

September 2015

Middletown Township Education Association

News & Views

Welcome and Welcome Back!

The new year means new staff to our district, and the M.T.E.A. welcomes all staff members that are new to Middletown. We also welcome back all veteran staff members! Most of our work year will be rewarding, but we also know there will occasionally be some friction or disagreements or even some contractual violations. The building reps and officers of the Association are here to help you resolve these issues as quickly and smoothly as possible. If you find yourself in a situation where you believe your contractual rights are being compromised, please see a building representative as soon as possible for advice and help.

Electronic Signatures

Effective with the 2015-16 school year, our district is implementing the use of the electronic signature/acknowledgment feature in My Learning Plan (MLP) for all observation forms. All MTEA staff members will electronically 'acknowledge' their observation forms through My Learning Plan in replace of signing printed copies. This does not necessarily mean that you agree with the evaluation, but simply that you acknowledge you have received the evaluation. Only the summative evaluation will be printed; however, members have the option to print each evaluation and keep a hard copy of all their evaluations. All members will receive notification from your building, as well as instructions on how the electronic acknowledgment will work. Please read the instructions carefully.

New Member Workshop

The MTEA will be holding a New Member Meeting for newly hired staff on October 13, 2015 at Jacques Reception Center. Information about your contract, your benefits, your rights, and your responsibilities as an Association member will be discussed. We ask that veteran members encourage the new hires to become active in the MTEA Association.

Need to Know

Certified staff members are guaranteed 200 minutes of Preparation Time EACH week. This is not time to have co-planning with grade level or subject area teachers, parent conferences, or meetings for IEP's. Your Prep Period is your time to plan, grade papers, and attend to matters to prepare for your classes. **This is not time that can be administratively assigned, nor can it be designated as "Collaboration Time" as specified in the contract.**

Elementary co-teachers should be provided a 20 minute period of collaborative planning per week. Co-teaching teams who co-teach more than one subject will have one planning period for each subject.

Contract limitations on the secondary level daily load:

Watch for more than three (3) different teaching preparations; anyone assigned to four (4) or more different teaching preparations **MUST** be relieved of his/her administrative (duty) assignment. Article 19.26a

Watch for changes in teaching area stations.

A regular classroom teacher in the Middle Schools and Senior High Schools shall not be required to change subject area teaching stations more than three (3) times in any one (1) day. Article 19.27a

Watch for consecutive teaching period limits (no more than (3) periods nor more than four (4) periods where double length periods are scheduled). Article 19.28a

Staff members who volunteer for positions that previously were stipend positions reduce the chance of having the position ever return to a stipend. This unfairly hurts ALL of our members.

2015-2016 Association Meeting Dates

The MTEA holds monthly meetings to keep the Association Representatives apprised of the issues they are being confronted with on a daily basis.

Any member of the MTEA is invited to attend the Representative Council meetings. You do not have to be a building representative; however, only the representatives may vote. The MTEA is always looking for new members to become active in the Association and their schools. Please speak to a building representative or contact us at the MTEA if you are interested in becoming a rep or alternate representative.

All Representative Council meetings are held at the High School North Library, and Executive Council meetings are held at the MTEA office unless otherwise noted:

Representative Council Executive Committee

September 10, 2015	September 17, 2015
October 1, 2015	October 15, 2015
November 12, 2015	November 19, 2015
December 10, 2015*	December 17, 2015
January 7, 2016	January 21, 2016
February 4, 2016	February 18, 2016
March 3, 2016	March 17, 2016
April 7, 2016	April 21, 2016
May 5, 2016	May 19, 2016
June 2, 2016	June 16, 2016

- * Jacques
- All meetings held at HS North @ 4:00 p.m.
- Honored Guests Cocktail Party June 9, 2016@ Jacques

M.T.E.A. Workshops 2015-2016

The MTEA has been approved for many Professional Development workshops. Attendees will be granted 2 hours of Professional Development. Professional Staff will also be granted 2 hours of CEU credit. ESP Staff will be granted 2 hours toward the ESP increment. Staff must be active members of the MTEA to attend the workshops. Please check the MTEA website to view the many workshops offered to our members and fill out an online registration form at www.mtea.com

Middletown Day

One of the MTEA's largest PRIDE events in the community is on September 26th, where the entire community comes together to have a good time. Volunteers are needed to help set up and staff our MTEA booth. If you can help, please email Mary Ellen Connelly at connellym@middletownk12.org Information is also available on the MTEA website at mtea.com

Parking For Pete's Sake

Also on September 26, 2015, is a bike ride at Sandy Hook to raise money to assist families with transportation and parking costs while being treated at Sloan Kettering. A party at *Off the Hook* follows. Please check the MTEA website at mtea.com

The Great Race

On October 24, 2015, the Great Race will be held at Middletown High School South. The first race begins at 10 am. All proceeds from this day go directly to each school's PTA/PTO organization, so we ask that teachers encourage students and their families to support this wonderful event!

The XYZ's of Retirement

On Wednesday, October 21, 2015, MCEA members considering retirement are invited to attend a workshop at the Radisson Hotel in Freehold. Please register for this event on the MCEA website: MCEANJ.com If you have any questions, please contact MCEA at 732-455-5054.

Future XYZ's of Retirement Dates:

January 13, 2016 Doubletree Hotel, Tinton Falls
February 24, 2016 Radisson Hotel
May 3, 2016 Doubletree Hotel, Tinton Falls

NJEA Convention

The Monmouth County Education Association will be offering bus service to any member of the Monmouth County Education Association who would like to attend the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City on Thursday, November 5, 2015. The bus will depart from the MCEA office at 3455 Route 66 in Neptune at 7:30 a.m. and return to the office at approximately 7:30 p.m. The bus will bring members to the Resorts Casino, and Resorts will provide transportation to the convention center. Resorts will provide a \$25 game voucher to each person who rides the bus.

A hospitality suite will also be provided at Caesars from 12-2 p.m. where refreshments will be provided. If you are interested in either event, please register at MCEANJ.COM

Grievance Updates

2014-5 Continuous Preparation Periods at the Elementary Level. On June 28, 2015, a motion to vacate the award issued in favor of the Board of Education, by Arbitrator Jeffrey Tener on January 22, 2015, was heard in Superior Court by Judge Patricia Del Bueno Cleary. The Association argued that Tener's award, allowing for elementary prep time to be split was ridiculous and inefficient. Judge Cleary ruled against the Association. Unfortunately, this is an instance where "they just don't get it." Splitting prep time into segments of 10 or 15 minutes does not let the teacher use the time efficiently, and we hope that building administrators will look for any way possible to not schedule teachers in this manner.

2015-7 Quarterly Exams at the Secondary Level. Arbitrator John Sands initially issued an award in favor of allowing the District to have teachers write quarterly exams. As per the District's testimony, those exams would be written on Professional Development Days, with substitute coverage, or if neither of those ways was able to be provided, after posting and paying for

people to write the exam. The District then denied payment to a member who was forced to write an exam on her own time after being denied PD time, sub coverage or payment, saying that the ruling only provided those means for common core quarterlies to be written. Both the Administration and the Association agreed to bring the same arbitrator back in to resolve the disagreement and clarify the arbitrator's original decision. The Association argued that there was no difference between common core and non common core quarterly exams, and after a full day of testimony, the arbitrator agreed to clarify his original award. That award clarification states that from now on, if any teacher has to write any quarterly exam, the District must allow the exams to be written on Professional Development days, provide substitute coverage to allow the teacher to write the exam, or post the exam and pay teachers to write it.

2015-5 Basement Grades. The Public Employee Relations Committee (PERC) ruled that it is a managerial prerogative to set minimum student scores, such as giving a student a minimum grade of 55 for a marking period, despite the fact that the student may have actually earned a much lower grade. PERC ruled that this is an establishment of a grading policy, and not a grade consultation issue.

2016-1 Hiring Secretaries at Step 1

All previous administrations have hired secretaries at Step 1, regardless of any prior experience until recently, when secretaries were hired at steps above Step 1. On September 15, 2015, a grievance Level II hearing was held. The Association asked that all secretaries previously hired with pertinent experience be given credit for that experience, as were the new hires. The Administration has five (5) days to respond to the Association.