

mea Record

Mesa Education Association
Mesa, Arizona
Volume XXXIX, Number 10
April 15, 2008

Affiliated with the Arizona Education Association and the National Education Association

Please join us for our Annual All Member Meetings

Tuesday, April 22
4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn
1666 S. Dobson Rd.
(Dobson/US 60)

Wednesday, April 23
4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's
6465 E. Southern Ave.
(Power/Southern)

Please RSVP by
Friday, April 18
to Heather at 833-8400,
ext. 101 or via email to
heather.tanner@arizonaea.org

We welcome ALL members to join us at either meeting and hope to see you there!

Involvement, Engagement, Having a Voice

By Kirk Hinsey, President



Thank you to all of you that have attended the FR meetings this year. Thank you to those who have contacted me about the budget. Thank you to those who have emailed their legislators. Thank you to those that have contacted the Board and Superintendent. Thank you for those that have attended a site meeting. Thank you to those that went to the Capitol. Thank you to those that have attended bargaining. Thank you to those that have served on a district committee. Thank you to those that participated in our Cat in the Hat writing contest. Thank you to those who encouraged seniors to apply for our scholarships. Thank you to those that got involved and didn't just sit back and let things happen.

I am inviting all members to our All Member Meetings this month on Tuesday, April 22 at Dobson Ranch Inn and Wednesday, April 23 at Mi Amigos on Power and Southern. The meeting will begin at 4:15 and food will be provided. Please **RSVP** to the office by **Friday, April 18**, 833-8400 ext. 101.

On the back of this Record is a list of committees. Do you remember this when you signed up? Now is a chance to get re-engaged and get involved in MEA. Discover your passions and strengths and share them with MEA. Please sign up and bring with you to the meeting or send to the office. The organization is only as strong and as good as its members and its members' involvement. **Members make it happen.**



Inside the Record

- Page 2Spring Membership
- Page 2MEA Calendar of Events
- Page 2Submissions Wanted for the MEA Record
- Page 3Congratulations!
- Page 3Open Letter on School Funding
- Page 3Conference Invitation
- Page 3Tutors Needed
- Page 4Committee Sign Up Sheet

Congratulations to the new MEA Officers and Executive Board Members!

The following members ran unopposed, and have been elected to these positions:

Officers:

Treasurer: Andrea Kowalzyk

Executive Board Members:

Region 2 Representative: Jennifer Tellez-Carson, Lincoln

Region 4 Representative: Mike Conway, Kerr

Region 8 Representative: Kathy Ray, Mendoza/O'Connor

Region 10 Representative: David Clark, Salk

They will assume their elected positions June 1, 2008. Congratulations again!

Region 6 still needs a Representative - contact Kirk Hinsey if you are interested.

Spring Membership is a Good Idea!

Now is the time to energize your fellow educators who have not seen the light to join MEA. If they have never been a member of NEA, they can join now and not pay anything until school starts next fall. That's 17 months for the price of 12. Encourage them to join now and new members will also enjoy the benefits of the Access Card. It is time to encourage all educators to join and build a stronger voice for public education.



Do you like to write? Would you like to share your story of how MEA has helped you? Interested in reporting on an MEA or AEA event you attended? Or have another idea for a Record article?

If so, please submit your story or ideas to Heather at the MEA Office. Articles must be received no later than 5 PM on the 10th of each month. Please include a contact number or email.

All articles must conform to established length and be appropriate for the purposes of this publication. Information in articles needs to be journalistically and factually sound. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, mechanics, and clarity. We will notify you if we use your submission.

Congratulations to Vicky Rivera, MEA Member
from Edison Elementary!

She is the recipient of a Promise Grant from AEA and will be honored this weekend at the Salute to Excellence Dinner, sponsored by the AEA Foundation for Teaching and Learning.

MEA Calendar of Events

April - May 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
21	22 <i>West Side Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn (Dobson/US 60)	23 <i>East Side Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)	24	25 April Break	26 AEA Delegate Assembly Phoenix/Mesa Marriott
28	29 <i>MEA Exec Board</i> , 4:15 PM, MEA Office	30	1	2	3
5	6 <i>MEA Retirement Dinner</i> , 5 PM, Admin Services Bldg.	7	8	9 RSVP Due by 5 PM for May's End of Year Meeting	10
12	13 <i>End of Year Meeting/Fiesta</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's (Gilbert/Southern)	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22 End of 4th Quarter	23 Teacher Work Day	24
26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31 MEA/MESPA Planning Retreat Location TBD

An Open Letter to Members: Budget Cuts and Where Funding Comes From

I am Kathy Ray and I serve as the Region 8 Representative on the MEA Executive Board. I am also a K-3 Reading Coach at O'Conner and Mendoza. With recent Maintenance and Operations budget cuts and the threat by the Superintendent to consider different delivery models by certificated staff, my position has come under fire by colleagues throughout the district. Please allow me to explain how my position is funded.

The voters in Arizona passed a ballot initiative called Prop 202, more commonly known as "Indian Gaming Money." This money filters from the Arizona Department of Education to school districts and charters through the "INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT FUND." All monies received for this fund to date have been distributed based on attending student count. For children in Mesa Public Schools this means approximately \$3.8 million dollars this fiscal school year. This is how the Arizona Revised Statute law 15-979 says these funds have to be spent:

Each school district and charter school may utilize up to fifty percent of the amount of monies collected for teacher compensation increases and class size reduction. (This should sound familiar to many of you because it is a line item on your incentive bonus checks)

The other money not utilized above shall be spent for the following:

1. Dropout prevention programs.
2. Instructional improvement programs to develop minimum reading skills for students by the end of third grade.

The "IIF" report for Mesa Public Schools is public record and available at: <http://www.ade.az.gov/districts>

Please use caution when expressing your opinion of where the district needs to make budget cuts. School finance is complicated and certificated staff members are not all paid out of the budget that is under attack due to a drop in student enrollment. Nor can money just be moved from one fund to another due to strict funding guidelines that are set by Arizona state laws.

Thank you,
Kathy Ray, Reading Coach, Mendoza and O'Connor

Achieving World Class: What Will it Take? An invitation from ABEC

Attend the Arizona Business & Education Coalition conference, "Achieving World Class: What Will it Take?" June 2 and 3, at the Orange Tree Resort in Scottsdale. An awesome line up of speakers includes:

- **How do we fund World Class schools?**
Hear Jacob Adams, the principal investigator on the School Finance Redesign Project, a national project funded by the Gates Foundation.
- **How do we develop World Class math and science teachers?**
Dr. William Schmidt, University Distinguished Professor, Michigan State University and co-director of the U.S. China Center for Research
- **Does high school reform contribute to World Class systems?**
Governor Bob Wise (W.Va), President, Alliance for Excellent Education
- **Can Arizona produce World Class schools?**
Kati Haycock, President, Education Trust

You'll want to invite your business partner and attend together. Go to www.azbec.org to register.

Tutors Needed!

Interested in making extra money and helping kids at the same time?

Sign up for the MEA Tutor Bank! We provide your name and phone number to parents who are looking for tutors for their children. You set your rate, availability, and where you will tutor

All grade levels and subjects are welcome. You can also tutor during the summer if you wish.

If you are interested in signing up, please contact Heather at the MEA Office, 833-8400, ext. 101.

In order to participate, you must be a current MEA Member.

MEA Record

1032 E. University Dr., Mesa, Arizona 85203
480-833-8400 (Office) 480-834-6890 (Fax)

Visit us on the web: www.mesateachers.org

Committees and Involvement

Please indicate any committees you are interested in serving on, and return this page to the MEA Office via School Mail; or bring it to one of the April All Member Meetings.

- _____ **Bargaining Committee** – Learn how to read a budget and work through the Meet and Confer process. 5 members.
Time commitment: January – early April. Mondays and some other meetings to prepare for the Monday meetings.
- _____ **Cat in the Hat – Read Across America Committee** – Plan activities to support and share with teachers celebrating reading. Advertise and assess the Cat in the Hat writing entries. First meeting during the first quarter to brainstorm. Any number of members.
Time commitment: Committee’s choice.
- _____ **Pay for Performance Committee** – Meet with the district when needed as concerns arise from the district’s Pay for Performance plan. 3 members.
Time commitment: Usually one meeting in the fall and then as needed.
- _____ **Benefits Committee** – Meet with other representatives and the district about the insurance trust and the benefits offered through that department. Review use, expenditures, and trends and make recommendations to the board. 3 members.
Time commitment: 4 – 6 meetings throughout the year, as needed.
- _____ **Professional Development Committee** – Working with the district, continue our Teacher – to – Teacher trainings held throughout the year. Any number of members.
Time commitment: Possibly meet before school for planning and then a couple of follow ups.
- _____ **GREAT – Grassroots Politics** – Get involved in the political process and have your voice be heard. Education is influenced and can influence politics in the state. Any number of members.
Time commitment: Your own passion and dedication.
- _____ **Beginning Teacher & Retirement Celebrations Committee** – Help organize the two events at the beginning and end of the year. Any number of members.
Time commitment: A couple days before school starts and a day at the end.
- _____ **Membership Committee** – Work as a team to engage and continue to grow our MEA membership. A fun committee to meet lots of new people. Any number of members.
Time commitment: Meet once a month, as needed.
- _____ **Scholarship Committee** – Look for ways to raise money for our scholarship fund as well as evaluate applications at the end of the year. Any number of members.
Time constraint: A couple meetings a year.

Members Make it Happen.

Name _____

Home Email _____

School/Site _____

Home Phone _____