

# The Slate



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## MNEA spring elections

At the January Representative Assembly, the MNEA Nominations and Elections Committee announced the timetable for elections and the vacancies for MNEA offices, for representatives to the TEA Representative Assembly, and for delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly. See Page three for the TEA/NEA Delegate Nomination Form. The MNEA Spring Election Timetable is posted at: [www.mnea.com/electiontimetable.htm](http://www.mnea.com/electiontimetable.htm). MNEA vacancies are as follows:

### MNEA Officers (Two-Year Terms)

**President**  
**Vice President**  
**Finance Officer**  
**Secretary**

### MNEA Executive Board Members (Three-Year Terms)

**District 1 Director** (*Hunters Lane Cluster*)  
**District 4 Director** (*Glenclyff Cluster*)  
**District 7 Director** (*Hillsboro Cluster*)  
**District 10 Director** (*Stratford Cluster*)

### MNEA Executive Board Members (Two-Year Term)

**District 12 Director** (*Cane Ridge Cluster*)

The individual elected to the District 12 Director position on the MNEA Executive Board Member will be seated immediately following certification of election results.

### TEA Board of Directors (Three-Year Term)

**TEA District 9 Director** (*MNEA Representative on TEA Board*)

### Nominations and Elections Committee (Two-Year Terms)

**District 2 Committee Member** (*Hillwood Cluster*)  
**District 4 Committee Member** (*Glenclyff Cluster*)  
**District 6 Committee Member** (*Pearl-Cohn Cluster*)  
**District 8 Committee Member** (*Antioch Cluster*)  
**District 10 Committee Member** (*Stratford Cluster*)  
**District 12 Committee Member** (*Cane Ridge Cluster*)

### Administrative Retirement Committee (Two-Year Term)

**Trustee** (*Participant in the Metro Teacher Pension Plan*)

### Metropolitan Professional Employee Insurance Trust

**Trustee** (Three-Year Term)

### TEA Fund for Children and Public Education Council

(Formerly T-PACE Council)

**District 9 Council Member** (Three-Year Term)

## MNEA works for principals, too

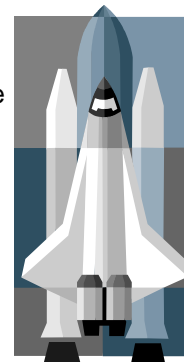
In December, MNEA was successful at resolving a grievance at the informal step over a miscalculation of sick leave time impacting middle school principals and others who have been converted to 12-month administrative employees. The EBS payroll system calculates sick leave in hours rather than days as stated in the *Educational Agreement* and TCA 49-5-710(a)(1). Prior to December 2008, MNPS and Metro Payroll have made no recalculation of accrued sick leave time when an employee converting from a 7.5-hour work day to an 8-hour work day. MNPS has agreed to fix all past errors.

## Space week is coming!

Tennessee Space Week (TSW) is a statewide project designed to increase student interest and performance in science and mathematics through a focus on aerospace programs and accomplishments. Keeping this goal in mind, TEA strongly encourages interdisciplinary project development as well as traditional proposals within math and science departments across the state. For more information, go to <http://www.teateachers.org/cms/TEA%27s+Tennessee+Space+Week/82.html>

Activities are co-sponsored by the Tennessee Education Association, the Tennessee Space Grant Consortium, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The TSW project, originated in 1986, includes special learning opportunities for students and teachers.

**When is TSW?** Following the Challenger tragedy, January 28, 1986, TEA acted to honor the life and teaching of fellow NEA member, Christa McAuliffe, who was aboard the Challenger as America's first teacher in space. In her honor, Tennessee Space Week is held each January, the last school week preceding, or the school week including, January 28. This year's celebration runs from **January 25 through January 31**.



## Know your contract

### Article VI, Section H. Teacher Facilities & Input into Construction of Facilities

Teacher Facilities. The Board shall strive to make available in each school as funds and space permit: a work area for teachers containing equipment and supplies to aid in the preparation of instructional materials; adequate lunchroom space; restroom and lavatory facilities exclusively for teacher use; space and facilities for teachers to conduct their business and store necessary equipment and supplies, a secure space for personal belongings (in the individual's classroom or work area); and a faculty lounge. (2006)



## Deducting MNEA dues

Since MNPS converted to the Metro Government payroll system (EBS), the Board has stopped providing a printout to MNEA members showing their dues deductions at the end of the tax year. In order to have an official record of dues deductions, members are advised to retain their December 24 check stub ("pay advice"). That pay advice shows the MNEA dues deductions for the preceding 12 months.



The total dues deducted during the tax year represent partial dues payments for two separate membership years (the last part of 2007-2008 and the start of 2008-2009). Thus, the amount will not be equal to annual dues for either year. In most cases, the total dues deducted for the 2007 tax year should be **\$560.38** (six payments of \$39.21 for January through March and eight payments of \$40.64 for September through December). Individual amounts may vary based upon when you joined and whether you had a pay period with no pay.

If you have lost that particular stub, the school secretary can print out a duplicate. However, he or she must remember to scroll to the second page of the pay advice screen before printing or the dues amount will not show on the printed page.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### January

- 17** *I Can Do It!* Classroom Management Workshop  
8:00 AM at MNEA Headquarters
- 26** Professional Council  
4:00 PM at the Central Office



### February

- 12** MNEA Executive Board Meeting  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 13** MNEA Candidate Petitions Due  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 19** MNEA Representative Assembly  
4:30 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 19** TEA/NEA Delegate Nomination forms Due  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 21** MNEA Black History Forum  
8:00 AM at TEA Headquarters
- 23** Professional Council  
4:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters

### March

- 6** TEA/NEA Delegate Ballots Due  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 12** MNEA Executive Board Meeting  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 26** MNEA Representative Assembly  
4:00 PM at the Central Office
- 27** MNEA Officer Election Period Begins

### April

- 6** MNEA Executive Board Meeting (*Date change*)  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 13** MNEA Officer Ballots Due  
5:00 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 16** MNEA Representative Assembly  
4:30 PM at MNEA Headquarters
- 27** Professional Council  
4:30 PM at MNEA Headquarters

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# TEA/NEA DELEGATE NOMINATION FORM

MNEA will elect delegates to both the TEA and NEA Representative Assemblies during the February 23 to March 6 election period. DELEGATE NOMINATIONS must be submitted to the MNEA office by 5:00 p.m. on February 19, 2009. All members of MNEA are encouraged to submit a nomination form. It is through the Representative Assemblies that policies for both TEA and NEA are established. The TEA Representative Assembly will be held May 1 and 2, 2009, at the Nashville Convention Center. MNEA is eligible for approximately 130 delegates.

The NEA Representative Assembly will be held July 1 through July 6, 2009, in San Diego, CA. MNEA will send approximately 22 delegates. The president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary were elected as delegates in the MNEA general election last spring.

PLEASE PRINT

Name of Nominee \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number or TEA Access Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (required for verification)

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Email Address (not MNPS) \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Work Location \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Ext. \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to submit my name for election to:** (Mark all that apply.)

- The TEA Representative Assembly, May 1 and 2, 2009, at the Nashville Convention Center
- The NEA Representative Assembly, July 1 through July 6, 2009, in San Diego, CA

**I am a:** (Mark one.)

- A teacher, guidance counselor, librarian, or other paid on the teacher salary schedule
- A supervisor or administrator paid on the administrative/supervisory salary schedule

**My race is:** (Mark all that apply.)

- American Indian/Alaska Native
- African American
- Hispanic
- Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Other Racial or Ethnic Minority (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

**If elected, I agree to attend all the meetings of the Representative Assembly and abide by MNEA rules.**

Signature of Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN TO MNEA-ROUTE 3 BY 5:00 PM, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

## Let's hear from Erick...

Several years ago the Board of Education purchased a computer system called Chancery SMS® to replace the antiquated AIMS student management system. I've been around long enough to remember the struggles over adopting and implementing AIMS and initially believed the challenges teachers face relative to Chancery SMS® would diminish over time as did the issues facing those employees using AIMS. However, time has proven me wrong.



In 2006, the textbook/education conglomerate Pearson Education, Inc. purchased the financially struggling company Chancery Software Limited. Pearson presumably was planning on fixing the problems with Chancery SMS® but is apparently abandoning the product in favor of newer technology. Chancery SMS® has few advocates in this school district but numerous detractors. As an end user of the product, I am personally offended by the claim below which can be found on Pearson's website:

### *Chancery SMS®*

*An enterprise-class solution for growing urban districts seeking specific implementation and customization services, streamlined operations, and organizational process re-engineering.*

Don't laugh, but Pearson list the following as "Features and Benefits"

1. *Up-to-the-minute information on student progress*
2. *Robust reporting and data mining capabilities*
3. *Great Districts Streamline Operations*
4. *Scalable Solution*
5. *Improved Efficiencies*
6. *Secure, scalable, easy to maintain system*
7. *Roles-based functionality*
8. *Fast, effective communication tools*
9. *Open, integrated*

If I were writing a description of Chancery, I would write something more like this:

### *Chancery SMS®*

1. *A multi-million-dollar boondoggle, that seldom performs the tasks its producers claim without some convoluted work-around or modification costing the district more resources (both human and capital).*
2. *A system that does not integrate any technology efficiently and that can only perform when users are asked to log off or stop entering data.*
3. *A system that cannot schedule middle schools or A/B blocks without thousands of manual entries.*
4. *A system that makes teachers', administrators', and guidance counselors' lives more difficult every day.*

I remember multiple promises at Professional Council and through email communication with IT that Chancery SMS® would integrate seamlessly with GradeSpeed®. I remember assurances that the bugs would be worked out and that network upgrades would fix the problems with data loss. I also remember cautions from teachers in Memphis who warned us Chancery was a disaster. I'm now giving up on promises and looking for real solutions! MNPS needs to bag the boondoggle!



## MNEA celebrates black history

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." This recognition came as a result of concerns brought forth from Dr. Carter S. Woodson. You will be reading and hearing about all of the upcoming events being planned throughout the city of Nashville during the month of February. We encourage each of you to celebrate and arrange to attend events where possible or create your own.

As a part of this celebration the MNEA Minority Affairs Committee, chaired by Patricia Rowe Lane (Tom Joy Elementary School) will be sponsoring a BLACK HISTORY FORUM —Theme: ***What a Day!***

The forum will be held on ***Saturday, February 21, 2009 at 10:00 AM at the Tennessee Education Association*** headquarters located at 801 Second Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee. Program events include our special guest speaker, Dr. Carolyn Tucker, our guest choir from East Literature Magnet School "Rising Legacy" and dancers under the direction of Maxine Jones. Vendors will be on site. Directions to TEA headquarters are posted at [www.mnea.com/teadirections.htm](http://www.mnea.com/teadirections.htm).



The panel discussions' moderator will be Ms. LaCheryl Tucker of Atlanta, Georgia. She is joined by the following distinguished community leaders: Dr. Kevin Churchwell (physician), Ms. Patricia Clark (housing advocate), Mr. Howard Gentry (community leader/parent), Dr. Sharon Gentry (school board member/parent), Attorney Jerry Maynard, II (Councilman), Mr. Joe Spicer (business leader) Shemial Quarles (Metro Public Schools Student) and Breanna Quarles (student, Middle Tennessee State University).

*This event is free to the public. Come join us as we celebrate Black History Month at the TEA building. **What a Day!***

## MNEA members receive discounts

During December, MNEA members received their TEA membership card ("ACCESS Card") via U.S. Mail. The ACCESS card is actually a discount program that provides special offers on everything from hamburgers to cruises. Members report that they have saved in excess



of their annual dues by using the ACCESS card in Nashville, across the state, and throughout the nation. In order to take advantage of the discounts,

members must first activate their card. To activate your card, go to [www.mnea.com](http://www.mnea.com) and select the ACCESS Card link at the bottom of the page.

More details and up-to-date information at [www.mnea.com](http://www.mnea.com)