

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

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* **Please join us for our** *
* **next Faculty Assemblies** *
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Tuesday, March 25
4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn
1666 S. Dobson Rd.
(Dobson/US 60)

Wednesday, March 26
4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's
6465 E. Southern Ave.
(Power/Southern)

Please RSVP by
Friday, March 14
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!*



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Spring Has Sprung!

By Kirk Hinsey, President



Flowers are blooming and temperatures are rising. Baseball has returned. Our legislature has made little movement toward enacting a budget. It must be spring in Arizona.

Spring brings with it many opportunities and, metaphorically speaking, a chance for renewal and rebirth. It is a time to do our spring cleaning, not only in our houses, but also in our professional lives.

With the uncertainty of budget cuts and changes in the district it is easy to get mad, angry, and frustrated. But think back to the idealism that you had when you entered the teaching profession. You were going to make a difference in students' lives. You were going to make learning fun.

As president, I have had the privilege of talking at several sites about the budget crisis. Some have gone more smoothly than others. I value each and every teacher in Mesa and the contributions they make in students' lives. Sometimes it may appear as though I am not compassionate or concerned, but the sleepless nights would disprove that.

This past week, I had a former student come back to visit me to say thank you for believing in him. He was constantly in trouble at school and at times, he made my English class more of a challenge. But I saw in him energy, vitality, creativity, and a successful future. He experienced many setbacks, but seven years later, he is graduating from MCC and hoping to attend ASU. With tears welling in my eyes, I was reminded of why I am a teacher and why I am passionate about our profession. This is never on AYP, but is of much more value.

I do the same with the teachers I meet every week in Mesa. I see the future of the profession as well as the dedication and the passion you have for your chosen profession. Even those teachers that challenge me, I see the love and dedication you have for the job and respect all that you do and believe in.

As the temperatures rise and the budget becomes clear, let's do our spring cleaning and renew our love of teaching and our passion for the profession. And may this be the year the D-Backs get back in the World Series.

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* **Congratulations to the Delegates for the NEA RA:** *
* **July 1-6, 2008 in Washington, D.C.** *

Kirk Hinsey, Powell
Mike Conway, Kerr
Joe Thomas, Skyline
Sue Azizi, Emerson
Skip Allen, Stevenson

Janie Hydrick, Career Ladder
Wayne Manske, Field
Andrea Kowalzyk, Webster
Tiffany Bunstein, Dobson
Shirley Thomas, Westwood

Voices from AEA Day at the State Capitol, March 5, 2008



First-time attendees from Webster Elementary

Melissa Thompson, Webster Kindergarten Teacher
I enjoyed the AEA Day at the State Capitol. It opened my eyes to the political side of Education. I learned how much we are affected by what happens at the State Capitol.

Andrea Kowalzyk, Webster Third Grade Teacher
Education Day at the Capitol was a motivating experience. Seeing our legislators in action was fascinating. This was a day to let our voice be heard. I saw the importance of getting involved and standing up for education.

Cassandra Thomas, Webster Kindergarten Teacher
I really enjoyed my day down at the Capitol for AEA Day. It really opened my eyes to all the different politics in education. I am glad that I had this unique opportunity to be a part of the ongoing issues that face our profession.

Shweta Chopra, Webster Kindergarten Teacher
Education Day at the State Capitol was an eye-opening as well as educational experience. Before this I was naïve about how politics influenced our day-to-day activities as educators. It is important for us to be aware of our legislators and to get involved.

Katie Conley, Webster Kindergarten Teacher
Education Day at the Capitol was a very interesting day. It was my first time attending and I learned a lot about how the process for a bill works. I also found out that we have to work hard and pay attention to our own district legislator. Our votes do count if we want our education to matter to them.



Governor Janet Napolitano addresses the AEA Day attendees



MEA Member and AEA Director Mike Conway,
Kerr Elementary

Jennifer Tellez-Carson, Lincoln First Grade Teacher
My experience discussing my profession and the needs of my students was fascinating. Not only was I able to meet with amazing teachers from across the state, but I also had conversations with state house and senate representatives. I was surprised by how simple it can be to make my voice heard, and I would encourage others to find ways to become empowered. The conclusion I made, is that many policy makers do not truly realize what our job requires, and so it is up to us to make them understand, because education is truly where the future of our state lies.



MEA President Kirk Hinsey being interviewed by ASU TV

Education Day at the Capitol: We Have More Work To Do **Joshua Buckley, Skyline High School**

My experience at the AEA Education Day at the Capitol left me thrilled, disappointed, and angry. When I walked from my car to the Capitol, a few blocks away, I was a fresh faced 2nd year teacher new in the AEA hoping to accomplish something. The tent outside the Capitol filling with teachers from across the state made me feel great. We were there to show the legislature that students, teachers, and education matter and that we can be a force for change. It was wonderful to see so many teachers fill a small room for an education hearing. The standing room only crowd let them know that we care and we matter. I think it sent a message but whether that visual message is enough for some of our friends down at the Capitol I am not so sure.

After hearing some of our legislators speak with us during an education panel I found myself applauding some and wanting to jump out of my seat to shout at others. I have come to the conclusion that there are some legislators who will never be with us, which means that we as an association have some work to do. If we care about education and our students, then we need to help elect candidates who understand that education is not just a service provided by the state but that it is an investment in the state's future and more importantly in the children of Arizona. We have to get the message out to people in our school district and the state that it's not enough for them to know their child goes to a good school but that every child goes to a good school and has the opportunity to attend a school that will provide them with the tools to succeed in life.

I am sick of hearing that I, as a teacher, am playing the victim card, that I just need to shut up and teach, and that I don't understand the issues facing the legislature. What I do understand now is that some of the legislators I met with today don't care about education. They can talk a good game and throw numbers out but if they truly cared they would put the money where their mouth is and fund education. Today I heard that "we shouldn't spend recklessly" when it comes to education. I didn't know that you could spend recklessly when it comes to the future of our children but then again - according to some legislators - I am just a teacher.

Cat In The Hat Party - March 7, 2008

On March 8, 2008, MEA and MESPA hosted their annual "Cat In The Hat" Party. First grade classrooms from around the district entered a contest to win a party with the Cat In The Hat by submitting books and projects stating why they would like a party with "The Cat". The winning teachers were:

Lolita Lee, Keller

Cynthia Elliott, Falcon Hill

Susan Goodenberger, Ishikawa

Martha Vogt, Field

Chastity Miller, Robson

Congratulations to all the winners!



A hug from the Cat (aka Jodi Toro)



Do you see a Cat in a Hat?



Thing 2 (aka Kathy Ray) likes stories!



Smiling Faces...



Mrs. Vogt's Class makes reading Fun!



Where is that Cat in a Hat?



Mmmm...this lunch looks tasty!!

MEA Record

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Visit us on the web: www.mesateachers.org

Bargaining – Make Your Presence Known

Bargaining continues and you should continue to receive bargaining updates in the mail. You are welcome to attend bargaining sessions, 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.

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.

2007 Tax Deduction Information

Full time members with payroll deduction, your 2007 tax deduction amount is **\$489.86**.

If you are not full time, please call Christine at 480-833-8400, Ext. 100 and she will provide your tax deduction amount.

MEA Calendar of Events

March - April 2008

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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	26 <i>East Side FR Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's	27	28	29
31 <i>MEA Meet and Confer</i> , 4 PM, Stapley Boardroom	1 <i>MEA Exec Board, Delegate Assembly Caucus</i> , 5:30 PM, Dobson High Cafeteria	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15 <i>MEA Exec Board</i> , 4:15 PM, MEA Office	16	17	18 RSVP Due by 5 PM for March FR Meetings	19
21	22 <i>West Side All Member Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Dobson Ranch Inn (Dobson/US 60)	23 <i>East Side All Member Meeting</i> , 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's (Power/Southern)	24	25 April Break No School	26
AEA Delegate Assembly					