

MEA Action Line



**Memphis
Education
Association**

126 Flicker Street • Memphis, TN 38104

Volume XXX, No. 2, August 2008

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IMPORTANT DATES

Aug 6

AR Training, 8-3:00pm, Hilton Memphis

Aug 7

MEA Board of Directors, 4:00pm

Aug 11

First Day of Classes

Aug 12

MEA Representative Assembly, 3:15pm

Sep 1

Labor Day - MEA Closed

Sep 2

MEA Board of Directors, 4:00pm

Sep 9

MEA Representative Assembly, 3:00pm

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 4

Praxis II, 4-8:00pm, MEA Auditorium

October 9

Evaluation Workshop, 4-7:00pm, MEA

Coming Soon:

I Can Do It! Classroom Mgmt. Workshop

Teacher Rights & Liability Workshop

MEA Joins MCS Funding Lawsuit

Many teachers joined MEA leaders and staff for the hearing on the MCS funding issue. The courtroom was filled to capacity with teachers interested in the outcome. Having been notified that the contract will not be honored, MEA believes the \$66 million would certainly go a long way to fund the negotiated agreement. MEA was present each day for the hearing.

We heard testimony from Tennessee Commissioner of Education, Dr. Tim Webb, that he had no choice but to withhold over \$400 million, but would set up a "Task Force" (that certainly did not include employees) to give the money to some entity. It was not clear if it was the City of Memphis or Shelby County Schools, but he made it clear it would not be Memphis City Schools.

Shelby County Schools Superintendent, Dr. Bobby Webb, testified that Shelby County Schools was not equipped to handle this many students, and if Shelby County Schools received the money, since they were under a federal court order any decision concerning "new" students would certainly need to go to the Federal Judge overseeing the case.

It is no secret and was stated in court that whatever the decision, it will be appealed all the way to the State Supreme Court.

The final court hearing in Judge Armstrong's court will be August 11, 2008. We will keep you up to date on any developments.

MEA Responds to Newspaper's Lack of Recognition

To: The Commercial Appeal

The July 29, 2008 front page headline read "MCS Gets Mixed Results", while the local news headline in my edition read "County Schools Progressing". Don't you find the MCS headline far less positive than the Shelby County headline? Previously, I have been pleased to see that the Commercial Appeal appeared to be in support of Memphis City Schools, but the MCS headline is very misleading.

While everyone involved in MCS from the custodians to the principals to the students and their parents has gone above and beyond the call of duty, achieving "Good Standing" for the district, the CA article appears to be a case of "damning with faint praise".

Perhaps you are unaware that MCS is the largest urban system in the State of Tennessee. eighty-four percent of our students are on free or reduced lunch, based on the income of their parents. Shelby County, on the other hand, is less than half as large, and has about 11% of their students on free or reduced lunch. Many people want to try to compare the two systems, but they are facing different challenges. Even Shelby County administrators and teachers are aware that there are huge obstacles to be overcome in MCS.

We know there is still work to be done, but the benchmark that we just achieved is cause for celebration. As a teacher, I know that justifiable praise is a far greater motivator than mild criticism, and I am sure that staff at all the schools will continue their great efforts. Now, however, since the Commercial Appeal was either unwilling or unable to give Memphis City Schools congratulations commensurate to their achievement, please allow me to do so.

Students, parents, teachers, ESPs, administrators, all school staff – every person who works hard and cares about our students – give yourselves a HUGE pat on the back. You did a GREAT job! I know that this school year you will build upon your success.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Fitzgerald, President - Memphis Education Association



MEA

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A Message From The President . . .

Welcome Back To Work!

Welcome back to work in the new 2008 – 2009 school year. I hope that you have had an enjoyable summer, whether you had time to actually take a vacation or not. I know that many of you worked in the schools or with children for nearly the whole summer. Others stayed busy representing our members at the NEA Annual Representative Assembly, which was held in Washington, D.C. this year. Still more of you attended courses to add to your professional knowledge, perhaps achieving the next degree lane.



Stephanie Fitzgerald

Special thanks go to all of you who stood up for the children of Memphis, and called, e-mailed or wrote letters to your City Council to let them know how disappointed in them we are. We need to keep informing them of how wrong their decision to cut funding for MCS is! A really excellent number of MEA members participated in County Commissioner Mike Carpenter’s dialog and problem solving session on school funding at the main library on a July summer night, and represented the teachers, ESPs and children of Memphis very well. I am sure Commissioner Carpenter got the message loud and clear, that to us, “It’s ALL about the children.”.

I am writing this before I appear in court to testify for MEA in the school funding case, so I can’t give you any more details as yet, but I am confident that no matter what happens in court, the educators of MEA will step up to the plate and do the very best that we can for our students. To me, that makes you heroes!

It seems to me that the essential question here is what value does the City Council place on the education of the children of Memphis. I know that we believe that there is no higher calling than that of educator – whether you are an administrator, a classroom teacher, an ESP, or any other job category that interacts with our students, you possess the power to change lives in a positive way. Time and time again, when you dedicate “off the clock” time to our kids, buy classroom supplies out of your own pocket, bring food for a child who is hungry, or supply clean clothing or shoes for a student in need, you are showing the absolute depth of your commitment and care. I believe with all my heart that someday, you will reap what you have sown.

In the meantime, we need to come together and work to solve the political dilemma that is school funding in the city of Memphis. We should speak out together, and speak out strongly!

Now, members, school is starting, and we will be the true professional that we are, and will reach out to our clients, the children, and start the education for this year. Please remember that when you have any problems, your association is here to help you. If you need advice, call MEA. If you are looking for meaningful professional development, check the website gomea.com for upcoming professional development. If you need help passing the PRAXIS, call MEA. If you feel you have been unfairly surplussed, call MEA. If you need legal help, call MEA. If you wish to become more involved, call MEA.

Now for the quiz: If you need help about any thing pertaining to your professional life –

- a. call MEA
- b. call 454-0966
- c. ask your AR for the MEA phone number



MEA Action Line is published by the Memphis Education Association

President Cont., pg. 3

MEA - An affiliate of:
 Tennessee Education Association
 800-342-8367 www.teateachers.org
 National Education Association
 202-833-4000 www.nea.org

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A Message From The Executive Director . . .

One More Hurdle To Face -

If you read the newspaper, look at TV, or listen to the radio, you know that “Silly Season” is here. Isn’t it curious that because of the economy, the governor proposed no salary increase for teachers early in the legislative session, but the Board of Education notified MEA well after school was out that they wanted to meet with us.

At a meeting that was coincidentally the same day the City Council decided to cut the Memphis City Schools budget by approximately \$60 million, we were informed the Board would not honor the negotiated agreement as it pertains to salaries. The Board told us that all salaries would be frozen. When questioned, that includes no step increases. In addition, the Board wants to change the portion that the Board pays for single premium for health insurance—from an 80/20 split to a 70/30 split.

I guess the Board wanted us to agree at the time. Instead we asked your building ARs to come to a special called RA meeting. And come they did. The auditorium was filled to capacity and overflowing!

We shared this information with your ARs and asked them to share it with you, the member, and be alert for any further action. We answered questions and provided all the information we had.

MEA has also entered into the lawsuit on the side of the Board of Education against the City. We believe that some entity must have a “Maintenance of Effort” for the money withheld as presented in state law. There is no doubt that this issue will ultimately need to be decided at the Tennessee Supreme Court.

The Board has asked to meet and renegotiate “Salary” and “Insurance.” We will be taking direction from TEA Legal as to any position we need to take on these issues. If we must sit down to renegotiate the contract, you can be

assured that we will request your input for direction—as we always do before negotiations.

Quite frankly, this puts a tremendous strain on the relationship between the Board of Education and MEA and you—the member. In the past, there have been many instances when the governor did not provide a pay increase or the increase was not as high as the negotiated amount and the contract was still honored.

MEA’s position is: “Either we have an Agreement or we don’t.” If the Board is not going to honor their agreements, it will make future negotiations much more difficult.

It is hard to know where all of this is leading. What I can tell you is that you will be well represented by MEA and TEA. We will do all we can within the law to make sure the Agreement is honored, jobs are protected, and children have every opportunity to get an education.

Size equals power. If you are not an MEA member, there is no time like the present. The larger we are, the more members we have, the greater our power.

While you may have a reason not to be a member, and I know financial times are difficult, being a member and increasing MEA’s position in the community should outweigh those reservations.

We will keep you well informed and up-to-date on any developments. Again, you are well served by MEA, and NOW is the time to become a member if you are not already. We welcome you.



Executive Director

ESP NEWS!



ESPs Working More Than One Job For MCS

If you are working five or more hours per day at two or more jobs for Memphis City Schools, you are supposed to have the status of full-time staff. If your status has not been changed from part-time to full-time, contact MEA at 454-0966, ext. 45.

Know Your ESP Contract... Duty Free Lunch and Breaks

Article 13 of the ESP Contract states, “Employees covered by the Agreement shall be allowed sufficient time to eat their meals. Not less than thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed for this purpose. The times when such meal period will be taken shall be determined by the Board commensurate with the operation of the specific work location. Employees who work six (6) hours or more per day may receive two (2) ten-minute breaks. Lunch breaks and rest breaks shall be scheduled by the supervisor.” For more information, contact MEA at 454-0966, ext. 45.

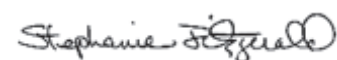
President, from pg. 2

d. any or all of the above

Of course, the correct answer is “d”.

Now, if by any chance you are not already a member, NOW is the best time to join. Just ask your building AR, or call MEA, or call ME. (same phone number)

HAVE A GREAT YEAR! LET US HELP!



Stephanie Fitzgerald, President

P.S. – Congratulations for MCS achieving “good standing”!

2008 - 2009 Service Units @ Memphis Education Association

Terri Jones, UniServ Director

A.B. Hill El.	Ford Road El.	J.P. Freeman School	Oakhaven El.	Westhaven El.
Alcy El.	Germanshire El.	Kansas CTC	Oakhaven High	Westwood El.
Alton El.	Gordon El.	Kingsbury CTC	Pyramid Academy	Westwood High
American Way Middle	Hamilton El.	Kingsbury El.	Raineshaven El.	
Balmoral El.	Hamilton High	Kingsbury High	Shady Grove El.	
Colonial Middle	Hamilton Middle	Kirby High	Sharpe El.	
Crump El.	Havenview Middle	Kirby Middle	Shrine School	
Driver's Education	Hickory Ridge El.	Klondike El.	Springhill El.	
Fairley El.	Humes Middle	Norris El.	Vance Middle	
Fairley High	Ida B. Wells Academy	Northside High	Wells Station El.	

Tom Marchand, UniServ Director

Administration	Colonial Visual	Fairview Annex	Overton High	White Station High
Avon-Lenox School	Craigmont High	Fairview Jr.	Pupil Services Center	Whitney El.
Berclair El.	Craigmont Middle	Georgia Avenue El.	Raineswood Res. Tr. Ctr.	Willow Oaks El.
Bond Building	Douglass El.	Grahamwood El.	Ral-Bartlett Meadows El.	Wooddale High
Brownsville Road El.	Douglass High	Hanley El.	Richland El.	Wooddale Middle
Carver High	Downtown El.	Hickory Ridge Middle	Ridgeway High	
Ctr. Drug Free Schools	East CTC	Hollywood Succ. Acad.	Ridgeway Middle	
Cherokee El.	East High	Knight Road El.	Ross El.	
Coleman El.	Egypt El.	Lester El.	Sea Isle El.	
Colonial Hearing	Evans El.	Messick CTC	White Station El.	

Herman Sawyer, UniServ Director

Bellevue Jr.	Corry Middle	Georgian Hills Jr.	Levi El.	Shelby Oaks El.
Bethel Grove El.	Cromwell El.	Getwell El.	Manassas High	Sherwood Middle
Brookmeade El.	Cypress Middle	Goodlett El.	Oak Forest El.	Snowden School
Caldwell El.	Delano El.	Graceland El.	Peabody El.	Vollentine El.
Carnes El.	Dunbar El.	Graves El.	River City High	Westside El.
Central High	Fox Meadows El.	Grizzlies Academy	Riverview El.	Westside High
Charjean El.	Frayser El.	Guthrie El.	Riverview Middle	White Station Middle
Chickasaw Jr.	Frayser High	Hawkins Mill El.	Rozelle El.	White's Chapel El.
Cordova El.	Gardenview El.	Holmes Road El.	Shannon El.	Winridge El.
Cordova Middle	Geeter Middle	Idlewild El.	Sheffield El.	
Corning El.	Georgian Hills El.	K.S. Robinson Alt. Ctr.	Sheffield High	

Marilyn Webley, UniServ Director

A. Maceo Walker El.	Grandview Heights El.	Longview Middle	Orleans El.	Stafford Academy
Airways Middle	Hillcrest High	Lucie E. Campbell El.	Raleigh-Egypt High	TLA
B.T. Washington High	Homebound	Magnolia El.	Raleigh-Egypt Middle	Treadwell El.
Bruce El.	Jackson El.	Manor Lake El.	Robert Church El.	Treadwell High
Cordova High	Kate Bond El.	Melrose High	Scenic Hills El.	Trezevant CTC
Coro Lake El.	Keystone El.	Middle College High	Sheffield CTC	Trezevant High
Cummings El.	Lakeview El.	Mitchell Road High	Sherwood El.	Whitehaven El.
Denver El.	Lanier Middle	New South Side HCA	South Park El.	Whitehaven High
Double Tree El.	LaRose El.	Newberry El.	Southwest CTC	Winchester El.
Florida-Kansas El.	Lincoln El.	Oakshire El.	Springdale El.	

Susanne Jackson, ESP - UniServ Director

All Schools

Your Association Staff: Committee & Program Assignments



Ken Foster
Executive Director
454-0966, Ext. 30
kefmea@isdn.net

- Chief Administrative Officer
- Association Lobbyist
- Vendor Relations
- Professional Committee
- Scholarship Fund Trust
- Finance and Budget
- Constitution and Bylaws
- ALSP (Association Legal and Scholarship Program)
- Building and Grounds
- TEA/NEA Convention Delegates
- TURN Initiative (Teacher Union Reform Network)
- Bargaining

- Status of Women
- Public Relation
- Mentoring/New Teacher Task Force
- Bargaining
- Future Teachers of America Clubs
- Association Lobbyist
- AR Training



Terri Jones
UniServ Director
454-0966, Ext. 24
tjmea@isdn.net



Susanne Jackson
ESP UniServ Director
454-0966, Ext. 45
sjmea@isdn.net

- ESP - Education Support Professionals
- M-PACE
- Bargaining
- Association Lobbyist
- MEA Website

- Editor, MEA Action Line Newsletter
- Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR&R)
- National Teacher Day
- Association Lobbyist
- Bargaining
- MEA Apple Tree/Porter-Leath
- New Teacher Orientation



Tom Marchand
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454-0966, Ext. 15
twmmea@isdn.net



Herman Sawyer
UniServ Director
454-0966, Ext. 12
hlsmea@isdn.net

- Emerging Leaders Academy
- Human Relations
- Association Lobbyist
- Minority Affairs
- Men of Education
- Elections
- Bargaining

- Membership
- Read Across America
- Bargaining
- Association Lobbyist
- Instructional and Professional Development (IPD)
- New Teacher Orientation
- Grant Writing



Marilyn Webley
UniServ Director
454-0966, Ext. 13
webleyme@isdn.net

Register To Vote!



Deadline for the November 4th elections is October 6, 2008. This is a very important election for public education. Make sure you are registered to vote and the election commission has your current address.

Also, please help make sure other staff, parents and students who are eligible are registered to vote. Anyone who will be 18 by **Election Day, November 4th** may register to vote.

For more information, contact the Shelby County Election Commission's Voter Registration office at 545-4136.

Membership Doesn't Cost It Pays!

Many MEA members have saved more than the cost of their dues by using their TEA Access Card. It opens the door to great discounts and savings. If you do not yet have your membership card, contact Ann Peace at 454-0966 ext. 20 to get your identification number. Then, go online to www.teateachers.org and click on the link for the Member Center to login your 10 digit identification number.

You'll find discounts and savings opportunities and be eligible for special prizes. While you're there, check the NEA care insurance and homeowner's insurance rates.

REMEMBER: Members are covered by \$1 million in liability coverage, and receive \$1,000 free life insurance.



NEA Delegates attend NEA-RA in Washington, D.C.



State Delegate:

Charles New, TLA

Local Administrator Delegates:

Lola Bolden, now at Havenview Middle
Margaret McKissick Larry, Avon Lenox

Local Teachers and other ESP Delegates:

Yvonne B. Acey, MEA President 2006-2008
Elaine Bolden, Westhaven Elem.
Sandra Boyd, Willow Oaks El.
Calvin Burrows, Truancy Assessment Center
Fannie Canady, American Way Middle
Allyson Chick, Fox Meadows Elem.
Phyllis Cleaves, Westwood High
Tina Crawford, Magnolia Elem.

Maleka Daniel, Vollentine Elem.
Bert DeLapp, East C.T.C.
LaVerne Dickerson, Westhaven Success Acad.
Dorothy Ealy, John P. Freeman School
Reginald Fentress, Winchester Elem.
Stephanie Fitzgerald, Melrose High
Wesceta Fletcher, Craigmont Middle
Clara Ford, Kirby High
Ravetra Ford, White's Chapel Elem.
Celestine French, Georgia Avenue Elem.
Eddie Gamble, Lucie E. Campbell Elem.
Sarah Harper, Northside High
Precious Hayes, Southwest C.T.C.
Patty Hester, Oakhaven Elem.
Tamara Hood, Grandview Heights Elem.
Jesse Jeff, Winchester Elem.

Katherine King, Winchester Elem.
Myrtle Malone, Gordon Elem.
Tanya Moore, Bethel Grove Elem.
Cecil Moore Jr., Craigmont High
Anntriniece Napper, Cromwell Elem.
Sara Redden, White Station High
Albert Renfroe, Snowden School
Ruby Renfroe, Sea Isle Elem.
Barbara Scott, Wooddale Middle
Lori Streeter, LaRose Elem.
Mildred L. Taylor, Hamilton Success Acad.
Jim Underhill, Fairley High
Jasmine Williams, Hillcrest High
Keith Williams, Kirby High
Florence Wright, Grandview Heights Elem.
Margaret Yarbrough, Balmoral Elem.

GET OUT THE VOTE

Sign up to be politically active in 2008-2009!

The Memphis Political Action Committee for Education (M-PACE) is made up of members of MEA who believe it is important for educators to be interested and involved in politics. Every decision that affects teachers and their students is made by elected officials. From School Board members, City Council and County Commission members, to state legislators, your classrooms are impacted by politicians.

MEA makes recommendations of support for candidates who have committed to support public education. Any MEA member can help!

Mark the items below in which you would be interested in and return the completed form to MEA, Rt. 1.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Become a member of M-PACE (0.50 per pay-period) | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending a school board meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone bank at MEA | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending a city council meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone bank at a candidate's headquarters | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending a county commission meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood canvassing | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing a calling list at your school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending rallies | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up for TEA's "G-R-E-A-T" cyberlobby team |

Name _____ School _____
 Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____
 E-Mail _____

Sign Up For A Committee in 2008-2009

MEA has many **active committees** for those who want to become more involved in the work of the Association. If you are interested in serving on a committee of your professional organization, please complete the form below. If you would like information or an appointment to one of committees listed below, please contact MEA @ 901-454-0966.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| ◆ Membership | ◆ Minority Affairs | ◆ Mentoring/New Teacher Task Force |
| ◆ Public Relations | ◆ Elections | ◆ Instruction & Professional Development (IPD) |
| ◆ Status of Women | ◆ Finance | ◆ Future Teachers Clubs (FTC) |
| ◆ Building & Grounds | ◆ National Teacher Day | ◆ Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR&R) |
| ◆ Men of Education | ◆ Read Across America | |
| ◆ Human Relations | ◆ Constitution and Bylaws | |

Committee Interest Form

Please Print

Name _____ Gender _____ Cell Phone _____
 Address _____ Zip _____ Home Phone _____
 School _____ E-Mail _____

Position Title: Administrator Teacher Counselor ESP (Specify) _____
 Ethnic Minority White

MEA Committees you have served on: _____

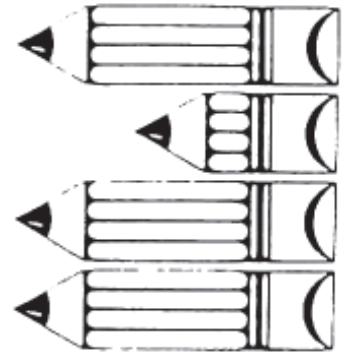
TEA Committees you have served on: _____

List up to three (3) committees in order of preference.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

NOTE: Return to MEA via Board Mail to Stephanie Fitzgerald, Route 1 OR fax to 901-454-9979.

Don't Delay. Sign Up Today! . . . you should be a part of your Professional Organization - JOIN MEA TODAY!



Dues vary for teachers, administrators, full-time ESPs, part-time ESPs, and substitutes. For more information, see your Association Representative or call Ann Peace, MEA Membership Coordinator, 454-0966, ext. 20.



**MEMPHIS
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION**

126 Flicker Street Memphis, TN 38104

Social Security Number

(Area Code) Home Phone

Name: Last First Initial

School Building/Location

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Subject _____

Grade _____ DOB _____

E-Mail _____

Male Female Race/Ethnicity: _____

Teacher Supervisor Mental Health Specialist

Principal Asst. Principal Other

Association	Membership Code	Annual Payment
NEA		
TEA		
MEA		
TOTAL		

Method of Payment: Payroll Deduction

I hereby authorize the local Board of Education or other employer to deduct from my paycheck annual dues for the United Education Profession and political action contributions as indicated. Continuing members authorization will continue until revoked in writing to the local education association president and the business office of my employer. In the event of separation prior to final payment, I direct the remaining balance to be deducted from my last paycheck. I agree to hold the Board of Education or my employer harmless for these deductions. A local's negotiated contract provisions and bylaws will prevail over any conflicting provision of this form.

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (NEA FCPE) collects voluntary contributions from Association members and uses those contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of education who are candidates for federal office. The local and state association political action committee performs similarly with local and state elections. Contributions to NEAFCPE and state and local PACE are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. A member may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates. 4% of TEA dues are to support candidates who support public education. Funds will be used or other purposes upon request. The funds used for political support are not tax deductible.

Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

Dues payments are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Member's Signature

Date

Association Representative