

MEA Representative Council Meeting: September 28, 2009

President Molly Erickson called the meeting to order at 4:32 P.M.

Information/Introductions

Gerry Gdowski provided the treats for the meeting. Gerry is an agent for Horace Mann insurance, an NEA endorsed product. Prior to the start of this meeting he had provided members an opportunity to sign up and receive information about products.

Agenda Revisions

None

Routine Matters

- A. The minutes of the August 31, 2009 meeting were approved.
- B. The Financial Report was approved as submitted.

Leadership Reports

- A. President's Report: Molly wanted to remind members that two teacher scholarships are offered per semester (fall, spring, and summer) through MEA; only two applications have been submitted thus far; the due date will be the end of October and Molly will advertise this; members pay for the class and MEA sends a check when transcripts are sent in to Molly. At the last Building Rep meeting members asked if surveys can be filtered so we can see voting results from high, middle, and elementary schools; Molly will add this question to future surveys. Molly attended the Learning Community Coordinating Council meeting for District 4 meeting: School districts are working on plans for elementary learning centers and poverty plans (each school district does one, it gets approved by school board then it needs to be approved by LCCC).
- B. Vice President's Report: Mike Foyt did not have a report.
- C. UniServ Report: Mike Wiesen was absent.
- D. Metro District Board Report: They are working on getting LCCC information on the website. The Crystal Apple Award deadline is October 16th; send nominations to Molly or Tom Whisinnand.

Information Items

- A. Retirement Seminar: MEA and NSEA-Retired will host a workshop on Thursday, November 5th at DSAC from 4:30-6:00; members 50 years of age and older are invited to attend. The workshop will only cover state retirement, not VESP through Millard Public Schools.
- B. Date Change for December Building Rep meeting: Changed to Monday, December 14th
- C. Grade Level Meetings: Elementary teachers are asked to attend a grade level meeting each year; the district is asking that each teacher attend (in the past one person per grade level per building attended) because the meeting deals with the new Language Arts curriculum. Meetings run to 5:00 P.M. Some members felt the information shared at the meeting could have easily been sent out through email; others felt it was beneficial, all depending on who you sit with and what information you share. One member asked if this meeting qualifies as one of the four evening meetings the district can require; Molly said that if the district lets you go by 5:00 P.M. then it doesn't fall into that category. It was suggested that one person per grade level per building can attend and then discuss the information from the meeting with PLCs.
- D. Membership Numbers/New Teacher Party: We have 1164 current members (1212 was last year's total); 63 new members have joined, 48 of those are new hires. 91 new teachers haven't joined. There are 580 total nonmembers. Please speak to new teachers and nonmembers; teachers need to join by October 1 to receive legal services. The New Teacher Party was poorly attended; only two new teachers and 10 Building Reps attended. Suggestions on getting more new teachers involved were to avoid progress report time, meet in August instead of September, ask building reps to personally bring new teachers. Molly suggested going back to providing lunch on the first day new teachers are in meetings then doing Happy Hour for all members. Other suggestions: Provide door prizes to encourage signing up, advertise benefits better.
- E. ProCom: Met for the first time on September 17th. Two teachers each from high school, middle school, and elementary school attended. Day 194: Teachers present still like having the choice of dates; it was suggested that teachers be allowed to take a four hour class then have four hours to implement what was learned. Dr. Lutz explained that President Obama's speech was considered controversial by the district because of the number of phone calls it generated as well as polarization by the community. Pandemic plan: The district has one; absence numbers are reported to the Douglas County Health Department; there has not been a spike in Millard's absences. Stimulus dollars will provide: Smart Boards for 4th and 5th grade teachers as well as secondary Social Studies and Science teachers, funding for a Wellness Program, Career Academies, amongst other things; for a complete list, see the School Board's minutes from the September 21 meeting. Extra Duty: A committee will research to see if we are comparable to other

districts; the Negotiations team will use this information the next time we negotiate. Moved (Whisinand/Heys) that the MEA president write a letter supporting student productions, including “Rent” at Millard North High School, and send it to the school board. Moved (Whisinand/Schulte) to close discussion. Both motions carried.

- F. Learning Community Coordinating Council: Matt Heys attended the meeting on September 17th, and he shared information regarding English Language Proficiency Plans and Poverty Plans.

Action Items

- A. None

New Business / Questions

- A. None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Erin Shirmang-Ward, Secretary