

The Tell Tale

Rockwood NEA Newsletter

Volume 42 Issue 3

Navigating the Waters

Allison Seitz, President

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A recent article in this publication sent a message to our community that teachers are unintelligent, lazy, and incompetent. As a public school teacher, I took great offense to the perceived inadequacies of an entire profession dedicated to the future of our country.

At one point the author claimed that teachers are “hostile” toward our brightest students and unwilling to provide them the challenges they need to reach their potential. How can that be when Rockwood teachers regularly develop instruction that accelerates and differentiates for all students in a focused effort to ensure each student is progressing? When teachers are pre-testing, providing feedback, adjusting lessons as they learn more about how each student learns, integrating technology, and so much more, we do it because we are dedicated to making sure all students reach their potential.

The author also described his perception about our “lack of competence” and “lack of appreciation of outstanding intellectual development”, yet Rockwood teachers continue to increase the percentage of students scoring in the proficient and advanced levels in Communication Arts, Math and Social Studies on our state tests. Over 65% of our students at each grade level are performing above the 50th percentile on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills while only 50% are expected to do so. In some subjects that percentage is over 90% for our students. Our school district has 14 Missouri Gold Star and 10 National Blue Ribbon schools. Additionally, our high school students are excelling on Advanced Placement exams with 75% of them scoring a 3 or better, and consistently our ACT and SAT scores are above state and national averages. Our students earn scholarships to prestigious colleges and universities. They are awarded national honors. These accomplishments and many more are made possible through the intellectual strength of teachers.

And through all of the hard work, even though the author of *Problem Students* doesn't see the value, we also promote self-respect and confidence. We provide students support when they struggle and celebrate with them whether they take a small step toward a learning goal or a gigantic leap over it. And then we set another goal. And another and another until our students start coming back to us saying thank you for believing in them when they didn't...for knowing just how far and how hard to push and when to pullback...for being the intelligent, dedicated and highly competent teachers who prepared them for a successful life in a world turning faster than they could imagine from our classrooms.

Allison Seitz
Rockwood Teacher
President of the Rockwood National Education Association

In this Issue...

Board Policy Change ▪ MNEA Fall Conference ▪ The Wind in Our Sails

Thank you, Thank you!

Wow! A HUGE thank you to the 881 members who completed the 2005 Bargaining Survey and to the 150 who sent in a testimonial!! Your input is invaluable to the team as they begin their work!



Board Policy Change: Distance Learning

As the result of the 2004-06 negotiations and the work of a subcommittee composed of teachers, administrators and support staff, the district has removed its restriction on **distance** or **on-line** course work. Prior to this committee's work, teachers were restricted to a maximum of two courses via correspondence or on-line, now referred to as distance learning. By lifting this restriction, teachers need to be aware they are limited to **no more than nine** hours of graduate credit hours **per semester** during instructional periods. This limitation would not apply to teachers in the summer who are not teaching.

Here is what to look for when considering on-line course work:

- Will this university issue graduate credit hours that are transferable to another institution if you are working toward a Masters degree at another university?
- Is the university accredited through North Central Association of College and Schools; we are no longer requiring NCATE accreditation?
- Is the course work in my subject or a related area?
- Is the graduate credit for work after the bachelor's degree is conferred?
- Does the course profile appear to be one where there is accountability and interaction with a faculty member and others enrolled in the program?
- Have you read the district's channel change policy and regulations – 4505?
- Are you aware the drop out rate for on-line course work is higher than traditional classroom instruction?

If you have read all of the above and the relevant policy/regulations and you feel distance learning in the answer for you...**GO FOR IT!**

Thanks to members of the Distance or On-line subcommittee. They are Steve Ayotte, Sue McAdamis, Cathy Jones, Jane Lingafelter, Allison Seitz, Dana Todaro, Joan Matyshak and Eric Graham.

MNEA Fall Conference

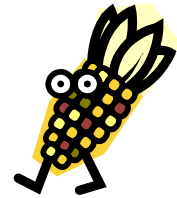
November 10-11, Adam's Mark Hotel, Downtown St. Louis

Session topics include: Teaching Respect for All, National Board Certification, What New's with ADHD, Using Good Children's Literature, Collective Bargaining, History Brought to Life, But I'm NOT a Reading Teacher, Handheld Computers... See your October issue of Something Better for a complete list!

Attention New Teachers: By attending the "I Can Do It" Classroom Management session on either the 10 or 11, you fulfill your Beginning Teacher Assistance requirement. Register on-line at www.mnea.org/teach/begteach/htm or contact Tina.Morton@mnea.org

The Wind in Our Sails

Congratulations to...



Barb Dozier (Bowles), who won a scholarship to attend the National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) Fall Conference.

(As a local of more than 800 members, RNEA is a member of NCUEA – a chapter of NEA)

Andy Gensler (Eureka High School), on his recognition as a National Milken Council Teacher of the Nation and his prize of a \$25,000 check!!!!

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Dates to Remember

Nov. 11—MNEA Fall Conference
Nov. 16—Exec. Board 4:30pm, Office;
Nov. 23-25—Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 7—AR meeting, 4:30 pm, CMS

American Education Week



A Strong America Starts with Great Public Schools

November 13-19, 2005

Happy Thanksgiving

from RNEA

