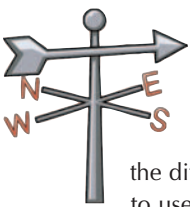


workshop

CORE TRAINING

Navigating Conflict

Most of us hate conflict. But is it possible that conflict can be a good thing? Can you turn conflict into something that works for you? Conflict can lead to the next best thing if you have the



skills and knowledge to recognize it and deal with it directly and effectively. By attending the "Navigating Conflict" workshop, you will learn how advance preparation for negotiations and discipline meetings can make all the difference. We will also show you techniques to use when emotions are high and you want to get everyone back on track.

MSEA is offering the "Navigating Conflict" workshop on two separate weekends in two locations in Minnesota. Sign up for the training near you! You are MSEA and it is only through your involvement that the union has a voice and stands strong!

January 25 & 26 - Mankato Holiday Inn
February 1 & 2 - Bemidji Hampton Inn & Suites

We strongly encourage unit officers, building representatives, negotiation team members or any member interested in doing these things in the future to attend this core training. We also want to attract senior and experienced members who are interested in taking these lessons back to their unit. In short, we are inviting any member who wants to perfect their techniques or learn something new. If you attended the Chief Steward Training last January, you are not only welcome, we urge you to attend!

Registration Deadline

Registration is due in the MSEA office by **January 4, 2008** for both trainings. Attendance is limited to 50 participants per location, so be sure to register ASAP. Members must also call the appropriate hotel by **January 4, 2008** to claim a room under the existing MSEA reservations.



Additional workshop information including meeting locations, directions and reimbursements is available on the MSEA website at. Register online today at www.msea-mn.com. We look forward to seeing you there!

webTRIVIA

full members only

Play MSEA's new online webTRIVIA game! A question about MSEA will be posted on the MSEA website on the 1st through the 14th of **each month**. Members who guess the correct answer will be eligible to win a free MSEA charcoal gray fleece vest. (pictured on the MSEA website)

how to play

 (Compete rules on the MSEA website)

CLICK on the webTRIVIA link on the MSEA website (www.msea-mn.com) to view the monthly trivia question.

SEARCH the MSEA website for the correct answer.

SUBMIT answer before midnight on the 14th of each month.

ONE WINNER will be drawn at random from the correct answers and will receive a MSEA charcoal gray fleece vest.

past winners - Congratulations to Betsy Fiksdal, Rochester (Oct. 07) and Linda Pederson, Moorhead (Nov. 07)

networking

A VALUABLE RESOURCE

MARY KEARNEY, EXEC. DIRECTOR

Common Ground

MSEA President Evan Mapes and I met with classified school employee associations from Washington, California and Utah on November 7th & 8th in San Jose, California. Shane Allers, President of SEIU Local 284 in Minnesota and representatives from the classified employee section of NEA also attended. The purpose was to network and to explore forming a loosely structured coalition to focus on raising the profile of classified school employees nationwide, via lobbying on issues common to our members and by raising a collective voice for classified employees in other ways.

We discussed our common problems. The term "classified employee" can be confusing to the uninformed listener. Often teachers are the only recognized employees working in school districts. The term "classified employees" covers such a wide variety of functions (food service, paraprofessionals, drivers, secretaries & custodians) that this also creates confusion about our identity. We also discovered that classified employees everywhere face an uphill battle in obtaining adequate health care benefits and fair wages and the solutions are not easy.

continued on page 3

"The Minnesota School Employees Association (MSEA), is a growing union which recognizes the dignity of the individual worker and the power of the organized body. It is a democratic union directed by its membership, and fiscally responsible to that membership. Through an empowered membership and a professional staff, MSEA provides the highest level of representation and service in the State of Minnesota."

MSEA

190 E 5th ST. #750
St. Paul MN 55101

651.227.3623
800.622.0289
651.297.6814 fax
888.329.6732 fax
www.msea-mn.com

PRESIDENT

Evan Mapes
20033 Center St
Thief River Falls MN 56701
218.681.1254

VICE-PRESIDENT

Mary Schaufenbuel
1030 20th St
Windom Mn 56101
507.831.1848

TREASURER

Diana Vogt
602 19th St SE
Rochester MN 55904
507.289.2078

DIRECTORS

Sue Ames
816 Cedar Dr
LaCrescent MN 55947
507.895.4532

Cindy Antonson
1112 18 1/2 St N
Moorhead MN 56560
218.236.5229

Nona Bauer
53499 255th St
Austin MN 55912
507.433.9514

MJ Hanson
610 4th St NE, Box 12
Baudette MN 56623
218.634.1775

Kim Lennartson
6138 Kalen Ct
Woodbury MN 55129
651.458.8872

Patrick Wheeler
113 3rd St NE
Little Falls MN 56345
pmwmn@yahoo.com

MSEA STAFF

Exec Dir	Mary Kearney
Dir of Org	Tim Geelan
Field Rep	Bob Schrank
Field Rep	Chris Schaefer
Field Rep	Lori K. Carlson
Field Rep	Greg Gardner
Field Rep	Cheryl Rosheim
Field Rep	Don Gilbertson
Office Mgr	Jodi Lietzau
Fin Mgr	Lynn Jansen
Admin Asst	Melissa Gara

APRIL 18 & 19, 2008

Delegate Assembly

BACK TO FERGUS FALLS

The 2008 MSEA Delegate Assembly will again be held at the Fergus Falls Bigwood Event Center. The Delegates, Board and staff were pleased with the move to the newer, more spacious conference center last year and felt the hotel served our needs quite well. It seems we may have found a new home for MSEA's annual conference; be sure to join us in April and let us know what you think!

Conference information is available on the MSEA website and will be sent to Chief Stewards as the conference draws near. Online registration will also be available in January.

DEADLINES TO REMEMBER

MARCH 1st

Delegate Assembly Registrations
MSEA Scholarship Applications
Sue Ezell Leadership Award
Newsletter of the Year Award
Fair Share Conversions
100% Full Membership

MARCH 12th

Resolutions affecting the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws or dues schedule

MARCH 27th

All properly submitted Assembly resolutions will be mailed to all Delegates, Alternates and Chief Stewards.

2009 DA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MSEA would like to encourage unit members to participate in the planning and running of the annual Delegate Assembly. More information regarding Planning Committee responsibilities are available on the Delegate Assembly page of the MSEA website.

It is not possible for Planning Committee members to attend the Assembly as Delegates, as some committee duties will interfere with Assembly agenda items. Alternates may be volunteers, but should understand they may not be able to fully attend all Assembly sessions.

Units and/or members interested in helping the MSEA Board plan the 2009 Delegate Assembly banquet should contact Program/Planning Committee Chair MJ Hanson by **June 30, 2008**.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



HELLO!

I hope everybody had a nice Thanksgiving and on behalf of the MSEA Board of Directors, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The MSEA Core Trainings have been scheduled and will be held in two locations - Mankato (Jan 25-26) and Bemidji (Feb 1-2). Hopefully this will allow more members to attend. The training is entitled "Navigating Conflict" and I hope many of you have an opportunity to join us. Unit leaders have been sent information regarding the workshop and you can also learn more about it on the MSEA website.

During the second week of November, Executive Director Mary Kearney and I went to a meeting in San Jose, California, with unions that represent classified school employees in other states. Representatives from Utah, California, Washington, Arkansas and Minnesota were in attendance. It sure was a learning experience! It was interesting to learn that it doesn't matter what state you live in or what union you belong to, all classified school employees share many of the same problems. It was helpful to hear how they are trying to address these problems. I felt it was a very good opportunity for MSEA to network with other unions and states, and will be recommending to the Board that we continue to attend these meetings.

Also, I would like to mention the Board is looking for a unit that would like to help plan the 2009 Delegate Assembly banquet. (See article to the left) Think your unit might be interested? For more information, check out the front page of the MSEA website contact Jodi Lietzau at the MSEA office. Interested members should notify Director MJ Hanson by June 30, 2008.

In Unity,
Evan Mapes, MSEA President

networking from page 1

Working Together



Last year MSEA coauthored a congressional resolution with these unions that would create a national award for the Classified Employee of the Year. This year the CSEA (California) is proposing legislation to that affect and is asking all of us to join them in this effort. Each union identified its two most immediate concerns as rising health care costs and No Child Left Behind (NCLB). It was reported that proposals to reauthorize NCLB would not make their way in Congress until the spring of 2008. President Bush still stands behind the legislation, although even he is looking for some changes, while lead Democrats in the House and Senate will continue to seek changes and increased funding. Everyone predicts the fight will heat up as the Presidential election closes in.

California is further proposing that the groups who do join the coalition would lobby together in Washington in May, focusing on two or three initiatives of nationwide significance to members. In the meantime the organizations will continue to share information and advice. Evan and I will report these matters to the MSEA Board of Directors for its review and discussion in upcoming meetings.

scholarship OFFERED TO UECU MEMBERS

\$2,000 Educator Scholarship Award

Woodbury, MN - The United Educators Credit Union (UECU) is proud to announce that their 2008 Educator Scholarship Award has been increased to \$2,000. Also, in an effort to



allow more time for applicant submission, the credit union has launched the annual scholarship program early. Applications are now being accepted and the submission deadline is **February 15, 2008.**

The \$2,000 Scholarship will be awarded to a United Educators Credit Union member for the use of professional development in the education field. Anyone working in education is eligible to apply. Applicants must have worked a minimum of six months in the field and must plan to attend an accredited institution within one year of receiving the award.

A committee of educators, credit union board and supervisory committee members and a representative from Education Minnesota will select the winner. The Educator Award, as well as two Student Scholarship Awards, will be presented at the credit union's Annual Meeting in April, 2008.

Scholarship applications are due **February 15, 2008** and are available at the credit union's branch offices or online at www.uecu.coop. Education Minnesota also contributes to the award program.

member ORGANIZING COMMITTEES

TIM GEELAN, DIR. OF ORGANIZING

Leading the Way

Are you an activist? Do you believe that united workers can accomplish anything? A member organizing committee leads the way to bring new members into MSEA, and gives you the opportunity to motivate others in the fight for respect.

Members drive MSEA. To build a better future for our schools, our children and ourselves, members are getting involved in their union. Member driven committees offer opportunities for all of us to be a part of the solution.

Why We Build Committees

Successful organizing campaigns begin by having a strong member organizing committee. A strong committee is the foundation for creating a powerful, democratic and active union.

In an unorganized or "non-unionized" unit, workers:

- *have no voice in the working conditions
- *fear of being disciplined or worse - losing their jobs, if they speak up to management
- *doubt that conditions will ever change for the better
- *become apathetic

These conditions lead to a divided workplace where workers have no "voice at work". When unorganized workers decide to join a union, it is vital that a strong internal organizing committee be formed. Building an active organizing committee is not easy; it takes time. But it is necessary if we want MSEA to grow – election campaigns almost never succeed without them. This model of organizing builds the "union" before the actual election process has occurred.

The committee will receive support, training and all the needed resources from MSEA. The organizing committee will be the glue that holds the campaign together. In the workplace they are upfront and strong in their public support for the union and are ready to answer questions about MSEA. When our leaders and activists talk to unorganized employees, they are helping with the organizing process. They let the unorganized know what MSEA has done for them and will help unify and motivate the unorganized members.

The best contract in the world is just a piece of paper if there is not a strong unified well-led membership to enforce it. The process of building the union needs to be a continuous process that involves all the members. And that includes **YOU!**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

MSEA
190 E 5th St #750
St Paul MN 55101

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #6764
St. Paul, MN

DEADLINES & DETAILS

did you know?

Referendums

In an October 28th Minneapolis Star Tribune article examining whether school financing should be put to a referendum vote it was stated, "The consequences (when referendums are not approved) are dire, especially for those who will be laid off.... Less dire but no less real are the consequences of instability in curriculum and staffing on students due to a sudden loss of funding."

This past Election Day saw referendum votes in fourteen school districts where MSEA members are employed. Some of these districts had multiple initiatives. Of the 21 initiatives affecting member districts, 12 passed and nine failed, a few by only a handful of votes. Although the victories were significant, such as in Windom and East Grand Forks, the ramifications in districts with failed initiatives bear watching. We are hoping the consequences are not dire as the newspaper predicted and we will be evaluating what action we might take in the future to increase our successes.

e-Communications

Are you "in the loop" regarding MSEA news and upcoming events? Email Melissa Gara (melissa@msea-mn.com) to receive MSEA's periodic *Highlights* emails.

Para Certification

The 2006-07 Minnesota Legislature passed a law requiring the State Board of Teaching to draft rules governing para certification. The Board of Teaching begun this process by asking for comments from the public and all interested parties. The Board of Teaching will send out a draft of the proposed rules (probably in early 2008) and a request for comments from interested parties. Early speculation has these proposed rules looking very similar to the rules proposed in 2004 which were ultimately rejected.

MSEA is not submitting comments at this time, but will submit comments on the proposed rules. The 2004 proposed rules focused on a voluntary, not mandatory, system of paraprofessional certification; with every individual's certification being statewide. MSEA has been and will continue to monitor this process on your behalf.

What's Happening?

Let us know what's going on in your unit! Our members have a wealth of good ideas and MSEA loves to recognize them for creative thinking and hard work. Email Jodi Lietzau (jodi@msea-mn.com) with good news to share in an upcoming newsletter.