vary from school to school. The Department of Public Instruction has required MPS to clarify the role of educational assistants in all reading instruction (Direct Instruction, Basal Reading, and Guided Reading) to ensure they are being utilized in a consistent and legal manner.

Please continue on page two...



Misuse of EAs

Continued from front page...

The following is intended to provide clarification and help you ensure educational assistants are being utilized appropriately.

"The role of educational assistants is to support the educational program. The role of educational assistants in Direct Instruction remains one of support. The use of educational assistants in a manner other than as support violates state regulations. State regulations require that a person assigned to teach reading via the Direct Instruction method or any other method be licensed. It also requires that introduction (teaching) of materials to students be performed at all times by licensed teachers.

"Educational assistants cannot be used as instructional leaders, because educational assistants are not licensed. Educational assistants cannot teach reading under any curriculum model. Educational assistants shall not be assigned to teach reading groups. Educational assistants cannot introduce material to students. Therefore, educational assistants working in Direct Instruction cannot be used to teacher reading or introduce new material to students. Considering educational assistants are not licensed and cannot introduce material to students, their role in the direct instruction process must be different from that of teachers. Educational assistants cannot be used to perform the same functions teachers do in any reading instruction, including Direct Instruction.

Please continue on page three...

Help Set the Direction for WEAC and the NEA

Do you know who adopts WEAC and NEA positions on current issues? Who sets their policies? Who elects our state and national union leaders? Who decides how WEAC and NEA dues are spent?

The answer is that members like you determine the overall direction and the major positions of WEAC and NEA. Members who are elected as delegates meet once a year at the WEAC Representative Assembly in the spring and at the NEA Representative Assembly in July. These delegates elect officers and make the basic decisions that guide WEAC and NEA throughout each school year.

WEAC RA Activities/Time Commitment

The WEAC RA, which is made up of nearly 900 delegates from across the state, is held on a weekend in late April or early May each year. On Friday evening, hearings are conducted on the budget, resolutions, and constitutional amendments. There are also opportunities to meet the candidates for WEAC offices. There is a full schedule of floor periods on Saturday. The delegates act on various reports, adopt the legislative program, consider resolutions and new action items, elect officers, and adopt the annual budget and dues. Any business not completed by Saturday evening is considered on Sunday morning.

To prepare our delegates to participate, we hold an after-school meeting at the MTEA Building. At that time, delegates receive and review a packet of materials which include the program budget, resolutions, and constitutional amendments.

NEA RA Activities/Time Commitment

The NEA RA is held during the first week of July and involves six full days of activities. Each state holds daily caucus sessions to discuss positions, prepare for floor action, meet NEA officer candidates, etc. The first two days are devoted to pre-conference meetings for various groups and caucuses. During this time, the focus is on educational issues, and a convention takes place with educational exhibits. Hospitality sessions and other events are held to meet the candidates.

The formal business meeting, or RA, is held over four full days. Each day starts with a 7:00 a.m. caucus meeting of Wisconsin's 350+ delegates. The floor session, involving over 10,000 NEA delegates, usually concludes by 6:30 p.m. each day. During the four days, delegates elect officers, adopt the annual program budget and dues, and act on NEA resolutions, constitutional amendments, and reports.

Wisconsin's delegates, which includes those locally-elected as well as state-wide delegates, meet on the first Saturday in June in preparation for the NEA RA. Delegates receive a packet of materials and a briefing on the issues at this session, which takes place in Madison.

Becoming a Delegate

See pages three and four for details on how you can become a delegate to the Representative Assembly (RA) of WEAC and the NEA. Please consider becoming a candidate to represent the MTEA at both the state and national annual RA meetings.





Misuse of EAs

Continued from page two...

"General aides can never work with students on instruction. By Department of Public Instruction standards paraprofessionals can be used to support what teachers have already taught. Paraprofessionals can be used to:

- ◆ Reinforce, enrich and extend the lessons
- ◆ Work in small groups on materials that have been previously taught
- ◆ Check workbooks
- ◆ Support teachers by giving (but not grading) mastery tests and checkouts (CABS and formative assessment)

• Given in K4-2nd grade every 5 lessons

• Given 3-6 grade every 10 lessons

"The role of the paraprofessional in the instruction of reading, whether Direct Instruction or another method, must be limited to those of support and reinforcement. If you have educational assistants performing instruction tasks other than those listed, please make the appropriate realignment in their duties immediately.

"If you have any questions please call your Administrative Specialist at 475-8016 or Cleo Rucker, in Labor Relations at 475-8280, at your earliest convenience."

Participating 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 annual policy-setting meetings (called RA's) of both WEAC and NEA. To provide continuity of MTEA representation, delegates are elected to two-year terms for both the WEAC and NEA RA meetings.

(The article on page two describes the activities and time commitment of delegates for both the WEAC and NEA RA meetings.)

WEAC RA in Spring of 2008 and 2009

The WEAC RA will be held in Madison the weekend of May 2-4, 2008. In 2009, the WEAC RA is in La Crosse the weekend of April 24-26.

NEA RA in Early July in 2008 and 2009

In 2008, the NEA RA will be held in Washington DC on July 1-6. In 2009, the NEA RA will be in San Diego, also on July 1-6.

For the 2008 NEA RA, a statewide WEAC preparation meeting will be held in Madison on Saturday, June 7.

Delegate Expenses Budgeted for 2008

The MTEA Budget for 2007-2008 provides funds which will cover the cost of sending 25 MTEA educational assistant delegates to the state meeting and 10 delegates to the national meeting in 2008. The per delegate amount is based on the projected 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 MTEA EA membership, 66% 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 submit the form on page four. **The deadline for receipt of nominations at the MTEA Building is 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 31.**

Please call an MTEA staff member at 259-1990 if you have a question on:

- ◆ Your duties as a general EA or paraprofessional in support of instruction, or
- ◆ How the September 20 MPS directive is followed at your school.



Candidate's Ethnicity

The MTEA is required to report the ethnicity of delegates when certifying its list of delegates for both the WEAC RA and the NEA RA. This data will **not** be published.

Your ethnic designation will help the MTEA, WEAC, and NEA determine if the goal of sending a delegation reflective of the ethnic-minority membership of the MTEA is being met. (The categories listed below are based on the NEA's official delegate report form.)

Please check one:

- Native American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- African-American
- Hispanic
- Caucasian (not Spanish origin)

The Rules on Counting Words

- ◆ All words are counted: "I," "me," "a," "the," "in," "of," etc.
- ◆ Numbers count as one word, either written or the numeral: "twenty-two" or "22."
- ◆ Dates are one word: "April 16, 2007," "4/16/07," or "April 2007."
- ◆ Hyphenated words count as one word: "long-term."
- ◆ Abbreviated words such as "MTEA," "WEAC," "NEA," "WEAC/NEA," "BR," and "RA," count as one word. However, if you write out, for example, "National Education Association," it counts as three words.
- ◆ Contractions are one word - "I've," "can't," etc.

Original Needed

We need to receive your original signed nomination form. If you need to fax a copy to meet the deadline, please also mail us the original. Our fax number is 259-7801.

Candidate Nomination Form - MEAA Delegate to the 2008 & 2009 WEAC RA and/or the NEA RA (Please Print)

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ WI Zip: _____

Worksite: _____ Phone: _____

I hereby nominate myself as an MEAA delegate candidate for the following (check **both** if you wish to be a delegate for both RA's):

_____ WEAC Representative Assembly, held in spring of 2008 and 2009.

_____ NEA Representative Assembly, held in early July of 2008 and 2009.

I am currently an active, dues-paying MTEA/WEAC/NEA member. If elected as a delegate, I will represent the MTEA membership and participate in all meetings for MTEA delegates to the Representative Assembly including preparation sessions, all RA floor sessions, and all Wisconsin caucus sessions. I understand that the MTEA will reimburse me for up to the established amount for expenses incurred by delegates from our area - based on my **full** participation as an MEAA delegate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

25 Words or Fewer!

In the space below, **please print** information that you would like published as a candidate. **You are limited to 25 words.**

The MEAA Balloting Committee will count up to the first 25 words and only your first 25 words will be printed in the election issue of Team-Mate.

Please ask another member to count the words before you submit this form. **The rules on counting words are printed to the left.**

Submit one form per person. Nominations must be received at the MTEA Building by 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, October 31.

