

delegates REGISTER NOW

2008 Delegate Assembly

Calling all units!! Come be a part of MSEA's governing body - the annual Delegate Assembly! The 2008 MSEA Delegate Assembly will once again be held at the Fergus Falls Bigwood Event Center on **April 18 & 19th**. Make sure your unit is represented at the conference.

Delegates must call the Bigwood Event Center (800.293.2216) by **March 18th** to reserve their room for **April 18th** (be sure to mention you are part of the MSEA reservation block). Online registration and complete conference information is now available on the MSEA website. Registration materials will also be sent to every Chief Steward.

www.msea-mn.com

Number of Delegates

NOTE: the MSEA Bylaws determining the number of Delegates permitted by each unit was amended at the 2007 Delegate Assembly. In reality, the new language will affect only a few units and is printed below.

MSEA BYLAW 3.2 NUMBER OF DELEGATES

School Districts with one MSEA Bargaining Unit: These Bargaining Units shall be entitled to not fewer than two (2) delegates. Any unit that employs more than 75 MSEA members may select one (1) additional delegate for every 75 members over the initial 75 members.

School Districts with more than one (1) MSEA Bargaining Unit: These Bargaining Units may use the previous formula or the following formula; whichever yields the greatest number of delegates. These Bargaining Units shall be entitled to not fewer than one (1) delegate per bargaining unit. Any Bargaining Unit that employs more than 75 MSEA members may select one (1) additional delegate for every 75 members over the initial 75 members. Individual Bargaining Unit delegates are transferable to other Bargaining Units within the same School District at the discretion of the individual bargaining unit.

The number of delegates for each school district/bargaining unit shall be determined based on the number of members employed by the district on March 1 of each year. To be eligible to serve as a delegate, a person must be a member of MSEA in good standing with full membership privileges.

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2008 spring regionals

Delegates & Alternates should make every effort to attend the Spring Regional in their area in order to prepare for the upcoming Delegate Assembly.

REG	DATE	LOCATION	TIME
1&2	2/23	Bemidji - Hungry Bear 2300 24th St NW, 56601	10:00 AM
3	2/28	Moorhead - Frying Pan Restaurant 2920 Hwy 10 E, 56560	6:30 PM
4	3/11	Sauk Rapids - Jimmy's Pour House 22 2nd Av N, 56379	6:00 PM
5	3/8	St. Paul - Champps 2401 W 7th St, 55116	2:30 PM
6	3/6	Windom - Eagle's Club 821 4th Av, 56101	5:30 PM
7	3/11	Rochester - Old Country Buffet 1300 Salem Rd SW, 55902	6:00 PM

workshop

NAVIGATING CONFLICT

MARY KEARNEY, EXEC. DIRECTOR

Hands On Training

I am writing this just after we finished the Navigating Conflict training session in Mankato and before we go to Bemidji. Thirty-seven enthusiastic members participated in Mankato. The agenda was intense, beginning with a combined lunch and learning session at 11:30 AM on Friday. In the first two sessions Bob Schrank and Greg Gardner laid the educational terrain for what was to come and provided the basics on conflict styles and identification of responses to conflict. They then placed these concepts in the framework of a disciplinary meeting. Necessary, but not exactly "wake-em-up" stuff.

To paraphrase an old saying in the advertising game, Bob and Greg provided "the steak" and Chris Schaefer sold "the sizzle". Chris created a negotiation simulation that got everyone involved. Members were divided into bargaining teams and the normally easy-going Chris morphed into Dr. Zimmerman, a superintendent recently imported from North Dakota via the dark planet, whose demeanor would make Simon Cowles look like Mr. Nice.

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"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

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Field Rep	Greg Gardner
Field Rep	Cheryl Rosheim
Field Rep	Don Gilbertson
Office Mgr	Jodi Lietzau
Fin Mgr	Lynn Jansen
Admin Asst	Melissa Gara

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The degree to which members participated was the best part of the training. Some got angry—but only for the evening. Some got even. And some took it in stride. All appeared to try new techniques, while showing off skills they brought with them. It was clear from the level of enthusiasm and ability demonstrated that MSEA does not lack leaders or committed members. This was refreshing to witness!

We were also glad to see so many new faces at this training! We estimated about a third of the attendees were first-time participants in a MSEA workshop or training. Hopefully they walked away with a handful of new skills and another perspective of what MSEA has to offer its members. MSEA remains committed to providing thoughtful, practical trainings for our membership; perhaps we'll see you at the next one!

webTRIVIA

online trivia game

A new MSEA trivia question is posted each month on the MSEA website and members have from the 1st - 14th of the month to submit their answers.

Answers to all trivia questions can be found somewhere on the MSEA website.

www.msea-mn.com

Congratulations to the following MSEA members who have won a new MSEA charcoal gray fleece vest by correctly answering the monthly online MSEA trivia question. Any full member is eligible to play - and WIN!

january 2008

Pat Gangl, St. Cloud para

december 2007

Ellen Kensinger, Detroit Lakes secretary

november 2007

Linda Pederson, Moorhead para

october 2007

Betsy Fiksdal, Rochester para

Be sure to visit the MSEA website and play next month!

FROM THE PRESIDENT



EVAN MAPES

When talking with members, the conversation always seems to include how frustrating it is that the State of Minnesota can continue to underfund our schools. There were around 100 local school referendums last fall and only about half passed. In addition, there are a number of school districts that have missed the deadline for settling teacher contracts. As classified school employees in Minnesota, it is going to be very difficult for us to gain adequate increases in wages and benefits for the foreseeable future.

For many years, both the State and Federal governments have underfunded our schools and it continues to fall on school districts to try to increase local referendums in order to just maintain what we have. And as we all know, in some cases even when referendums have passed, it hasn't been enough. We have had cutbacks in ALL areas of our schools from fewer hours worked by classified staff to positions being completely eliminated. This is very evident in schools that MSEA represents that have not been able to get referendums passed. That is why it is disheartening that some of our members are not supporting local referendums.

As a taxpayer, I understand. We get our local tax statement every year and we are constantly having our county and city taxes raised without any input from us. So often school districts need more money and the only means available is for the School Board to go to the voters in that school district. We are all tired of taxes going up. I think one thing we have to realize is that unlike our neighbor, if the school district doesn't get more money it could be our job, or our fellow employee's job on the line, because the district will have to make cuts. And if we as employees are lucky enough not to have our hours cut or lose our job completely, we will still feel the effects come contract time.

So I urge you, the next time your School Board needs to hold a referendum, take a moment and think how it affects you. Not only as a taxpayer, but as an employee.

In Unity,
MSEA President Evan Mapes

Deadlines To Remember

MARCH 1st

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

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.

Reimbursements

MSEA will pay for the following expenses for all Delegates:
*hotel costs for April 18th (2 delegates per room)
*Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast & Saturday lunch

MSEA will reimburse Delegates for the following expenses:
*lost wages (from MSEA contracted work)
*roundtrip mileage (carpooling is encouraged)

Per MSEA Policy: All event sessions should be attended or reimbursement may be denied due to excessive absence. If reimbursement is denied, the MSEA Treasurer, or a designee, will write a letter stating the basis for the denial and advising the person(s) that he or she may submit, in writing, reasons why the reimbursement should be allowed. This letter must be sent 45 days after the receipt of the denial letter from MSEA. The MSEA Executive Director and Board will then reconsider the denial at the next scheduled Board meeting.

Cancellations

Please be respectful and notify MSEA immediately of a cancellation or a change in Delegates or Alternates. Maintaining an accurate count of attendees helps us to properly prepare for the conference. MSEA is also charged for meals and room reservations for "no shows" which may be passed on to the Delegate.

2009 DA Planning Committee

MSEA would like to encourage unit members to participate in the planning and running of the annual Delegate Assembly. Is your unit interested in helping plan the banquet at the next Delegate Assembly? More information regarding the DA Planning Committee responsibilities is 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 plan the 2009 Delegate Assembly banquet should contact Program/Planning Committee Chair MJ Hanson by **June 30, 2008**.

fair share

STATUS CONVERSIONS

What Is Fair Share?

All employees who are identified as part of the Bargaining Unit by the Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS) are covered by the provisions of the contract. The Exclusive Representative (MSEA) is required to represent all employees in the Unit, not just the full members. MSEA must process all grievances and represent all employees in negotiations, mediation and arbitration.

However, the State of Minnesota has ruled that since fair share fee payers benefit from the negotiated contract, they must pay their "fair share" to the exclusive representative (MSEA), which is no more than 85% of a full member. A fair share fee payer has chosen not to participate in union activities. They cannot vote, hold local or state office or take advantage of member-only benefits.

What Is The Monetary Difference?

The difference in dollars between participating as a full member versus a fair share fee payer is only a few dollars.

For example:

	Annual Salary	Dues Per Year	Dues Per Month (9)
Full Member	\$10,500	\$210.00	\$23.33
Fair Share Fee Payer	\$10,500	\$178.50	\$19.83
DIFFERENCE		\$31.50	\$3.50

That \$3.50 buys you the right to voice your opinion about negotiations and vote on contractual issues as well as access to a number of member-only benefits. Even if someone isn't "pro union" wouldn't it be worth \$3.50 per month to have the opportunity to let MSEA know how they feel about the terms and conditions of employment?

Don't be fooled, your district knows how many fair share fee payers are in your unit and can use that information to divide and conquer. When we do not have strong involvement by our membership we send the message that we are not united and therefore our bargaining power is weakened. Ask a fair share fee payer to reconsider the benefits and advantages of joining MSEA as a full member.

Together we can be a strong voice for effecting positive change to your working terms and conditions. Remember, in unity there is strength!

Contact the MSEA office for a supply of new member packets.

melissa@msea-mn.com

651.227.3623

800.622.0289

“The strongest bond of human sympathy outside the family relation should be one uniting working people of all nations, tongues and kindreds.”

Abraham Lincoln, US President

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DEADLINES & DETAILS

did you know?

MSEA Scholarship Deadline

Applications for the Nancy Crippen Educational Scholarship (NCES) must be faxed to the MSEA office or postmarked by **MARCH 1st**. Ten \$500 scholarships are awarded yearly. Nancy Crippen served as MSEA's Executive Director from 1986 until her death in 1996. Nancy's commitment to education was demonstrated through her service on the Worthington Board of Education and her dedication to bettering the working conditions of classified school employees throughout the public school system in Minnesota. Nancy passed on to her seven children the value of education as each of those children went on to receive various levels of higher education degrees. This scholarship was named in her memory to honor Nancy's strong belief that "our children are our future and we must teach them well."

Union Dues NOT Tax Deductible

FYI: IRS Required Notice

Union dues paid to MSEA are NOT tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, they might be deductible under other provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. Questions? Talk with your tax preparer.

MSEA Organizing Incentive

MSEA has a policy rewarding MSEA members for bringing in new organizing contacts. For each contact name MSEA receives from a member resulting in a meeting with a new, unrepresented group, MSEA will pay that member \$50.00.

Furthermore, if that unit should eventually vote to join MSEA, that same member will have his/her dues waived for one school year. MSEA appreciates and values its members' commitment to growth and wants to encourage members to take an active role in the organizing process.

\$25 MSEA Retiree Gift

As a gesture of thanks for maintaining full membership status over the years, full members retiring from their school district will receive a gift of \$25.00 from MSEA. Retiring members who have served one full term on the Board of Directors will receive \$50.00.

Please contact Lynn Jansen at lynn@msea-mn.com or 800.622.0289 with retiree information.