



Newsletter

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Montville Education Association

Motivating, Educating, & Activating our Members



Volume I, Issue I

October 2004

Meet your Uni-Serve Representative

What's a UniServe Rep?

A UniServe Representative has an important role in the MEA organization. The UniServe Representative advises the union on legal and contractual matters as well as our rights as union members.

A Note from your Uni-Serve Rep—Gail Hooker.....

I am a Connecticut native, and have worked in the field of personnel and labor relations for over twenty-five years. I received my Bachelor's degree from Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York and Master's degree from the University of New Haven, New Haven CT. I

have served as a Classification and Compensation Specialist, a Personnel Officer for the CT Supreme Court (Judicial Branch) and was the former Director of Personnel for Southern CT State University, New Haven, CT for eleven years. Prior to coming to the CT Education Association position, I served as the Chief Negotiator for seven years for the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, representing higher education administrators and over 5000 state clerical employees. I have been involved in labor relations training and policy development and have had a range of opportunities and experiences that have served as preparation for the position at CEA. Your local officers have been tremendous and I

am looking forward to working with the motivated and exceptional teachers in the Montville School District.



Gail has volunteered to provide MEA members with training on the contract. The training sessions will be held at Tyl Middle School on the last Monday of every month, immediately following the executive committee meeting.

MEA House Party Draws Small But Diverse Crowd



Tyl Middle School—On September 22, 2004, the MEA hosted a House Party for Public Education at Tyl Middle School. Though attendance was sparse, five schools in the district were represented, drawing everyone from teachers to secretaries and administrators. The purpose of this House Party was to draw attention to the fact that public education is woefully under funded, though heavily

legislated, by the federal government. Similar House Parties were held all over the country on the 22nd, all sponsored by the National Mobilization for Great Public Schools, a coalition comprised of the NEA, Moveon.org, the NAACP, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, and the U.S. Hispanic Leadership Institute. Through the MEA House Party, staff and administrators were encouraged to begin a dialogue about public education in Connecticut and what can be done to give it the proper attention and respect nationally as well as locally.

Anyone interested in seeing public education become a prior-

ity for our legislators is encouraged to write to them or to the local papers to bring attention to this worthwhile cause, and to sign the petition at www.greatpublicschools.org. We can make our voices heard, and we need to make a difference. The time is NOW.



What's Coming

County Council Meeting

County Council is an opportunity for delegates from all of the CEA affiliates in the county to get together, eat dinner, learn about what's going on in the state with regards to education *and* meet the local political candidates running for office. The MEA pays for your dinner--all you pay for are your drinks (and yes, there is a full cash bar).

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 26. The

highlight of this meeting will be a "meet and greet" session with local congressional candidates.

The next County Council Meeting will be held in January. See your building representative for more information.

MEA Get Together

Once again the MEA is sponsoring a get together. It will be held at the Radisson in New London from 5pm to 7pm Thursday evening, November 4. There will be NO speeches

other than a couple of quick welcomes, and there will be a cash bar, delicious hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, desserts and coffee, and *really* quality give aways. People are welcome to stay for the entire thing, or just pop in and say hi. Every single district employee is welcome! (But you must respond--only if you plan to attend--to your building representative by October 28th.)

Important Deadlines

October 1

You shall be notified of sick leave accumulation

October 15

Transcripts are due in the Superintendent's office for courses that will advance you on the salary schedule. You must have notified the Superintendent of these credits in writing by the previous March 1st

November 1

To qualify for the Early Retirement Incentive Plan, a **letter of intention** to retire must be submitted to the Superintendent on or before November 1st of the calendar year immediately prior to the calendar year in which the retirement will commence

December 1

Deadline for sabbatical leave applications for the following school year.

January 1

To qualify for the Early Retirement Incentive Plan, a **letter of retirement** must be submitted to the Superintendent no later than January 1st of the calendar year in which the retirement will commence



About the Contract.....

A View From My Office

by Joel Farris, MEA VP

Many teachers are unaware that they have a right to representation. Any time a teacher is called into a meeting they have the right to ask for a representative. This is why each school has a building representative. It is important to know your rights and your contract. Part of the MEA's goal this year is to educate the membership on the contract and their legal rights. The following information can be found on the CEA's website (www.cea.org).

The role of the Association representative at a "Weingarten" meeting

A teacher has the right to bring an Association representative to an investigative meeting called by a supervisor when the

teacher has reasonable grounds to believe that the meeting may lead to his/her discipline. This is known as a "Weingarten" right, after a decision by the National Labor Relations Board.

"Any time a teacher is called into a meeting they have the right to ask for a representative."

In Decision No. 2165 made on November 23, 1982, by State Department of Education -and- State Vocational Federation of Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO, the State Board of Labor Relations (SBLR) discussed the role of the employee's representative in such meetings. The Board held as follows:

1. The employer may

not require the representative to remain silent throughout the meeting.

2. The employer may not require the representative to remain silent until after the employer has finished questioning and eliciting answers from the employee.

3. The employer may not require the representative to channel his/her questions through the employee.

4. The representative may not insist that the employer negotiate, i.e., the employer has no duty to negotiate with the representative.

5. The representative may not, through unduly provocative questions or in the tone or manner of conduct, transform the meeting into a purely adversarial confrontation.

In sum, the State Board of Labor Relations has clearly indicated that employee representation cannot be relegated to a passive role.

Building Representatives

Julie Bateman Pat Kopycinski Mohegan Elementary	Pat Davis Lin LaPierre Murphy Elementary	Jane Angelico Carol Keatly Oakdale Elementary	Rallou Clark Colin Delaney Tyl Middle	David Gollsneider Montville Alternative High	Tanya Higdon Lynn Grills Jennifer McKernan Montville High
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