

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

Please join us for our
next Faculty Assemblies

Tuesday, February 26
4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn
1666 S. Dobson Rd.
(Dobson/US 60)

Wednesday, February 27
4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's
6465 E. Southern Ave.
(Power/Southern)

Please RSVP by
Friday, February 22
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!

Where Will You Be In November?

By Kirk Hinsey, President



Fear....Anger....Challenges....Opportunities....

These four words seem to exemplify what has been going on this year when it comes down to the budget for the state and for Mesa Public Schools. Educators are afraid of the unknown and what lies ahead.

Some educators are angry and ready to spit nails. Their frustration of not being respected as a professional, being given more and more work to 'improve' student achievement, and taking on extra chores to make ends meet is boiling to the top. But where does the anger need to be directed: the school board? Superintendents? Top administrators? The state legislature? Ourselves for allowing this to happen?

But this uncertain time can also allow for creative thought and opportunity to make Mesa Public Schools stronger and better. Not only do we have a responsibility to the district, we have a responsibility to our profession to become politically aware.

My challenge to you is to give of yourself and become engaged in the politics of education. It is that messy thing in the corner we don't want to touch, but realize eventually we have to deal with it.

Our lawmakers and the public in general don't seem to understand that economic development can only be better if we invest in education and provide opportunities for our educators and our students to succeed. We are currently ranked 49th in per pupil funding, and have been at, or near the bottom for several years, yet there is no outcry. Where are the concerned parents wondering why their schools are cutting back on services and not fully preparing their child for the future? Where is the outrage from the educators who continue to see their paychecks shrink and not keep up with inflation? So how do we answer these questions?

Engagement in the politics of the state and an understanding that your voice does count is very important for a democratic system to flourish.

COMPLACENCY will get you nowhere.

Are we going to sit back and allow others to create public policy that affects us OR will we be active between now and November?



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Bargaining – Make Your Presence Known

Bargaining continues and you should have received your first update after the opening session on Monday, February 11. Spokesperson Joe Thomas had excellent and insightful opening remarks. It is unfortunate that there were not more people there to hear them. Please plan on attending bargaining on Mondays at 4:00 PM at the Stapley Board Room. It does make a difference to see people in the audience and it helps to encourage your bargaining team, especially in these difficult times.

Ways to Get Involved in March

NEA's Read Across America – the first week of March is the celebration. MEA sponsored a writing contest and four lucky first grade classes will be attending a party with the Cat in the Hat on Friday, March 7, courtesy of **MEA and MESPA**. Go to www.nea.org and find great ideas to celebrate on your own with your students.

March 5 – Education Day at the Capitol. Register online at www.arizonaea.org and click on politics and legislation. A great introduction to life at the capitol.

Sign up to receive the weekly **Legislative Update** with the important issues surrounding education. It's an quick and easy way to take action and contact your legislators. Visit www.arizonaea.org to sign up. Be sure to use your home email address to receive this information.

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.

We have a desperate need for High School tutors, especially in Math and Science. These are probably our most requested grade levels and subjects. However, **all** grade levels and subjects are welcome.

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

MEA Calendar of Events

February—March 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25	26 <i>West Side FR Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn (Dobson/US 60)	27 <i>East Side FR Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)	28	29	1
3 <i>MEA Meet and Confer</i> , 4 PM, Stapley Boardroom	4 <i>MEA Exec Board</i> , 4:15 PM, MEA Office	5 <i>AEA Day at the State Capitol</i> Delegate Ballots Due	6	7 <i>Cat in the Hat Party</i> , 12 Noon, Student Services	8
10 <i>MEA Meet and Confer</i> , 4 PM, Stapley Boardroom	11	12 <i>End of 3rd Quarter</i>	13	14 <i>RSVP Due by 5 PM for March FR Meetings</i>	15
17	18	19	20	21	22
Spring Break—No School					
24 <i>MEA Meet and Confer</i> , 4 PM, Stapley Boardroom	25 <i>West Side FR Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn (Dobson/US 60)	26 <i>East Side FR Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)	27	28	29
31 <i>MEA Meet and Confer</i> , 4 PM, Stapley Boardroom					

