

mea Record

Mesa Education Association
Mesa, Arizona
www.mesateachers.org

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Affiliated with the Arizona Education Association and the National Education Association

Welcome Back Edition

This year we will be having
TWO Faculty Rep (FR) Meetings
Each Month.

Tuesday Meetings will be at a
West Side Location and Wednes-
day Meetings will be at an East
Side Location. **You may attend**
either meeting - whichever is
more convenient for you.

We welcome all members to attend
and hope you will join us for our
first FR Meetings of the year:

Tuesday, Aug. 28 at 4:15 PM,
Dobson Ranch Inn, 1666 S.
Dobson

Wednesday, Aug. 29 at 4:15 PM
Mi Amigo's, 6465 E. Southern

Please RSVP by **Friday, Aug. 24**
to Heather at 833-8400, Ext. 101.

MEA Record

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Visit us on the web:

www.mesateachers.org
www.arizonaaea.org
www.nea.org
www.neamb.com

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A New Beginning

By Kirk Hinsey, President



"Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Einstein.

As I read this quote, I think of the membership and the possibilities of the Mesa Education Association. Over the last few years, MEA has become more involved and more active in many arenas. We have continued to build a respectful, professional working relationship with the district. The bargained agreement remains on the front burner, but political action and advocacy has become a passion for many of our members. They worked hard to elect pro public education candidates and pass initiatives to ensure quality in Arizona's schools. Members have become more informed about the budget talks and actively sought out answers to many questions. I am extremely proud of that and my predecessor did a wonderful job engaging new members and showing that Members Make it Happen.

Now on to the possibilities. We have a challenge of reenergizing our schools and our district. We can continue to complain in the teacher's lounge and point the finger at someone else and blame them for our problems or we can do things differently to move our cause forward. Some of our elementary schools are taking on the challenge of planning time and coming up with creative, workable solutions to ensure quality learning as well as to develop professionally. Our secondary schools have heard the call to action and are looking at ways to reinvent themselves and begin to stand out as a leader in education. Through all of these discussions, MEA is there to assist and develop a plan, with the agreement as our guide, but also to show outside the box thinking. We can get the different results with different thinking and doing things differently.

As a part of this move in a new direction, there are new committees (see accompanying article) as well as a new FR meeting in east Mesa to energize the schools and membership in those areas. These are two areas that we are hoping for new results. MEA can be proud of our working relationship with the district that has been cultivated over time. Our members are important and that is why we want to reach out and assist in any way we can.

2007 New Teachers Brunch a Success!

MEA held its annual New Teachers Brunch on August 6, 2007 at Mesa High School. Out of approximately 195 new teachers that attended, 141 signed up as new members! Congratulations and a big THANK YOU are in order for all of our members who volunteered their time to help. This is proof that Members DO Make It Happen.

However, there are 422 new teachers in the district this year, so as members it is important to make connections with these new teachers and show them what MEA can do for them. Keep up the good work and let's help our association grow bigger and better.



MEA Member Wayne Manske meets with a potential member at the 2007 New Teachers Brunch.

Report from the NEA Republican Leaders Conference

By Kathy Ray, MEA Executive Board, Region 6

I was among more than 80 Republican educators from across the nation who attended the National Education Association's (NEA) first-ever Republican Leaders Conference in Minneapolis, MN from August 2-5, 2007. The conference, which featured panel discussions by NEA Republican members who are State Legislators and Party Activists, was sponsored by the NEA Government Relations Department to assist NEA Republican members in becoming more active in their local and state Republican Parties.

As part of the conference, the NEA hosted a reception for Republican National Committee (RNC) members that was also attended by NEA President Reg Weaver; GOP Presidential candidate Mitt Romney and his wife, Ann; the campaign manager for Presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani, Mike DuHaime; and the White House political director, Jonathan Felts. Attendees also heard from political consultants who advised NEA Republicans to get involved in party activities, participate in political campaigns at all levels and work to become party leaders and delegates to county, state and national Republican conventions.

RNC staff participated in many NEA Republican Leaders Conference activities, and Republican National Committee members from many states attended the August 3, reception, which featured remarks by NEA President Weaver. He reiterated NEA's commitment to bipartisanship in its political and legislative advocacy.

The NEA Republican Leaders Conference is part of NEA's initiative to recognize the support of its Republican members, increase its presence in Republican Party activities and support pro-public education Republican candidates and lawmakers at the state and national levels. Approximately one million of NEA's 3.2 million members are Republicans, and have the potential to have a significant impact on Republican Party activities, organization and platforms in 2008. I encourage any member to get involved with their party, regardless of the affiliation. We desperately need to start educating politicians about our profession!

As always, please feel free to contact me or any MEA Board Member with questions, comments, or your willingness to volunteer for your professional association.

MEA Calendar of Events

August - September 2007

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
20	21 <i>MEA Exec Board, 4:15 PM MEA Office</i>	22	23	24 <i>Please RSVP for August FR Meetings by 5 PM Today</i>	25
27	28 <i>West Side FR Meeting, 4:15 PM Dobson Ranch Inn (Dobson/US 60)</i>	29 <i>East Side FR Meeting, 4:15 PM Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)</i>	30	31	1
3 Labor Day No School	4 <i>MEA Exec Board, 4:15 PM MEA Office</i>	5	6	7 <i>Please RSVP for 9/12 NCLB Training by 5 PM Today</i>	8
10 <i>Teacher to Teacher Workshop, 4:15 PM</i>	11 <i>Teacher to Teacher Workshop, 4:15 PM</i>	12 <i>NCLB Training, 5 PM, Rigatony's (225 E. Brown)</i>	13	14	15
17 <i>Please RSVP for 9/20 NCLB Training by 5 PM Today</i>	21 <i>MEA Exec Board, 4:15 PM MEA Office</i>	19	20 <i>NCLB Training, 5 PM, Painted Mtn. Golf Resort (Recker/McKellips)</i>	21 <i>Please RSVP for Sept. FR Meetings by 5 PM Today</i>	22
24	25 <i>West Side FR Meeting, 4:15 PM **Mi Amigo's** (Gilbert/Southern)</i>	29 <i>East Side FR Meeting, 4:15 PM Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)</i>	27	28	29

Committees, Committees, Committees

Now is the time for all good men and women to come forward in the aid of their association and district. There are some wonderful opportunities to share your wisdom and knowledge and serve on a district committee. We need able-bodied and intelligent people to serve on the following committees: Bargaining (one junior high and one high school person), Student Retention and Growth Committee, and Junior High Professional Day Committee (6 people).

The Bargaining Committee works hard to learn school finance and works to improve teacher working conditions and benefits for certified staff. All of this leads to better employees and higher student achievement. The Student Retention Committee is a new committee that came out of bargaining last spring to brainstorm with the district on ways to bring students back into Mesa Public Schools. This is a great opportunity to have your voice heard and to continue to make Mesa a great place to work and learn. This is a committee to begin working outside the box and reinventing schools to continue Mesa's academic tradition and reinvigorate the district. The Junior High Professional Day Committee is a committee to monitor and see how the new junior high day is working and how it is implemented across the district. This is an opportunity to share how the different sites developed their day and learn from the successes.

If you are interested in any of these committees, please call the MEA office at 480-833-8400, Ext. 101 and leave your name and committee – or you may email your name and committee to heather.tanner@arizonaaea.org. Thank you in advance for helping our organization and the district to provide a quality public education. Members do make it happen.

Wanted: Student Teachers

Do you have a student teacher this year? If so, please encourage them to join the AEA. Remember, MEA will pay their dues while they are a student teacher, so it is FREE for them to join. Also, when they join the Association as a certified teacher, they will receive a rebate off their membership for the dues MEA paid. Call the MEA Office to get forms sent to you.

Help us build a stronger AEA!

Be sure to check out the new and improved MEA Website at www.mesateachers.org.

One exciting new feature is the "Members Resource" page, which contains links and information about member benefits, online access to the MEA Handbook and much more.

Teacher To Teacher Professional Development

By Joe Thomas, MEA Vice President

Mesa Education Association and Mesa Public Schools are teaming up to offer professional development you can use.

MEA is excited to enter this partnership where teachers will benefit from the knowledge of other educators in the district as to what *really* works with Mesa students and parents. These courses are one hour in length and meant to provide you with information and strategies you can begin using the very next day.

Our first two courses are in September. The first is an **Orientation to National Board Certification** and will be held **September 10th**. NEA Executive Board and Career Ladder specialist Dr. Janie Hydrick will describe what National Board Certification entails, what support is available to teachers, and what timelines must be met. Certification carries with it a one time \$4,000 stipend, a yearly stipend of \$800, and allows Career Ladder participants to move to the newly-created Step 4.

The second class, **Communicating Effectively with Parents**, will be held **September 11th**. It will provide proven strategies for initiating and maintaining open lines of communication with parents, overcoming language barriers, holding effective parent-teacher conferences, and keeping accurate records and documentation of student academics and behavior. The course is filled with strategies aimed at creating strong parent-teacher partnerships.

Both courses are after school from 4:15 until 5:15. MEA will announce the sites in an upcoming flyer sent directly to the sites. You will also be able to register electronically through the district by going to the following website: www.mpsprofdev.org.

Also, mark your calendar for these upcoming courses:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Tuesday, October 30: | Understanding the Evaluation Process in Arizona |
| Tuesday, November 13: | Reporting Child Abuse—Following the Law |
| Monday, December 3: | Orientation to National Board (repeat) |

Welcome Back

By Dr. Debra Duvall, Superintendent of Schools



Welcome back. I hope our school-based staffs are looking forward to a great new school year. Over the past few weeks, I've had the opportunity to speak to our new teachers and other new employees, as well as greet our employees in various departments. Each of you plays a critical role in the education of our students. I'm filled with pride as I see the commitment of our veteran employees and the enthusiasm of our new teachers and support staff.

I'm appreciative of the work of MEA and MESPA as we address issues critical to our district. One of those issues concerns our recent identification as a district in Corrective Action. According to the No Child Left Behind accountability plan, we did not test enough students nor did enough students, in particular categories, meet the academic target for their grade or subject area. These are situations that, by working together, we can improve.

Mesa Unified School District has a proud tradition, and with all of us working together, a great future. Our Governing Board, administration, teachers, and support personnel work as a family -- a big family. Our relationships are based on trust, mutual respect, and common goals. Our students benefit from the important work we accomplish together. I look forward to another successful school year.

