



30701 Barrington Avenue • Suite 125 • Madison Heights, Michigan 48071 • 248/585-3723

President: ROBERTA MASTERS *Vice President:* JOE MOCERI
Secretary: DEBBIE ROSENMAN *Treasurer:* CINDY SHANKIN
Trustees: LARRY SMARTT, BETSY MURPHY,
TONY LUCCHI, CARYN GACH, MARILYN PAPANDREA

President's Newsletter *January 2008*

Happy New Year, 2008! It seems impossible that it is already 2008 for only a short time ago the world was anticipating how to survive the change into the New Millennium. To keep things in moderation and to maintain a good balance, remain the keys to success. This year will be no different as we move forward with a slate full of events. The New Year always provides new challenges and new opportunities for without both, one would never know or fully appreciate the talents that rest within. The Executive Board and TEA Bargaining Team will be meeting to create the full membership survey and to plan for administering the survey in February. Your leadership teams will also attend the MEA Bargaining/PR Conference in February. Sessions addressing basic bargaining, crisis preparation, political action, teacher advocacy and the impact on the employment of Association members along with all other school personnel will be offered. The leadership will make every effort to keep members informed as new developments occur. On behalf of the TEA Executive Board, I wish you and your family along with our school family a great year! **Roberta Masters** (work) 248.585.3723 (home office) 248.828.2812 Email: teaprez@gmail.com

Teacher of the Year Nominations This is a final reminder to consider nominating a colleague for the "Teacher of the Year Award". This is a wonderful opportunity to recognize a colleague who has made a difference in the lives of children and staff. Connect to the District website: www.troy.k12.mi.us/tsdnews/teacheroftheyear.htm for the necessary application which is due to Tim McAvoy by **Friday, January 18, 2008**. The TEA PR Committee will determine the finalists at each level and overall District winner.

Elementary Half-Day Absences Elementary teachers who are scheduled for half day in-services need to plan for appropriate substitute coverage for half day absences. This should include sufficient time of 20 minutes for travel and 40 minutes of unassigned lunch for the classroom teacher. The absence reporting time for substitutes will therefore vary based on the individual teacher building schedules (late or early) and grade level with scheduled lunch period. Please contact your building representative for further clarification or information regarding this item.

In addition, please use caution when calling for a substitute on half days for personal business or family illness. Do **not change the start time** for if the time is greater than 4 hours, you will be charged a full day of absence.

Elementary Prep Time This is a reminder to all elementary staff regarding the contractual right that the Board has agreed to provide a weekly minimum of 225 minutes of preparation time and conference time for all elementary teachers. This is accomplished through the scheduling of specials. Should a special teacher be absent and a substitute not provided on the scheduled day, the building administrator is to arrange for substitute coverage for those teachers who have lost prep time on another day preferably within the same week that the loss occurs.

Any teacher who is asked to cover another teacher on his/her prep time should be completing a time sheet for compensation to offset this time loss. According to Schedule D page 74, the 2007-08 hourly rate is \$26.86/hour.

PAC Drive 2007-08 TEA Representative Delegates can plan on receiving all Political Action Committee (PAC) materials at the January 22, 2008 Representative Assembly which will be held at ATHENS HIGH SCHOOL in the Media Center. Co-Chairs, Sara Ritter and Kaity O'Riordan will provide an over-view of this year's campaign and disseminate the PAC 08 packets. The PAC drive will take place from January 28th to February 8th. Please plan ahead and have your checkbooks ready! The future of each educator is at stake whether a member is a first year teacher or more senior member of the TEA. Proposed legislation for public school funding for all educational programs, employees' health care benefits, student safety legislation, and retirement benefits are on the line. Constant changes by the state legislators impact and/or diminish our rights and abilities to make decisions at the local level. PAC dollars support efforts to address these concerns through a collective voice and concerted effort. *Please plan ahead; have your checkbook "ready and willing" to give to this important program!*

Do You Fit this Criterion? Part-time teachers who elect to receive MESSA insurance are in a unique situation regarding insurance premium payments. While this is a very rare situation, it can be disconcerting to receive a bill for catch-up payments for health insurance. **Any part-time teacher, who pays a portion of insurance premiums AND plans to go out on an extended leave,** needs to contact Linda Fritts in the Benefits Office to review the payroll deductions. Potentially, one could owe money to the District depending on how far into the school year the leave begins. If you fit this description, call 248 823 4006 to be sure your premiums are covered sufficiently and/or make plans to adjust payroll deduction to adequately cover the prorated portion of premium.

MEA Scholarship 2006 Application This is another reminder for scholarship opportunities for your senior who will be graduating from a public school in 2008. This MEA scholarship has been offered since 1997 and has awarded over \$175,000 to student scholarship recipients. It is supported through local association donations and fund raising efforts. Last year 17 public high school students and five college students were awarded scholarships which totaled \$25,000. Contact your child's high school counseling office or download an application from MyMEA.org under conferences and announcements. Applications must be postmarked by **FEBRUARY 8, 2008**.

Right to Work Scam! Watch out for paid signature mercenaries at the polling places across Michigan on January 15th along with their misleading efforts to get a signature on petitions while making money by doing so. The true intention of this law is to cripple union efforts to represent workers by allowing freeloaders to receive union benefits without paying dues or service fees. This already takes place in other states and has ultimately had a negative impact on bargained wages/benefits and other working conditions of public school employees which can be legally bargained.

Bargaining Process Update The Executive Board and Bargaining Team will meet to review materials for writing the 2007-08 TEA Survey. The survey will be administered at each building according to a schedule developed by a Bargaining Team member, Executive Board officer or trustee along with the building representative. Further communications through your TEA Building Representative will keep you posted on this activity. Please be sure to make your voice heard by actively participating in this important step to determine the priorities and issues for this round of negotiations. The TEA Crisis Team will also begin plans for coordinating committees. Stay tuned!

January 8, 2008 TEA Executive Board-SODA Office
January 9, 2008 TEA Bargaining Team Preliminary Work-SODA Office
January 18, 2008 End of Semester-teacher workday; Teacher of the Year applications due to Tim McAvoy
January 21, 2008 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday-No School K-12 or staff
January 22, 2008 TEA Representative Assembly-ATHENS HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER-4:15 p.m.

Emphasizing Educational Excellence
iammea.org/tea