

classified

MINNESOTA SCHOOL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2009
VOLUME 30 • NUMBER 2

MSEA/AFSCME Day on the Hill February 11, 2010

We need your help to make our voices heard at the Capitol! Won't you join us? Register online by January 29th. Details on page 3.

unit dues

CHRISTINA'S CORNER

CHRISTINA L. CLARK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Does your unit collect local dues? Have you ever thought about it? Only 38 of our 80 bargaining units currently collect local dues, an option available to all MSEA units. The cost is only \$12 a year for each member (or \$10.20 for fair share fee payers). Unit dues give you a little extra money to spend on yourselves. You can throw a picnic, compensate

your leaders (negotiators, stewards) with stipends, provide door prizes, pay for pizza and sodas for a unit meeting, donate to worthy causes, purchase supplies for the kids, or cover the many other costs generated by union business. You manage the funds using your own United Educators Credit Union account. Contact Lynn Jansen at MSEA (800.622.0289) to find out how to get started – the \$12 from each individual accumulates to significant member benefits.

Fair Share Conversions

Speaking of unit dues, I've written before about the benefits of MSEA membership. Our union is only as strong as our membership. Some folks don't join because they know they are entitled to the same level of contract representation as our MSEA members. What they might not realize is that our strength at the bargaining table is entirely dependent on our membership numbers. When we go to the table and the district knows that 30% or 40% of our unit members are fair share, the district also knows that we don't have the solidarity or strength to make good on our demands at the negotiations table. Please employ some "fair share conversion" strategies to improve your membership numbers. The best strategy is simple: Grab a membership application and take five minutes to explain to a fair share fee payer why membership is the only way to go. I guarantee that most of these conversations will result in the person converting to membership.

This is the last newsletter of 2009. Have a great holiday season and a very Happy New Year! I'll see you in 2010. !Si se puede!

core training

HITTING THE BRICK WALL

During October and November, members from 24 bargaining units attended the MSEA Core Training held in Bemidji and Mankato. The subject was Negotiations; the theme was "Hitting the Brick Wall". We kicked off the workshop with the movie "The Willmar 8 Revisited", which took a look back at the eight courageous women who went on strike against the Willmar Citizens' National Bank between 1977-79. Remarkably, this story is also a part of MSEA's history. Glennis Ter Wisscha, one of the Willmar 8, later served as a field representative and then as MSEA's second Executive Director.

continued on pg 5

Introducing Field Rep JOHN ROSTAD



Originally from West Fargo, ND, John Rostad began his 25th year of teaching in September of 2009, the last 16+ years at Le Center Public Schools. John has been a local president, member rights person, and chief negotiator with the LCEA during the past 16 years. From Feb 2007 - Aug 2009, John was a part-time field staff member with Education Minnesota, working with locals in contract negotiations, trainings, mediations and other related union issues. Currently John lives in St. Peter, MN. He has a daughter, Sarah, age 22 and a son, Justin, a junior in high school. In his spare time, John enjoys spending time chasing after his son's athletic events, hunting, fishing, reading, exercising, and being with friends and family. John is truly looking forward to the new venture of his life, working with members of MSEA. Welcome aboard John!

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

Sue Ames
816 Cedar Dr
LaCrescent MN 55947
608.317.4418

TREASURER

Diana Vogt
602 19th St SE
Rochester MN 55904
507.289.2078

DIRECTORS

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

Angie Lien
690 105th Av NE
Spicer MN 56288
320.796.6916

Mary Schaufenbuel
1030 20th St
Windom MN 56101
507.831.1848

Mark Spangler
902 Woodland Av
Mankato MN 56001
507.403.9461

MSEA STAFF

Exec Dir Christina Clark
Asst Dir Lynn Jansen
Office Mgr Jodi Lietzau
Admin Asst Melissa John
Field Rep Bob Schrank
Field Rep Chris Schaefer
Field Rep Lori K. Carlson
Field Rep Greg Gardner
Field Rep Don Gilbertson
Field Rep John Rostad

DATES & deadlines

BE SURE TO NOTE THESE IMPORTANT
DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!

- Feb 1 DA Resolutions Due
Affecting the Articles of
Incorporation, Bylaws or
dues schedule
- Feb 11 MSEA/AFSCME
Day on the Hill
- Mar 1 DA Deadlines
Assembly Registrations
Scholarship Applications
Sue Ezell Nominations
Unit Newsletters
Fair Share Conversions
100 % Full Membership
- Mar 1 New Logo Concept
Submissions Due
Logo concept will be voted
on and announced at the
April Delegate Assembly
- Mar 1 Spring Regional (3)
- Mar 8 Spring Regional (5)
- Mar 13 Spring Regional (1&2)
- Mar 16 Spring Regional (7)
- Mar 18 Spring Regional (4)
- Mar 23 Spring Regional (6)
- Mar 24 Resolutions Mailed Out
To all unit Chief Stewards,
Delegates & Alternates
- Apr 23-24 Delegate Assembly
Fergus Falls Convention Ctr
MSEA's 30th Anniversary!
- Aug 10-11 MSEA August Rally
Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge

NOTE: Delegates, Alternates and
Chief Stewards should make every
effort to attend the Spring Regional
meeting in their area.

Detailed information including loca-
tion/time will be sent to unit leaders as
the Spring Regionals draw near. We
hope to see you there!

FROM THE PRESIDENT



2009 is now coming to
an end and it has been
another very busy year
for the MSEA!

I encourage you to
attend the upcoming MSEA Day on the
Hill scheduled for **February 11, 2010**. We
will be joining AFSCME Council 65 again
this year to show unity throughout
Minnesota. This is a very important event
for all MSEA members and we need as
many of you as possible to attend. As we
all know, most school district funding
comes from the State and it is imperative
that, as school district employees, we let
our elected officials know how important
it is to properly fund our schools. When it
is contract time for all of us, without prop-
er funding, it is almost impossible for us to
get raises and benefit packages that we
expect, and more importantly, deserve.

Over the last few years, funding from the
State has not kept pace as needed and
most Minnesota school districts have cut
hours or laid off MSEA members. This
trend will not stop unless we make our
voices heard at the Capitol in St Paul. If
your unit has had hours cut or has experi-
enced layoffs, we need you to voice your
concerns and tell your legislator how it
has affected you and the job you do at the
school district. I hope you take the time to
attend, and please consider your time as
an investment in your future, because it
really is.

At this time of year I would also like to
wish every member a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!

In Unity,

Evan Mapes

Evan Mapes
MSEA President

Announcing the MSEA/AFSCME Co. 65



2010 Day on the Hill

Thursday, February 11th

SAVE jobs!

EARN a living wage!

PROTECT affordable benefits!

We need to let our legislators know how IMPORTANT the services we provide are to our schools and how much we VALUE our jobs.

Attend the DAY ON THE HILL in St. Paul on February 11th!
(and remember to bring a friend)

MSEA will pay a \$50 stipend and mileage to each member that attends this important event. Carpooling is encouraged. Attendees will also receive lunch and a MSEA t-shirt.

Registrations due: January 29th!

Register online via the MSEA website:

www.msea-mn.com

Questions? Contact Christina Clark
christina@msea-mn.com or 800.622.0289

*Thursday, February 11, 2010
Crowne Plaza Hotel, St. Paul*

TENTATIVE AGENDA

8:30 am	Registration
9:30 am	Women's Caucus
10:00 am	Welcome & Information
11:00 am	Box Lunches Issue Meetings How to Lobby
Noon	Bus to Capitol
12:30 pm	Group briefings with Legislative Leaders
1:30 pm	Meetings with Your Legislators

You have a VOICE. . . . make it HEARD!!

from the field

DON GILBERTSON, FIELD REP

AN \$8,000 MISTAKE

MSEA recently settled a grievance on behalf of an employee who received an \$8,000 settlement. The issues were complicated, involving off duty conduct, just cause and due process.

the issue: An employee was involved in an off-duty, off-district property family-related physical altercation. Multiple individuals were charged with potentially felony charges although none of the individuals suffered any injuries whatsoever.

The grievant worked several days after the incident, but when the charges were posted in the local newspaper, the district suspended the grievant without pay. MSEA maintained the employee was only charged with a crime and the judicial system assumes the employee to be innocent; therefore the district should not assume that the employee represented a danger to students or staff. However to protect the students, the district believed it had not only the right but the responsibility to remove the employee from any student contact.

the grievance: MSEA then filed a grievance using the just cause standard in the Labor Agreement, suspending timelines until the charges were disposed of by the court system. The grievant maintained innocence in any misconduct, and the felony assault charges were eventually dropped by the courts. The grievant notified the district that the assault charges were dropped and the district returned the grievant to work immediately.

At the point the grievant returned to work, MSEA proceeded with the grievance, which was denied by the district in steps one and two. The issue went to mediation, as required by the Labor Agreement, but no real progress toward settlement was achieved.

the settlement: MSEA was preparing to submit the grievance to binding arbitration when the district indicated its willingness to negotiate a settlement. Eventually, a settlement agreement was reached by all parties. The member received the backpay (\$8,000), accrued sick leave during the suspension and the record of the discipline was removed from the personnel file.

the lesson: In this case, MSEA's willingness to push the case to arbitration finally caused the district to analyze the uncertain cost of going to hearing against the certainty of a compromise settlement.

LOGO: **design** CONTEST

Win \$500!

Are you creative?

Do you have a flair for design?

If so, we need your help!

MSEA is sponsoring a new logo contest and is asking members to submit concepts for a new, updated logo! The current logo is beginning to feel a bit dated. MSEA would like to create a new logo that still reflects MSEA and who we represent, but with a more **modern** or **timeless** look that can carry MSEA well into the future.



CONTEST DETAILS

The Contest is open only to MSEA members; no more than three concept entries may be submitted by any one Entrant. Flexibility is key; the final logo must be able to be resized easily to look good at relatively small sizes. (letterhead, envelopes, etc). MSEA's primary color is **maroon** with secondary colors of black and white, however the final logo must be legible in black and white. The new MSEA logo will be displayed online, in print, electronically, in advertising and on MSEA merchandise.

SUBMISSIONS

Send all submissions to Jodi Lietzau at MSEA by **MARCH 1, 2010**.
jodi@msea-mn.com 651.297.6814(fax) 190 E 5th St #750
888.329.6732(toll free) St Paul MN 55101

SELECTION OF WINNER

The MSEA Program Committee will select up to three entries for consideration at the 2010 Delegate Assembly. The Delegates and Alternates at the 2010 Delegate Assembly will vote for their favorite concept and the results will be shared with the Assembly. The Entrant whose concept receives the most votes will receive a **\$500 cash prize**. A professional designer will then use the concept receiving the most votes to create MSEA's new logo. However, MSEA reserves the right to not adopt any of the entries as the new logo if, in its discretion, MSEA's interests are best served by either retaining the existing logo or extending or modifying the process to find a new logo.

NOTE: For complete rules, visit: www.msea-mn.com

MSEA LOGO EVOLUTION

October 1981



MSEA's first logo is created

January 1985



"Shaking hands" & SEIU Local 1980 added to existing Minnesota outline.

May 1987



SEIU text removed

March 1995



While in the process of disaffiliating from SEIU, the simple outline is used once again while a new logo is in production



MSEA MEMBERS ATTENDING THE 2009 CORE TRAINING IN MANKATO.

core training pg 1

It is a very motivational movie, especially relevant to units facing a tough round of negotiations in these lean economic times. If you would like to share "The Willmar 8 Revisited" video with your fellow members, it can be checked out from the MSEA office and runs about thirty minutes.

The Work Begins

Members were then divided into negotiation teams, presented with a challenging bargaining scenario and asked the difficult question of "Where do you go now?" The teams worked hard to customize contract campaigns to help break down the wall and move negotiations forward. The teams came up with great ideas to motivate unit members, get noticed by the District (and sometimes the public) and create unity in their groups.

But they weren't done yet! They also had to figure out HOW to realistically make their campaigns work. What are the costs and who will pay for them? How much time will the steps take? How can they help other members get involved? What resources are available? The teams worked well together to create creative plans that had a minimal cost, maximum member involvement and accomplished their goal.

A mock membership meeting was held for unit officers to convince members why the campaign was necessary and also encourage

member participation. Unit officers fielded the all too familiar questions with candor, pragmatism and generous helping of humor. The raucous membership meetings were a success and a great way to end the evening!

Related Sessions

On Saturday morning, members attended related sessions called "What About the Fair Share Fee Payers", "Selling the Message" and the extremely popular "Costings."

The last session just before lunch on Saturday was titled "The S Word" and explored the harsh realities of a unit voting to strike. Attendees and trainers shared their perspectives on a variety of points, such as: 1) Is there a good time to go on strike?, 2) How do fair share numbers affect the outcome? and 3) How can you really gauge your members' commitment? It was a great discussion and the Bemidji attendees benefited from member input from two MSEA bargaining units that have been on strike.

Overall attendees felt this was one of the best trainings that MSEA has offered and was very timely considering the tough round of negotiations that are underway or will be coming up in the near future.

Don't miss out - watch your email and the MSEA website to learn more about MSEA's next Core Training!

retiring soon?

Full Members
Receive \$25!

Did you know that when a full member retires from the school district, MSEA will send them a check for \$25? It's one of MSEA's Members-Only Benefits.

The MSEA Board of Directors recently clarified how retiring members can make sure they receive this benefit upon retirement.

If you have worked in the district for **at least four years** at the time of retirement, you can qualify in one of two ways, if:

- 1) you are at least 50 years old, or
- 2) you have applied for Social Security, PERA or medical disability retirement

All you need to do is contact Lynn Jansen in the MSEA office so we can verify your eligibility. Then the \$25 is all yours!

800.622.0289
651.227.3623
lynn@msea-mn.com

Thanks so much for being a part of the MSEA family - your membership and participation benefits us all!

Enjoy your retirement and on to your next adventure!

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

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

did you know?

Themes in Collective Bargaining

Although it is true that each contract is unique and each round of negotiations also unique; when we examine the past 30 years of collective bargaining several noteworthy themes emerge. Through a common understanding of these themes we can better prepare for MSEA's future at the bargaining table.

RECOGNITION

The first hurdle faced by MSEA members was recognition. Many school district administrators were completely unaware of the invaluable work performed by our members. Through the process of organizing into bargaining units we gained recognition. We fought for, and won, a seat at the table and a piece of the economic pie!

RESPECT

Once school districts realized we existed, we could begin the fight for respect. We sought to be treated like all other employees – teachers, principals, etc. We sought the same increases as other employees. We fought this battle over many different rounds of bargaining in every district we represent. Today, this battle has been won!

Most districts are quick to offer our members the same increases as other employees. In fact, this is the primary reason that union member wages increase faster than unrepresented employee wages.

RESPONSIBILITY

We began our fight seeking recognition and respect. Having achieved those goals, what does the future hold? Responsibility is the theme of the future! We are equal partners with our employers and as such must act responsibly. Responsibility takes many forms. It could mean working with your employer to protect unit positions and hours and minimize layoffs. It may mean helping the district pass a levy. It might mean working with other bargaining units to achieve mutual goals or joining a labor-management committee. After all, employees and employers are in the same boat and when we work together we all benefit.

Does this mean the end of difficult negotiations? Of course not. Labor and management will always have differences, but it does signify a new stage in our development and maturation as a labor union in the 21st century.

THEN & NOW

CHRIS SCHAEFER, FIELD REP