

Getting Involved in Your Union

Concerned about the lack of progress at the bargaining table? Interested in improving working conditions for EAs?

You can help by serving on the MEAA Executive Council.

The Council has a leadership role in setting policies within the EA unit of your union. Council members discuss and make decisions on issues and concerns that directly affect assistants throughout MPS.

Each Council member also serves on one of your union's three key committees - EA Bargaining, Constitution, or Budget.

Open Positions

If you would like to join the MEAA Executive Council in working on behalf of EAs, you should apply for one of the following vacant positions:

- ◆ Elementary Representative (Three open positions)
- ◆ At-Large Representative
- ◆ Senior High Representative

Apply Now

To apply, please send the form on the back indicating the position that interests you to MEAA President Tommie Lee Glenn at the MTEA Building; 5130 West Vliet Street; Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208. Applications will be reviewed by a committee that will make appointment recommendations to the Executive Council.

Please continue on back...

Contract Bargaining on March 17

After months of delays, contract talks are resuming between your educational assistant bargaining team and the School Board's team. At the March 17 session, the Board's team will present a counter-proposal to the comprehensive package of proposals your team presented several months ago.

Summary of Your EA Team Proposals

Your bargaining team has proposed the following:

- ◆ Retroactive salary raises of 3.5% for 2007 and 3.5% for 2008.
- ◆ Three days of systemwide inservice training offered to all EAs, to be held on banking time days.
- ◆ A contract provision spelling out the seniority rights of EAs and step-by-step procedures when schools are being merged and excessing may occur.
- ◆ Posting of vacant positions on the MPS Web site (Portal) and giving EAs the option of applying online. Currently, EAs must go to the MPS central office to find out if and where vacancies exist, and may apply only at central office.
- ◆ Increase the additional hourly amount for paraprofessionals assigned to classroom supervision duties, with the extra pay starting on the first day of such assignments.
- ◆ Increase the tuition reimbursement amount and salary rate for deaf and hard-of-hearing interpreters to be more competitive with the private sector.
- ◆ A contract provision to address the seniority rights, safety, training, and premium pay of \$1.00/hour if the School Board establishes school safety assistant positions with a workday ending after 5:00 p.m. (This proposal was made in response to the Board's school safety assistant proposals outlined on the back.)

Summary of the School Board Proposals

The School Board's bargaining team has proposed the following:

- ◆ Increase the amount that EAs would pay out of pocket for malicious auto damage. Currently, EAs pay the first \$35 when their car is damaged at work. The Board wants EAs to pay the first \$40.
- ◆ Currently, EAs who retire at the end of their work year and are eligible for Board payment toward health insurance premiums during retirement can guarantee a higher amount if they notify MPS by **April 1**. The Board is proposing to change this notice date to **March 1**.

Please continue on back...



Getting Involved

Continued from front...

If appointed, you would serve this school year and next, until June of 2010.

Your form must be received at the MTEA Building by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, **March 27**.

MEAA Executive Council Interest Form

Name: _____

School: _____

Home Phone: _____

School Phone: _____

I am interested in serving as a representative in the following MEAA leadership position (check one please):

- At-Large
- Elementary
- Senior High

Delegate Openings for the WEAC RA

The Wisconsin Education Association Council's Annual Representative Assembly will be held the weekend of **April 24-26** in LaCrosse. WEAC RA delegates act on reports, adopt the statewide legislative program, elect NEA Directors and other leaders, consider resolutions, and establish the WEAC budget and dues.

We need additional members to join our delegation for this key policy-setting meeting. If you'd like to serve as a delegate, please call Linda Scherlie of the MTEA support staff at 256-6760 or e-mail her at lscherli@mtea.weac.org.

Board's Contract Proposals

Continued from front...

◆Change the tuition reimbursement provision of the contract to limit eligibility to EAs working over 24 hours per week. (Currently EAs working over 20 hours per week are eligible.)

◆Change the tuition reimbursement criteria so that MPS determines whether or not reimbursement will be paid for courses not leading to teacher certification.

Board Proposals for School Safety Assistants

A contract provision that would allow the School Board to create school safety assistant positions with:

- A. A workday ending after 5:00 p.m. (Currently their regular workday must end no later than 5:00 p.m.)
- B. A workday of fewer than eight hours. (Currently all school safety assistants are guaranteed a paid eight-hour day, along with an unpaid lunch period.)
- C. An additional \$0.55/hour for hours worked after 5:00 p.m. for those who regularly work half or more of their day after 5:00 p.m. (The \$0.55 premium payment would not be paid when working overtime.)

As proposed, MPS could assign currently-employed school safety assistants to these positions - reducing their hours and changing the end of their workday to any time after 5:00 p.m.

Perspective on Contract Talks

(The following is the message sent to **all** MTEA members in the March 9 special edition of Sharpener.)

Here are a few facts that should concern all MTEA members - and more importantly, all nine School Board members!

- ◆The contract between the School Board and the MTEA covering educational assistants expired on December 31, **2006**.
- ◆EAs, some of the lowest paid employees in the district, have not received a raise for two years and three months.
- ◆The last time the School Board's team met with the EA bargaining team was in mid-November, 15 weeks ago.
- ◆The Board's team has not yet made an initial salary offer.

EA Bargaining Updates at mtea.org

For the latest developments, go to your union's Web site at mtea.org (Contracts>Educational Assistants). On March 18, we plan to post a report on the March 17 session.
