



MEA MONITOR

Moline Education Association

November 2013

President's Report – Susan Blackall

I want to send out the November Monitor filled with wishes for a peaceful and restful Thanksgiving holiday. We had a great first TNT gathering last Friday at the Barrel House. There was a good turnout, and we hope to see more of you in the future. Thanks to the work done by the Social Committee.

I regret having to include a note of concern right before the holidays, over the looming pension agreement. According to State Senator Melinda Bush, Speaker Madigan, President Cullerton, and Republican minority leaders are poised to move on a bi-partisan pension agreement. Politicians are expected to return to Springfield on Dec. 3 on a pension scheme that could cap the income that will be used to determine your retirement to be parallel with the social security cap, cut the COLA to half of the inflation rate, as well as hike the retirement age. I will keep an eye on the developing situation and keep you informed. I encourage you to take a moment to take time to contact your representatives.

1. E-mail your lawmakers right now and tell them you oppose the leaders' extreme pension scheme by going to: <http://www.ieanea.org/legislative/contact-your-legislators/>.
2. Be ready to call your state representative and your state senator on the call-action Nov. 25-26 and Dec. 2-3. You can call the We Are One Illinois hotline is 888-412-6570, 888-412- 6570 FREE, or use <http://www.weareoneillinois.org/click-to-call>.
3. Watch for information on the IEA website regarding Pension Emergency Day activities.

On a local note, several issues were brought up during the last AR and Exec Board meeting:

- Another issue brought up involved student's being allowed to return to class while still having nits in their hair. Our district works with the guidelines established by the Center for Disease Control. According to the CDC:
 - Head lice can be a nuisance but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.
 - Both the American Association of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses advocate that "no-nit" policies that require a child to be free of nits before they can return to schools should be discontinued for the following reasons:
 - Many nits are more than ¼ inch from the scalp. Such nits are usually not viable and very unlikely to hatch to become crawling lice, or may in fact be empty shells, also known as casings.
 - Nits are cemented to hair shafts and are very unlikely to be transferred successfully to other people.
 - The burden of unnecessary absenteeism to the students, families and communities far outweighs the risks associated with head lice.
- Concerns were expressed over the lack of transparency in the Moline School District budget.
 - Your head negotiators, Amber Sensabaugh and Frank Boothe, and I met with Dave McDermott for an afternoon spent learning to understand the budget. The district's website, under District Information, Annual Budget, has a lot of general information on budget; in addition, Mr. McDermott was very forthcoming with information explaining how the district allocates money for building project and professional development. Certain identified funds must be used in specific ways, such as professional development, and others are more flexible. Title 1, Title 2, and technology money was used to build the professional development room. In addition profession development money as well as community contributions were used for Common Core training, with the bulk of the money being used for teacher's salaries for the summer training. Mr. McDermott has agreed to explain other financial concerns as they arise.

- There were concerns that the Co-Teaching seminar and observations were done without adequate communication about the purpose, the tone, and the extent of the observations. Teachers were not given the chance to provide feedback on the professional development or the observations, not were CPDU's provided.
 - Dr. Moyer said that there was poor communication on this initiative, and it wouldn't happen again. In addition, the in-service feedback and CPDU's would be sent out shortly.
 - He also informed me, that in the future all communications about district-wide initiatives will come from either himself or Clint Christopher directly to staff.
- Many teachers would like to be able to check their seniority, certification, as well as ranking in the district, yet there is no listing available.
 - Lanty McGuire was asked to put together a current list and he has started working on it, with the understanding that as teachers get evaluated, their rankings could change, which could impact the seniority listing within each category.
 - Teachers do want to make sure that their certifications are up-to-date on the ELIS site. That is what the district uses to identify certifications.
- Questions also came up about teacher evaluations and how an evaluation can be grieved.
 - According to our current standing in the contract and school code, evaluations cannot be grieved, unless there is a due process violation. A letter of disagreement from the evaluated teacher can be included with the teacher evaluation, but that letter will not the evaluation ranking.
 - At this time, other questions will be addressed by the Joint Committee on Teacher Evaluation. After the Joint Committee finishes their work, the MEA will be able to vote on whether to ratify the teacher evaluation document.
- Concerns were expressed about the number of bilingual and special education students placed in elementary classrooms.
 - Dr. Moyer said that there needed to be conversations with building principals as well as bilingual and special education coordinators if there are building concerns.
- Equity in computer lab conditions at the different elementary schools continues to be a focus of an on-going conversation.
 - Darryl Snyder said that adding air-conditioning to school computer labs would be a violation of a state code that deals with "air-exchange issues." The question then becomes, how can we deal with this issue, without hurting existing air-conditioned rooms. We will continue this discussion with Dr. Moyer and Darryl Snyder.
- A final concern was expressed over the lack of grade level meetings.
 - Dr. Moyer said that the position of the grade level chairs will be reconfigured to support the district's common core efforts. They are going to be asked to be curriculum leaders and to be able to share their expertise with other teachers in their grade level.
 - He also indicated that he wants to see grade level meetings back as soon as there is time to hold these meetings, hopefully next school year.

MEA MONITOR

AR Secretary's Report – Emily Roberts

The MEA Association Representatives met Thursday, November 14, 2013, at the IEA office, Moline. Prior to the start of the meeting, Lanty McGuire discussed transfers, the RIF process, seniority, the teacher evaluation categories, and answered questions. President Blackall called the meeting to order at 4:30pm. There were 33 representatives and 15 Executive Board members in attendance; a quorum was present.

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 10th, 2013, AR meeting was made by Colette Guerdet, seconded by Rachel Moore. **Motion** passed.

Treasurer Lori McCaw reported balances of \$2,000 in savings, \$5,101.67 in checking, and \$178,606.66 in cds. She noted that November bills had been paid. Motion to approve the treasurer's report made by Jen Miller, seconded by Fran Grier. **Motion** passed.

Committee Chair Reports:

- **Elections** – Teresa Armes asked for notification of any changes in personnel in the buildings. There will be an election the first Wednesday in December. Nominees were reminded to turn in biographies to either Teresa or Leslie Kahler at the IEA office.
- **Legislative** – Fran Grier reminded members that the “Help Build a Better Illinois” petitions are due in one week. She informed members to check certification status on ELIS; from April 1 to June 30, teachers must respond to questions on the website.
- **Region 18** – no report.
- **Membership** – Julie Bender-Peterson reported that the bill had been paid. Membership stands at 463.
- **Public Relations** – Kim Anderson announced that Years of Service pins and certificates awarded next year would begin at 10 years. President Blackall had received two thank-you cards – Connie McElyea, BOE President, for the MEA donation to family on the death of her husband; and Leslie Kahler, IEA secretary, for the plant sent on the death of her father.
- **Social** – Cassie Larvenz announced two TNT events: the first to be held Friday, November 15th, 3:30pm., at the Barrelhouse, Moline; the second to be January 11, Mallard's game. To make reservations for the game, send name and the number of tickets needed (\$15 per ticket) to Debbie Engstrom, Washington. President Blackall thanked members who had volunteered to serve on the Social committee.
- **Negotiations** – Frank Boothe informed members that the Negotiations Team would meet on December 12 to discuss survey questions. He encouraged members to submit questions and suggestions to a Negotiation Team member.

Old Business:

- A motion was made by Sherri Martin, seconded by Shelly Rumler, to amend the MEA Bylaw, Article III – Governance, Section 2 – Executive Board, to read “. . .and the chairpersons of the seven standing committees...” Bonnie Lartz noted that the Bylaws had not been changed in recent years to reflect the addition of the Social committee, and that Region 18 is not a standing committee. **Motion** passed. A motion was made by Bonnie Lartz, seconded by Shelly Rumler, to amend the Bylaw as presented to all the members of MEA. **Motion** passed. The MEA Bylaw shall now read:

Article III – Governance

Section 2 – Executive Board

The Executive Board of the MEA shall consist of the officers, the seven elected representatives (three from elementary, two from the middle schools, and two from the high school), and the chairpersons of the seven standing committees all of who shall have been members of the MEA for at least one year prior to his/her election. The Executive Board shall be the executive authority of the Association. It shall have the power to meet in executive session. Under the policies adopted by the Representative Council, and within the annual

Legislative –Fran Grier

budget, the Executive Board shall have the power to employ a staff for the efficient management of the association.

New Business:

- President Blackall noted that a handout of MEA Benefits is available to members.
- President Blackall would encourage the district to find a way to air-condition all computer labs. She has discussed the issue with Darryl Snyder.
- Second semester opening day – the Executive Board will discuss the agenda with Dr. Moyer.
- IPACE money – President Blackall requested the \$4/MEA member be sent back to the MEA. The balance in the IPACE account would be approximately \$3,000. There was discussion on using this money to support the 1% sales tax. A motion was made by Colette Guerdet, seconded by Sherri Martin, that 50% of the IPACE money may be used at the Executive Board’s discretion for the 1% sales tax. **Motion** passed.
- Boundaries Committee – Shelly Rumler will serve as the MEA member on the committee.
- Motion made by Bonnie Lartz, seconded by Fran Grier, to cancel the December AR meeting unless something urgent comes up. **Motion** passed.

President’s Report:

- Co-teaching observations – it was noted that there were concerns regarding observations made by an out-of-district consultant at MHS and the two middle schools. Executive Board will discuss this with Dr. Moyer.
- Dual-language – it was noted that the dual-language workshops were open to anyone in the district who is certified bi-lingual to attend.

AR Concerns:

- It was voted (2010-2011) to not publish AR concerns in the Monitor. ARs were reminded to communicate concerns discussed at the meeting with the other MEA members they represent. President Blackall will discuss most issues in the “President’s Corner” section of the Monitor or send superintendent’s responses directly to the ARs for dissemination to members.

Good of the Order:

- Gift certificates and door prizes were presented to winning ticket holders.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Fran Grier, seconded by Shelly Rumler. **Motion** passed. The meeting adjourned at 5:13pm.

Public Relations- Kim Anderson

Attention members! Did you know that the MEA has its own website (<http://mea40.org/>)? On this website, you can find archived copies of past Monitors and Connecting Lines. In addition, you can find lists of who the MEA Exec Board members and ARs are and when their meetings are held, MEA election applications and bios, how to access our contract and your Weingarten rights, tax info, John Deere-Moline / Moline Schools Special Recognition Awards, MEA Scholarship info, and links to the District, IEA, and NEA. But there is more we can do with this site!

In a section called Good News, we will feature fun, planned events by the newly formed MEA Social Committee. In addition, I would be willing to post other things such as special classroom or events or school fundraisers, outstanding awards or achievements of students or staff etc. Please feel free to send me text and pictures of anything you would like to share that you believe would qualify!

Candidates for Representative to the IEA Convention, in random order:

Scott Ehlers- I was selected as a delegate to the National Education Association in Washington, D.C., in 2012, and to the Illinois Representative Assembly in Chicago, last year. I graduated from NIU with a major in Political Science, received a Master's from WIU in Educational Administration and currently teach American Government and AP Government at Moline High School, and serve on the school's School Improvement Plan (Rising Star) and am a Capacity Builder for the district. I have been a life long resident of Moline, Illinois, and serve as a region 18 representative.

Julie Bender-Peterson- Kindergarten teacher/Willard Elementary 23 years with Moline School District #40 (all K-6) Mea Membership Chair for 6 years. Will be a member of the Negotiations Committee this Spring. I have attended the past 3 IEA Rallies in Springfield to campaign and support teacher issues at the Legislative level. Last year I attended the GPA Convention in Springfield for the first time and I believe that this experience inspired me to learn more about the legislative process within our profession. This past summer I attended the NEA Convention in Atlanta. This was an amazing eye-opening experience in terms of seeing first-hand the many issues that face our fellow teachers across the nation, as well as how the legislative process is conducted at a national level. I would like to be elected to attend the IEA Convention in Chicago. I feel this experience will allow me to have a deeper understanding of issues relating to Illinois and will also prepare me for serving on the Negotiations Committee this Spring. Thank you for considering me for this opportunity.

Fran Grier- Delegate to the National Education Association 12 years. Delegate to the Illinois Education Association 12 years. MEA executive board member-Legislative Chair-8 years. Grass Root Political Activist 8 years. Illinois Ed. Association Legislative committee 4 years. Region 18 delegate 2 years. Special Education teacher 18 years. Currently at John Deere Middle School.

Shelly Rumler- I am currently teaching Kindergarten at Garfield Elementary School. I have served as an association Rep. for the past 8 years. Last school year I served as President of the MEA. Last spring I attended the IEA-RA in Chicago and the NEA-RA in Atlanta last summer.

Casandra Larvenz- Elementary teacher: 34 years. Social Committee Chair: 3 years. Exec. Board MEA: 13 years. A.R. Rep: 8 years.

Susan Hafner- As a life-long Moliner, I have been part of Moline education system as both student and teacher. Obviously, I have seen a lot of changes along the way. Having been an English teacher at MHS for seventeen years, I have tried to take on stronger role in how some of those changes are developed and implemented, impacting both students and teachers. I am currently a data team leader of the English junior level, a member of the RTI(a) committee at MHS, AR for our department, and adviser for the "M", our school yearbook. Beyond these roles, I am also on various other committees at MHS. I have a Bachelor's degree in English Education and a Master's in English, which allows me to be an adjunct professor at Black Hawk College, providing our students with the opportunity for dual credit at the high school. I am invested in our school district as a teacher and also a parent, for I want my own children to get the best education possible. Fortunately, I feel that we at Moline do just that-provide an excellent education to all our students.

Dave Strafford- I have taught at both Wilson Middle School and Moline High School. I have experienced being RIFed, force transfer, and spent one year at part-time. I have served on the MEA exec board (not currently) and continue to be an AR. I am involved with the IEA as a grassroots political activist. I am willing to listen to your concerns and help find a solution. I have also attended several representative assemblies over the years. I will be happy to represent you at this year's assembly. Please feel free to contact me with your concerns. With your vote, I will continue to help as needed.

Elections will be held in buildings on Wednesday, December 4, 2013

MEA MONITOR

MOLINE EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

PHONE: 309-764-0811

E-MAIL:
sblackal@molineschools.org

WEB SITE:
www.me40.org

Executive Board

President-Susan Blackall
Vice President-Bonnie Lartz
Secretary-Emily Roberts
Treasurer-Lori McCaw

MHS at Large
Colette Guerdet
Jennifer Ulam

Middle School at Large
Susie Smice

Elementary at Large
Chris Ballard
Tina Ferreri
Dinah Leibovitz

Appointed Committee Chairs
Elections-Teresa Armes
Legislative-Fran Grier
Membership-Julie Bender
Public Relations-Kim Anderson
Social-Cassie Larvenz

Chief Negotiators-
Amber Sensabaugh
Frank Boothe

Membership –Julie Bender-Peterson

Our current membership is 463 members.

MEA Member News:

Congratulations to:

Kate Blondell (JDMS) and Jim Zacharewicz (alt. H.S.) for their marriage on 11/10/13

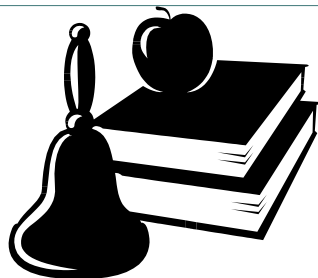
Andy Cockril (Jane Addams) on the birth of a son on 11/14/13

Lori Sedlock (Bicentennial) on the birth of her grandson

Jerilyn Clark (BHAEC) for her marriage on 11/01/13

Condolences to:

Allison Dounoulis (BHAEC) for the loss of her father



About Our Organization...

NEXT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: DECEMBER 5 AT 3:45 AT MEA OFFICE

NEXT AR MEETING: CANCELLED FOR DECEMBER

NEXT SUPERINTENDENT MEETING: CANCELLED FOR DECEMBER