

welcome BACK TO SCHOOL

MARY KEARNEY, EXEC. DIRECTOR

It is a new school year - a new beginning for members and for me, the start of my first full school year with MSEA. I was hired as Executive Director just before the 2005-06 school year ended. I benefited from the relatively slower "summer pace" while adjusting to my new role, learning a few of the ropes and getting to know at least some of you.

I attended my first full Board meeting in July, which introduced Evan Mapes as the new President and Patrick Wheeler as a new (again) Director. I was also lucky to work with outgoing Director Jon Selzler for a short time and with Les Schermerhorn in her previous role as President. Democracy means the potential for change in leadership is always present. This can be a very good thing for an organization; it keeps everyone on their toes. It seems when people leave or change roles in MSEA, they usually don't go very far away and the organization can continue to learn from their experience, while benefiting from the fresh outlook of the newly elected officials.

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MSEA Welcomes New Unit - Bird Island/Olivia/Lake Lillian

MSEA would like to welcome its newest unit - the paraprofessionals and food service employees of the Bird Island/Olivia/Lake Lillian (BOLD) school district! MSEA received a contact from the group in August of 2005, indicating an interest in organizing. In the months that followed, BOLD employees met with MSEA staff and also contacted current MSEA members in surrounding school districts in an effort to learn about MSEA's philosophy and representational service.



On June 7th, the BOLD employees voted overwhelmingly to join MSEA in an election conducted by the Bureau of Mediation Services (BMS). The MSEA Board and staff would like to welcome the BOLD unit and we are looking forward to representing you for years to come! Congratulations BOLD!

website NEW FEATURES

Over the past year, the MSEA website has undergone a number of changes to incorporate several new features while making it even easier to navigate. The improved website will be online soon! (www.msea-mn.com)

A "Members Only" feature has been created to give members access to more information with the added security of user passwords. Full members will now be able to view and download any MSEA unit contract or unit operating policy, as well as an array of past and current MSEA newsletters, *Updates* and other communications.



Another exciting addition is the creation of a **basic** webpage for each MSEA unit which will provide the following information:

- *MSEA Field Rep name/contact info
- *MSEA Director name/contact info
- *Current unit contract
- *Current unit operating policy
- *Unit membership status profile
- *School district website link

Basic unit webpages do not require any maintenance by the unit; all the information is automatically maintained and updated by MSEA.

Units may however, choose to **customize** their webpage to include additional information such as:

- *Leadership names/contact info
- *Building rep names/contact info
- *Calendar of events
- *Special announcements
- *Meeting notices
- *Negotiation updates

A unit choosing to **customize** their webpage will designate one or two members as "site managers" to periodically update their unit webpage. The webpage will "recognize" when a site manager logs in to the site and will allow them to make changes while viewing their unit webpage. All other members will be allowed "view-only" access to the webpages.

Watch your mail in late September for an announcement once these new website features are completed and online. Included in this announcement will be a unique, temporary ID number for you to use the first time you log into the new "Members Only" page. It will then prompt you to choose your own password to use when signing on in the future. We hope you find the new site informative and easy to use!

"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	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

E-COMMUNICATIONS

Sign Up Today

up to speed

Are you "in the loop" regarding MSEA news and events? MSEA now emails periodic *MSEA Highlights* to all chief stewards who have provided MSEA with their email address. Any full member may sign up for the *Highlights* as well.

earth friendly

Full members may now receive the quarterly *MSEA Classified* newsletter via email (pdf attachment) instead of through the regular mail. Adobe Acrobat software is required to open and read a pdf document. If you do not already have Acrobat, you may download it for free off of the main page of the MSEA website.

Interested in receiving the Board *Highlights* and *MSEA Classified* newsletter via email? Contact Melissa Gara at the MSEA office: melissa@msea-mn.com.

MEMBER BENEFITS

CONTACT MSEA FOR MORE INFORMATION
REGARDING THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

- ♦ ten \$500 annual scholarships
registration forms available online or on page 5 of this newsletter
- ♦ \$2,000 life insurance
(premium paid by MSEA)
- ♦ \$2,000 accidental death insurance
(premium paid by MSEA)
- ♦ low-cost auto/home/cycle insurance
- ♦ united educators credit union membership
- ♦ msea newsletter "the classified"
- ♦ valleyfair discounts (seasonal)
- ♦ member training available for unit leadership, neg teams and bldg reps
- ♦ retirement gift for full members
- ♦ mn zoo/imax theatre discount

FROM THE PRESIDENT



By the time you read this, the summer will be behind us and school will be back in session. I hope everyone had a good summer!

During our July meeting, the Board voted to discontinue our association with the National Association of Classified School Employees (NACSE) as requested at the 2006 Delegate Assembly. As a result, the Board created a Political Committee to help keep members informed on issues important to everyone on the local, state and national levels. The complete role of the committee has yet to be determined, but the Board voted to have Mary Schaufenbuel and Les Schermerhorn (Committee Chair) as Board representatives on the committee. In addition, we hope to add two members-at-large to serve on the committee along with MSEA Executive Director Mary Kearney.

The Board also discussed and decided to have Fall Regionals this year. The meeting dates and locations should be finalized soon; I hope many of you are able to attend.

The Board and staff met to discuss future trainings and to find better ways to assist unit leaders in doing their job. During this brainstorming session, one suggestion was to hold a Chief Steward training meeting in January 2007. If you have any suggestions or ideas regarding future trainings, please contact me or your regional Director.

In the coming weeks, MSEA's website renovation should be completed. Jodi Lietzau has put a lot of work into this project and has done a fantastic job, and I would like to thank her for all the work. I hope every member takes the opportunity to check it out.

In Unity,
Evan Mapes, MSEA President

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Several exciting ideas emerged from the July Board meeting including the return of Fall Regional meetings, the creation of a Political Committee to help direct and advance MSEA's political interests and concerns, and the development of new member training opportunities.

The Fall Regionals are now being scheduled and unit leaders will soon be notified of the exact times, dates and locations. The Regionals will be informative; in other words, I'd like the information to flow both ways - from the Board and staff to the members and back again! Regional meetings will give us the opportunity to explain the Political Committee to you in some detail while asking for your feedback and ideas. The more members who can attend these meetings the better it will be for us all. I'm looking forward to meeting more of you there!

In response to recent requests, we are planning a full day of hands-on chief steward training for January 13, 2007 (more details to follow). The Board and staff continue to explore how to best deliver, within available time and economic parameters, trainings that mean the most to you. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions or ideas.

I was also glad to be part of the MSEA Leadership Academy in August which focused on effective leadership skills and the importance of networking. The highlights for me were the presentations led by MSEA members. The Rochester Executive Board shared with us the creative ways in which they handle unit business, their special efforts to orient new members and their working relationship with the district to assure the dues collection process is accurate and complete. Member Pat Gangl led a joint presentation with Field Rep Greg Gardner about how the St. Cloud para unit worked with other unions in the district to make their voices heard in their school board election process. Both of these sessions were not only highly informative, they were presented with enthusiasm....and fun to listen to!

I look forward to the start of the school year and the chance to meet more of you and learn from you how best to serve MSEA. Have a great school year!

training OPPORTUNITIES

MN Food Service Conference: July 30 - Aug 2

"50 Years of Excellence and 50 Years of Pride" was the theme for the 2006 MN Food Service Conference held July 30 - August 2 at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center. This conference had something for everyone; dozens of Continuing Education Units (CEU) & Specialized Training Clock Hours (SpTr), motivational guest speakers, a golf outing, musical entertainment, awards and recognitions, a silent auction and a 50th birthday party bash! Attendance has never been a problem for this conference and this year was no exception. A record high 946 attendees including 33 speakers, 10 guests and 18 retired food service employees attended the conference workshops and events!



MSEA Office Manager Jodi Lietzau and Administrative Assistant Melissa Gara staffed the MSEA informational booth this year, talking to attendees and handing out MSEA brochures and promotional giveaways. A number of MSEA members from Anoka, Centennial, Lake of the Woods and Little Falls also took a moment to stop by and say hello!

Hosting a booth at these conferences allows MSEA to honor our ongoing commitment to reach out to the thousands of unorganized school employees throughout the state. **Strength in unity!**

MSEA Leadership Academy: August 7 - 8

MSEA represents an extremely diverse group of employees. Members include bus drivers, paraprofessionals, secretaries, technicians, custodians, security personnel and food service employees. MSEA reaches as far north as Warroad and as far south as LeRoy/Ostrander. The largest unit has 445 members while the smallest has only four.

So what could these units possibly have in common? **LEADERSHIP.** Every unit has some form of leadership, tailored to meet their specific needs. And these leaders face similar obstacles regardless of unit size, location or composition. Apathy is, unfortunately, a common unit problem. Communication, running effective meetings and representational demands are also all common concerns for MSEA chief stewards.

Unit leaders from around the state attended the Leadership Academy held August 7-8th at St. Benedict's College in St. Joseph, MN. Workshops included Team Building, Communications, Political Action, Managing Difficult Situations, Membership & Dues and Positive Group Behaviors led by the MSEA staff, guest speaker Helen Preddy (US Arbitration & Mediation of Minnesota) and members from the Rochester and St. Cloud units.



Political Committee

During the July Board meeting, the Board approved the creation of a Political Committee to focus on the development and implementation of a political agenda for MSEA.



Committee members include Board members Les Schermerhorn (Chair) and Mary Schaufenbuel, two MSEA members yet unnamed, Executive Director Mary Kearney and potentially a member of the field staff. The committee will tackle issues at the local, state and federal levels of government. The Board and staff committee members met on August 23, 2006 to discuss the scope and conduct of the committee. Next, the full committee will meet and submit its finalized plans to the Board for review.

Strength in Unity

In a related development, Les Schermerhorn, Mary Schaufenbuel, Field Rep Chris Schaefer and Mary Kearney met with staff and officers of SEIU Local 284 on August 24, 2006, to explore ways MSEA and Local 284 can work together to advance our mutual political interests. Local 284 is a school support staff focused union with about 9000 members in the state and a natural ally of MSEA. The two unions have a history of working together over the years and wish to continue building on that cooperative relationship.

While identifying core political issues of mutual interest, a few areas of special importance quickly emerged. MSEA and SEIU Local 284 have scheduled meetings to work together on the following concerns:

- 1) The need for labor representation on the PERA Board to make sure our perspectives are heard. PERA Board elections for four open seats will be held on January 10, 2007. MSEA and Local 284 will identify mutually acceptable pro-labor candidates and outline a strategy to get them elected.
- 2) Actively participating in upcoming school board elections in districts where both unions represent employees.
- 3) Identify legislative issues to jointly pursue such as the statewide health insurance effort.

MSEA is optimistic that many opportunities exist to progress a meaningful and effective mutual political agenda.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Share Your Good News....

Remember to share your good news with us! Has your unit or a member of your unit completed a special project or been recognized for an outstanding achievement? MSEA has so many talented and creative members - we can't help but want to show you off! Send your letters, photos (digital preferred) and news clippings to MSEA so we can mention you in the *Classified* newsletter or on our website.

Questions & Answers....

Do you need an answer to a question that you think other MSEA members could benefit from as well? Send them to MSEA and it just might be published in an upcoming *Classified* newsletter edition. Suggested topics:

MSEA practices/procedures	Legislative concerns
Representational matters	Job specific issues

Send all inquiries and information to Jodi Lietzau at: MSEA, 190 E 5th St #750, St. Paul MN 55101 or jodi@msea-mn.com.

No Child Left Behind

State Credential for Paraprofessionals

Currently there is no state credential; the effort to obtain this during the last legislative session was not successful. It will need to be reintroduced in the next legislative session.

Title 1 Program or Title 1 School

The NCLB requirements are in place only for paraprofessionals who are working in a Title 1 program or a Title 1 school. The requirements were not extended to special education paraprofessionals.

Online Interactive Paraprofessional Database

To keep up on what is happening around the country on paraprofessional and NCLB requirements please check out the above database at the ECS website:

http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=html/educationissues/teachingQuality/parapro/NCLB_parapro_DB_intro.asp

You may also contact MSEA Field Representative Bob Schrank (bob@msea-mn.com) with other questions regarding paraprofessional requirements.

MSEA NANCY CRIPPEN EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

MSEA awards ten \$500 scholarships to full members and/or their dependent children seeking post-secondary education each year.

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, Minnesota Board of Education and her dedication to bettering the working conditions of classified school employees throughout the public school system in Minnesota. Nancy herself had attended graduate school at the U of M and taken classes at the Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, while her husband, Gary, served as an appellate-court judge on the MN Court of Appeals. Nancy and Gary passed on to their 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."

APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED OR FAXED TO MSEA BY MARCH 1st EACH YEAR.

Mail: 190 E 5th St, #750
St Paul MN 55101

Fax: 651-297-6814 or 888-329-6732
Phone: 651-227-3623 or 800-622-0289 (toll free)

APPLICANT _____ ISD _____

MSEA MEMBER NAME _____ RELATIONSHIP TO MEMBER _____

ADDRESS _____ HOME # _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION _____

FIELD OF STUDY _____

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE RULES and PROCEDURES

1. The Scholarship committee will be comprised of two members of the Board of Directors and three members at large.
2. Scholarship recipients must be MSEA members or their dependent children.
3. Committee members and/or their dependent children are eligible for the NCES.
4. Scholarship shall be chosen by random selection.
5. Ten \$500.00 scholarships will be awarded, three for MSEA members and seven for dependent children of MSEA members seeking post-secondary education.
6. If MSEA does not receive enough eligible applications for each type of scholarship, the scholarship(s) will be awarded to an applicant of the other group.
7. Incomplete applications shall not be considered.
8. Scholarships will be announced each year at the Delegate Assembly.
9. Award money will be distributed upon proof of payment for educational courses.
10. Recipients must claim their award for expenses incurred during the current academic school year (Sept.-Aug.) or within two years from the date of notification of the award.

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THE ST. CLOUD EXPERIENCE

In the fall of 2004, a Labor Committee was formed in the St. Cloud school district between the unions representing the Paraprofessionals (MSEA), Food Service/Secretaries (SEIU 284), Custodians (Operating Engineers Local 49) and Interpreters (AFSCME Council 65). The goal was to work as a unified group to improve the working environment for all employees.

The first event the groups participated in was the "State of the District" meeting presented by the Superintendent. Close to 100 members representing employees from every union were in attendance, all wearing red shirts to proudly signify their unity. It was their first experience of working successfully together and they made a huge impression with the Superintendent and the district office.

The unions then worked together by presenting the same contract proposals and concerns to the district management during contract negotiations. By combining forces, the unions were able to gain improvements that they may not have been able to achieve on their own.

During the fall of 2005, the Labor

Committee sponsored a candidate screening for school board elections to fill four open positions. Six of the eight candidates participated in the screening and answered a series of questions prepared by the unions. After the meeting, each union met individually to discuss their reactions and rank the candidates. Then all four unions came together to determine the top four candidates they would endorse. On Election Day, the unions' top three candidates were all elected to the school board and the fourth board member was a candidate tied for fourth place on their list.

The Labor Committee is starting to see positive changes in the direction the School District is taking. Ideally, their efforts to elect labor-friendly school board members will have a positive impact during the next round of negotiations. In late August 2006, the groups held an ice cream social for union members and their families and invited the School Board members and the Superintendent. The St. Cloud Labor Committee plans to continue to meet regularly to address union concerns and identify future co-sponsored events. Together, we are better!