

Metro West Governing Board Meeting

Thursday, October 28, 2021

Virtual Meeting on Zoom

Those of Attendance:

Kay Carlson, SLP, President

Rose Korst, SLP, Secretary

Megan Lhotka, Treasurer

Melissa Benjamin, Orono VP

Denise Specht, EdMN President

Bernie Burnham, EdMN Vice President

Rodney Rowe, EdMN Secretary/Treasurer

Janie Gholston, Minneapolis MFT

Chris Watkins, SLP

Monica Byron, Richfield

David Clark, Richfield

Dale Clark, Hopkins

Marc Doepner-Hove, Westonka

Ann Hersman, Minnetonka

Mark Broten, Minnetonka

Cory Knutson, Wayzata

Anne Naumann, Wayzata

Katy Tharaldson, EdMN Field Staff

Beth Anderson, EdMN Field Staff

Chris Commers, ECCS

Kay Carlson called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Denise Specht: Welcome! EdMN officers are meeting with locals throughout the state. How are things going in your district? What's going well? What isn't going well? Listening for trends. Shortages are hitting districts throughout the state.

Names won't be shared, but stories will. Subs and paraprofessional shortages are at the fore front. As a result, kids needs aren't being met. There is a job fair in Rochester public schools to help fill the 80 paraprofessional openings. \$1500 signing bonus.

Ann Hersman, Minnetonka: Things are actually going better at the moment. There are so many teachers who would go elsewhere if they could find the same money. These teachers are overwhelmed with

technology, covid, etc. Could subs be paid \$300 a day? It might entice subs to come in and do the job.

Mark Broten said the elementary schools in their district are handling things differently from building to building. Adds to the mental stress.

Cory Knudtson, Wayzata: It was a frustrating day. He feels like everyone (teachers, administrators, students, everyone) is just filling holes in a damn that just keeps springing leaks. Growing incredibly worried about teachers. The pressure they are feeling is continuing to grow. Some teachers are on the verge of quitting the profession or simply leaving for now. What impact will this have on the Union?

Monica Byron, Richfield: People are burnt out and they are wanting to quit. The prep time teachers need to prepare for the next day is increasing and the work load is a huge issue. People feel like they can't do the best for students. It is eye opening at the things students haven't learned yet. The teachers feel like they can't slow down and meet the students where they are at.

People are feeling they can't deal with equity issues with all the other things going on. In addition, the middle school and high school are all feeling overwhelmed.

Chris Watkins, St. Louis Park: The stamina for school kids just isn't there. Kids are inattentive and off task. Kindergarteners didn't go to preschool last year

and it shows. The kids are behind. Teachers are feeling the fatigue.

Chris Commers, ECCS: This district feels the same as those above. The teachers big need in this district is **TIME**. It would help take some of the pressure off them. With the cuts, class sizes are the largest in the district history. The CEA members are suffering.

Marc Doepner-Hove, Westonka: The high school has 50 licensed teachers. This week alone he had multiple people wanting to quit—leaving teaching altogether. The district is starting to shut down some services. Food service and food supply issues. Custodial staff is also short. Things aren't getting cleaned or trash taken out. One paraprofessional left today. She felt she could make a lot more money in another profession. Morale is not good. There is a behavior problem, specifically 9th graders.

Sub shortage is huge.

Melissa Benjamin, Orono: The School Board decided to skip elections this year. There is a group of parents who are stalking the school board members. There is a huge pushback. They are still working on negotiations and so far it isn't going well.

Teachers and all educational staff are burning out.

Denise Specht said she is concerned about moral injury. This terms refers to nurses and teachers (and possibly others) who are being set up for failure. There is a survey in our chat. Please take it and get as many of your colleagues as possible to take it. People can take it twice. Once as parents, once as teachers.

Thank you for the work you are doing with kids and parents.

Agenda approved with flexibility.

Introductions

Motion to approve September Minutes.

Moved: Marc Doepner-Hove

Seconded: Chris Watkins

MOTION: PASSED

Megan Lhotka, treasurer's report. See attachment she sent.

Please submit vouchers if you need a reimbursement.

Law Conference \$165

Byerly's Catering for the December meeting. Is a \$25 reimbursement ok?

Three people, Melissa, Marc and Dave, would you be available to do the audit? Please let Megan know.

MOTION: To approve treasurer's report

Moved: Ann H.

Seconded: Chris W

MOTION: PASSED

Motion to approve the \$25 per member for food Dec. meeting. Email a picture of the receipt and she will mail out a check.

This includes the field reps as well.

Megan has the numbers for each local. This number is for purpose of collecting dues.

Uniserv Chair: No report because there hasn't been a meeting.

Board: Monica B. The Board is looking to set a goal of building a strong local. If you have ideas she can bring forward to the Board let her know.

Council Chairs:

Dave B., Legislation: Nothing on legislation. There are 2 plans in the works, but he has not seen them. More next month.

Melissa B. Communications: EdMN is updating the platform.

Marc D-H Negotiations: Once we get past the holidays, please share what your district is doing.

EdMN Field Staff: Katy, MEA last week 250 in person, 1000 on line. Law Conference is Nov 17. Please get registered. There are 94 locals that have settled. 262 are still in negotiations.

The student loan forgiveness program has changed. The new changes are making a deal for these teachers.

Vaccine for the little ones is coming next week.

Beth A. will drop the website in the chat where teachers can find out about loan forgiveness.

Ethnic Studies/Coalition Initiatives. Nothing more at this time.

Sharing local engagement activities.

Minnetonka : Mark B set up a pizza party at a brewery. Union paid for pizza. Well attended.

Wayzata: Cory Knudtson they had an in-house donuts, etc and handed out swag bags. Working on keeping members engaged.

Upcoming School Board Elections: Minnetonka is in the middle of a wild one.

Monica Byron says it's pretty bad out there.

Melissa Benjamin says students are politely refusing to wear masks.

Anne N says some kids are wearing masks to be like the other children against their parents wishes.

Open Forum: Teachers shared some experiences relating to negotiations and teacher planning time.

Red Flags: There are many teachers who are looking to leave the profession. Especially those in their 20s and early 30s. Older teachers are seeking ways to leave also. Could teachers be holding districts hostage? Ann H gave an example of the Computer teacher who resigned and moved to Arizona.

Teachers are beaten down. Time and mental health days are critical at this point. Teacher's voices need to be heard.

Discussion/Action items: Nothing

November 2, 2021 will you be willing to share room capacity at the Southwest office.

MOTION to adjourn.

Moved: Ann H

Seconded: Marc D-H

MOTION: PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Korst

REMINDER: Our next meeting is December 2, 2021. Remember to order from Bylerly's. \$25 maximum. Save receipt, take a picture of it and send it to Megan L for reimbursement.

Topic for this meeting: Combination of SPED and Distance learning issues.

Remember, NO November meeting.