

Your Views Are Important

Your EA bargaining team urges all members to:

- ◆ Vote to ratify the 2007-08 contract.
- ◆ Take the enclosed survey.
- ◆ Attend the **May 16** town hall meeting.

You may bring your contract ballot and survey to the EA meeting if you wish.

Voting for Contract Ratification

Three items for voting to ratify the 2007-08 MBSD/MTEA Educational Assistant Contract are enclosed with this Team-Mate:

1. A ratification document showing the new language for all of the changes, and the schedules for the 2007 and 2008 hourly rates.
2. A ballot.
3. A specially-marked "MTEA Ballot Return" envelope.

The MEAA Executive Council and the MTEA Executive Board have voted to recommend that EA members ratify the new pact.

May 16 Deadline for Ratification Ballots

As soon as you are ready to vote, please complete your ballot and return it by mail using the special ballot envelope by **May 16**.

Survey on the Next EA Contract

In addition to three items on ratifying the 2007-08 contract, a survey on bargaining the next two-year contract, for 2009 and 2010, is enclosed. Your EA bargaining team wants to learn your priorities and concerns to help develop proposals to start negotiations in June on the next EA contract by **May 16**.

Return Ballot & Survey Together

To save on postage, please use your ballot envelope to return your ratification ballot and the survey on the next contract together if you can.

Town Hall Meeting - May 16

Last November, your union hosted a town hall meeting open to all EA members. The purpose was to hear your concerns and answer contract questions. The get-together was a huge success, with over 90 members sharing their views *and* building union solidarity.

On Saturday, **May 16**, another EA Town Hall meeting will take place. The purpose is to give you an opportunity to discuss contract concerns with your EA bargaining team. You will be able to explain your issues in detail and give ideas for bargaining proposals.

EA Town Hall Meeting: The Details

- ◆ **When:** 10:30 a.m. until noon on Saturday, **May 16**
- ◆ **Where:** MTEA Building, 5130 West Vliet Street
- ◆ Light refreshments and door prizes
- ◆ Childcare for children ages 3-10
- ◆ Pre-registration at 259-1990 or mtea.org (Events)

Ratification Document: Old and New Wording

There are several contract language changes printed in the 2007-08 EA contract ratification document. It shows the old language (from the 2004-06 contract) along with new wording (for the 2007-08 contract).

- ◆ Old wording being deleted is shown with ~~strike through lines~~.
- ◆ New language is underlined.



Evaluation Rights

Your evaluation rights are defined in the MTEA-MBSD Educational Assistant Contract. If you receive a negative or questionable evaluation, you should exercise your contract rights, including your right to MTEA representation. The steps to follow are:

Find out what the evaluation means. You have a right to an explanation of what each item on the evaluation form means, as well as its overall meaning.

Study your evaluation before you sign it. The contract provides a **48-hour** period for you to study your evaluation before signing.

Contact the MTEA. A staff member will explain the procedures for responding to the evaluation and provide you with advice.

If you wish, respond in writing. By contract, your written response is made part of the evaluation report in your permanent personnel file in the central office. You should obtain an MTEA staff member's advice before submitting a written response.

Sign the evaluation form. By contract, your signature means only that you have reviewed the evaluation. Your signature does **not** mean that you agree with the evaluation.

Posting of Paraprofessional Positions

On May 1-7, MPS will post paraprofessional vacancies for next school year. The postings will be outside of Room 128 at the MPS central office, 5225 West Vliet Street, for five workdays (Friday, May 1 through Thursday, May 7).

In addition to paras, general EAs seeking paraprofessional status may apply for these vacancies if they meet the minimum qualification of 60 college credits, and MPS Classified Staffing has their official transcripts on file.

Clarification: Laid Off Vs. Excessed

Because of some confusion in the past, we want to again explain the differences between being laid off and being excessed:

◆ Being **laid off** means that you do not have a job with MPS - unless and until you are recalled from layoff. Your health and other benefits will not continue if you are laid off (unless you can pay the premiums out of pocket).

◆ **Excessing** means only that you will not have a position at the same school. Your health and other insurance coverages continue if you are identified as excessed. You should plan on returning in the fall and obtaining a new assignment at the reassignment assembly.

Renewing Your DPI License

Educational assistants working in special education must apply to renew their Department of Public Instruction (DPI) "Special Education Program Aide" license - if it expires on June 30 of this year.

To renew your license, we recommend that you go to the Educational Assistant Unit Office in Room 128 of the MPS central office to obtain and complete an application form. After you complete your portion of the form, MPS will sign the "Experience Verification" section and notarize your signature on the "Conduct and Competency Review" page. You should call MPS at 475-8216 before you come in to apply - to make certain a notary public is available.

DPI now requires a \$75 license processing fee. Be certain to bring a check, made payable to the Department of Public Instruction or money order (no cash), when you come to central office to fill out a renewal application.

MPS will mail your check/money order and form to DPI for you.

(You may obtain an application form at the MTEA Building and have it notarized by an MTEA staff member. However, for the "Experience Verification" section, you will need to bring your form to the MPS Educational Assistant Unit for the administrator's signature.)

Important: Chairperson Election

MEAA Educational Assistant Chairpersons are the union shop stewards for EA members at their school. By constitution, members in each school elect their EA Chairpersons for next school year during May. Your school's Alternate should be elected at the same time. The current EA Chairperson conducts this election.

EA Chairpersons elected for next school year take office after the final Chairperson meeting of this school year on June 3.