

To: All MEA Members
From: MEA Negotiations Team
Re: Salary Issues

This message is coming to all MEA Members though we know that not all members are aware of this situation. We are by no means trying to sound an alarm, but we do want to make our members aware of an issue that is occurring in our district.

Starting with some history, in 2004 the MEA and MPS negotiated a contract that moved from a traditional "step-and-lane" pay scale into our current pay system. In our current pay system, everyone has their own individual salary schedule and there is not scale for all like in many other districts. As an association, we know that there are many benefits and many concerns about the current system.

One of the issues that we are having with the current system is that there is an "overtake" issue. This means that people who earned their Master's Degree, or hours beyond their Master's before 2005 are at risk of being "taken over" by a new hire that has earned their degree after 2005. This issue was first discovered in 2009 when we were negotiating the last contract. This is the reason that there is language in the contract addressing the "overtake" issue. This is also why those who have a pre-2005 Master's is receiving a \$2,000 stipend and those with a post-2005 Master's is only receiving an \$800 stipend. We know that there is a problem and this was one step to work on correcting the problem.

With that being said, the number one goal of the MEA Negotiation's Team this year was to ensure that all teachers would not be without a job next year. Once RIFs were off the table, we then went to work to ensure that we would get enough of an increase to off-set the rising cost of the State Retirement System. Part of this goal included keeping the Master's Stipends in place for the 2011-2012 school year. This was also successful, hence the raise is .75 percent and the state retirement increase is .6 percent. Unfortunately, this is where we ended up this year.

Certainly, we have not sent out a survey for next year and have not begun to negotiate for the 2012-2013 school year. However, I can assure those of you

that could potentially be affected by the overtake issue, this will be a high priority for us again next year. We certainly will be looking at another increase in the state retirement; we will also be concerned with jobs as well. Yet the MEA and MPS both want to address this issue. Both MEA and MPS want to ensure teachers that their commitment to our district is valued.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any further questions. As we continue to work through this in the fall, we will continue to keep you updated. Thank you.