

Press Release



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Nashville, TN — On August 16, 2017, the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association (MNEA) learned of a plan by Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) to offer a \$6,000 signing bonus to attract teachers in high needs content areas. Unfortunately, those teachers already working for MNPS are being left out of the incentive program. MNEA has several concerns including:

1. The timing of this incentive may save money by leaving out the majority of new hires but won't be terribly effective because most districts surrounding Davidson County are already staffed for the year.
2. The plan incentivizes late hires but leaves out those who secured employment over the summer.
3. MNPS abandoned the "turn-around corps" bonus plan after one year because it was largely unsuccessful and did nothing to retain employees. In fact, at least one principal left the district right after the bonus was paid out that year.
4. Signing bonuses are controversial among teachers because they make some feel they are undervalued.
5. Signing bonuses must be carefully structured in such a way as to avoid the sign-and-flee cycle.

Dr. Erick Huth, the president of MNEA, said, "It's time for the city of Nashville to move beyond gimmicks and pay teachers a professional wage commensurate with the cost of living in our great city. All our teachers work hard for the children of Nashville—not just those hired after the start of the year in a few content areas." MNEA recognizes that shortage areas exist, but the district's focus needs to be on breaking down barriers to retaining employees. Signing bonuses only address a narrow issue for a limited amount of time.

The Metropolitan Nashville Education Association (MNEA) is the only recognized representative of teachers in on in Nashville and Davidson County. It is also the largest teacher organization in Nashville and was founded on April 15, 1964 upon the consolidation of Nashville City Schools and Davidson County Public Schools. MNEA replaced the Education Council, a consortium formed in 1959 by the City Teachers Association, the Nashville Teachers Association, the Davidson County Education Association, and the Davidson County Education Congress. However, MNEA's history of working for teachers and students in Nashville dates back to 1895.