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## *President's Newsletter      November 2007*

Everyone has talents to share . . . they just might be packaged differently. This statement has never been more evident than in today's world and specifically in our District. The personal and professional talents of our staff and students come in all sizes and shapes and those talents move to the forefront should the opportunity, challenge or the needs arise. Thanks are extended to the many TEA members who have stepped forward to represent building staff in the negotiations prep work. There is another group of District employees, some TEA members, who use their talents to impact a particular group of young people. How many of us are aware of the TSD program called "GROW" which stands for "Getting Ready for the Outside World"? Upon personal invitation, I had the wonderful opportunity to experience a typical Friday at the center recently. What a heartwarming, remarkable experience it was! The "GROW Program" provides support services to young adults, ages 18 through 26, with special needs-many of whom graduated from the Troy Schools. Their limited quarters, located on Long Lake near Dequindre, will be moving to the renovated old Baker as it becomes the new IB center in Troy. The student population of approximately 32, focuses on vocational training at community based **work-sites\*\*** for skill development. These skills become transferable and can assist the student in gaining the practical experience needed to obtain competitive employment. The intent is that they can potentially become more independent as maturing adults. These students readily offered me smiles, greetings and hugs as they shared their talents in the morning session. How many of us would be so willing to share our hidden talents so easily? How many of us will take our personal package and offer it to others without reservation? What leadership qualities do you keep hidden that could benefit the entire membership? Consider this your personal invitation to bring your talents forward and use them to benefit others. The challenge will be great but the reward, priceless! **Roberta Masters (work) 248.585.3723 (home office) 248.828.2812 Email: [teaprez@gmail.com](mailto:teaprez@gmail.com)**

Please see the website for a comprehensive list of local businesses which support these students through placement opportunities at **work-sites\*\***. In return, we encourage our members and families to frequent these establishments.

**Special Education Announcement** Secondary special education teachers cannot use the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) elementary test to fulfill "highly qualified" teacher requirements, federal auditors recently informed the Michigan Department of Education. How many teachers this will impact is not known, but MEA will be working closely with the Department of Education to explore definite answers and solutions. Teachers have until June 30, 2009, to become highly qualified through other options. The Association will work with TSD administration to address this concern.

**"Health Related Issues" link on TEA Website** Please check out the TEA website ([www.iammea.org/TEA](http://www.iammea.org/TEA)) for the latest update from Cynthia Dickstein, MESSA Field Representative, regarding Senate Bill 418/PA 106; Overage Dependents; Optional Short Term Disability; Marriages, Births and Adoptions; and Hearing Care Benefit Maximum articles.

**Schedule B,C, D Postings** Article 24.7 states that “When known, the Board shall publish and post in each school a list of all position which will be filled, and paid for at the scheduled rates for the school year. If during the year they plan to fill any additional positions the TEA will be notified, and the notification placed also in each school. No employee of the District will be asked to volunteer for any position not included in Schedules B, C or D.” These positions are to be visibly available for TEA members. A number of positions are being filled by non-union coaches from outside the District. This jeopardizes the collective bargaining agreement and those positions. Please contact Roberta if your building is not receiving notification of potential openings.

**November 2- End of 1<sup>st</sup> Card Marking** Teachers need to decide what works best for his/her individual schedule for work time and professional development on this day. In the past contracts, the half day was mandatory PD which not everyone needed particularly if the 30 hours had already been completed. The contract now allows for teacher discretion in determining the hours as **all workday, all PD**, or split the day-**half work and half PD**. There is an additional option to “flex” three (3) **half-days** on any non-student workday. As you determine what works best for you, please keep in mind that teacher work time at the end of each marking period is a valuable block of time to grade, report student progress and plan further lessons, as well as, complete necessary professional development.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences/Schedule** Conference times were bargained for the sole purpose of meeting with parents. The Association position is that professional development sessions cannot and should not occur during these conferences times. Thank you for upholding the Collective Bargaining Agreement by reserving this time exclusively for parent/teacher conferences as set forth in Article 6 H. November parent/teacher conferences are a great opportunity to connect with parents and discuss student achievement. The schedule for conferences is the same time of day as last year. **All teachers, full or shared-time, attend all sessions of parent/teacher conferences according to the CBA.**

LEVEL	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Elementary:	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Middle School	12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
High School	12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Substituting on Prep Hour** A number of our members are being asked to cover classes by teaching on their prep hours due to a lack of substitutes in buildings. While there is no obligation to do so, the contractual amount is set at \$26.86/hour. Be sure to complete a timesheet for **each and every hour** you perform this service and turn into office. Keep a copy of the timesheet for your records too.

**Professional Development** Please note “**teachers must keep his/her record and submit the record to the principal by the last teacher workday of the school year**”. (Article 11.11D) **Thank you for your assistance in keeping track of your hours and updating KALPA periodically so records can be maintained more readily by all staff.** The Letter of Understanding on page 86 of the CBA, outlines the parameters under which professional development is accepted by the District outside regular school hours and must be pre-approved by the District to count.

**Happy Thanksgiving to Everyone! - Recess** November 22-23; No school November 21<sup>st</sup> due to compensatory time for fall conferences.

November 01	MEA/SODA Grievance Training at Services Building @ 4:00 p.m.
November 02	End of First Marking Period; payday # 5
November 06	Election Day 2007-Vote!, TEA Executive Board meeting at Wass Elementary 4:00
November 10	MEA Fall Representative Assembly; November 11-16 National Education Week
November 14-15	Parent Teacher Conferences
November 21	Comp Day for Parent/teacher Conferences; November 22-23Thanksgiving Recess
November 27	TEA Representative Assembly @ Smith Middle School
November 28	Negotiations Study Committee #2 -Smith Middle School; 4:15 p.m.