

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2009 MSEA Delegate Assembly

The President's Report this year is a mixture of disappointment and excitement.

First, Mary Kearney, the Executive Director accepted, what she called, "her dream job", with the Portland, Oregon school district. So the Board began the process of looking for and hiring a new Executive Director. I am happy to say that Christina Clark accepted the job of Executive Director of MSEA. She comes to us with almost 20 years of union experience. I hope you take a minute and welcome her to MSEA.

During the process of looking for a new Executive Director, the Board decided it would be in the best interest of MSES to see if we could find an Interim Executive Director. We were lucky in having Gary Johnson accept the position. MSEA owes Gary a debt of gratitude. As an organization, we have been able to learn a lot from his experience.

We also had Cheryl Rosheim resign as Field Representative. Also, Alyssa Mueller, the Director of Organizing, informed the Board a couple of weeks ago that she is resigning. Alyssa's last day with MSEA is May 1st. I would like to thank her for all her hard work and to let her know she will be missed. I wish her good luck on her future endeavors.

Now for some good things, MSEA had a very successful training again this year. From the comments and reviews, all that attended seemed to enjoy and felt they learned things that will help them in the future. I would like to thank the staff for a job well done and, I hope you get a chance to attend training in the future.

We also held an MSEA Day on the Hill in St. Paul in early March. MSEA members were invited to attend, and for such a short notice we had a very good turnout. It was an exciting day, MSEA joined forces with AFSCME Council 65 and with the combined membership, we got attention from lawmakers that on our own we couldn't do. From the MSEA members I talked with, they thought it was a very good experience and can't wait til next year.

As you will hear in Gary's budget report, MSEA has been able to build and sustain a healthy fund balance over the last four or five years. With school funding from the State being cut and local levies being very high in most districts, some school districts are being forced into cutbacks and layoffs. MSEA, as an organization, has to be aware that this could affect our membership numbers. I want to assure you, with the reserve we have, and close monitoring of our spending, we will weather this storm.

Over the last year the Board has been working very hard on the Strategic Plan for MSEA, and tomorrow morning you will be presented with the results. The Board is excited about the plan, and over the next months with the help of Committees made up of MSEA members, we will have direction and goals for the future of MSEA. I hope after hearing the presentation tomorrow you are as excited as I am, and will sign up for a committee, and become a part of finalizing the direction MSEA will take in the future.