

mea Bargaining Update

Published by Mesa Education Association ♦ Volume 8, Number 3 ♦ March 3, 2009

District Response – Non Money Issues

The committees met for the third Meet-and-Confer session Monday, March 2. Most of the time was spent on the District's response to the non-money proposals that MEA brought last week.

Class Size. Dr. Ramirez pointed out that class size is a financial issue, directly tied to the number of teacher contracts. She said that she hopes that they can continue to agree to the Class Size Memorandum. This is a supplement to *Article 7 – Class Size*, which sets certain limits on K-1 classes, composition classes, and lab classes. She said that a decision on the memo will have to wait until the larger financial picture is more clear.

Medical Leave Assistance. MEA has asked that the regulations be modified to allow a teacher to make one request for donated days each semester, instead of the current limit of one request in a year. Dr. Ramirez said that she had referred the proposal to legal review.

Paydays. MEA has proposed that principals shall not delay the distribution of live checks on the last day of school. The District made a counter proposal that would require distribution of live checks no later than the end of the regular work day. MEA is reviewing this response.

Professional Day. Dr. Ramirez reported that next year's school calendar includes four half-days for professional development – which may provide some relief from the current requirements for in-service sessions. She expressed concerns regarding MEA's proposed standards for junior high schedules and work loads, citing the need to be creative and flexible. In response, Kirk Hinsey cited the need to maintain the teachers who implement the creative junior high programs.

Teacher Preparation Days. MEA has proposed restoring the paragraph on the teacher work day between semesters. The District's position is to leave that paragraph out of the Agreement until the next cycle of school calendars has been implemented – probably two years from now.

Classroom Assignment. Dr. Ramirez has no response at this time regarding MEA's proposal regarding re-assignments to different classrooms. She said she was asking for principals' feedback on the proposal.

Many thanks to the teachers who have attended the Meet-and-Confer sessions. Many teachers, representing several different schools, have been there every time. We appreciate your support!



Future Meetings. Meet-and-Confer sessions are scheduled each Monday afternoon, probably until early April: depending, of course, on what the Arizona Legislature does with school funding. The next session is Monday, March 9, at 4:00 p.m., at the Board Room at 549 N. Stapley Drive. Meetings are open to the public and all district educators are urged to attend.

MEA Bargaining Team: Kirk Hinsey, Chairperson, MEA President and teacher at Powell J.H.; Valerie Angus, EVA; Sue Azizi, Emerson; Joelyn Hilton, Educational Technology; Eric Stuebner, Pomeroy; and Will Moore, AEA Consultant.

On the back – Speak up for Schools, *Electronically*

Lobby by Email

You can receive the latest Legislative news and send timely messages to your legislators, all at your home computer. Join the AEA network and become a “cyber-lobbyist.”

Just go to the AEA website – www.arizonaaea.org. On the front page, click on sign up for the Legislative Update (about half way down the page). You will receive regular updates from the AEA lobbying team and you will receive requests and suggestions to contact your own legislators.

The Legislature is working on the public school funding package this month. They need to hear from you on these critical issues.

