

Letter regarding freezing dues sent to NJEA President Barbara Keshishian from Linda Guyer, MTEA President

May 10, 2011

Dear Barbara,

On both ESP Appreciation Day and National Teacher Appreciation Day, the MTEA sent its members a token of its appreciation- a flash drive with the MTEA logo. Many thank you emails were received; however, I received responses from some members advising that they would have preferred to have our dues frozen. I responded that in fact, MTEA dues have remained frozen at the budgeted amount for the 2007-2008 school year. Monmouth County (MCEA dues) have also remained frozen for the last several years.

Despite the fact that we lost over 100 teachers and ESP's at the end of last year due to Governor Christie's budget cuts, the MTEA was able to maintain the 2007-2008 rates for the 2010-2011 school year. Each year, this has become increasingly difficult to do. Regardless, the MTEA does not intend to raise the MTEA dues for the 2011-2012 school year, both because we do not have a new contract (in which we were offered a 0% increase), and we will have to begin to contribute more for our health insurance, as our contract expires on June 30, 2011.

When this discussion took place in our Representative Council meeting on May 5, 2011, many members voiced their concern that the NJEA's dues were the largest portion of the dues payment and asked why those dues couldn't be frozen too, especially in consideration of the new increases in health insurance and 2% caps.

As president of the Middletown Township Education Association's over 900 members, I strongly urge you to consider the request to freeze the dues that NJEA collects from its members.

Sincerely, Linda A. Guyer President, MTEA

How does the Salary Freeze Affect You?

On June 30, 2011, the 2008-2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Board of Education and the Association will expire. Until a new contract is negotiated, the two sides will be bound by the terms of the current contract. This means that both salaries and step increments will be frozen at the current levels, and will remain so until there is a new contract in place.

Continuing Education Credits

Despite the fact that the salary guides will be frozen until a new contract is negotiated, it is imperative that you continue to turn in any paperwork for advanced education levels (B to B+10, B10-B20, B30-Masters, etc. If you have completed graduate courses or CEU's that would make you eligible to move horizontally on the salary guide, it is your responsibility to have all your documents submitted to Personnel. ESP members need to obtain 75 hours of CEU credits to submit. Documents must be submitted no later than August 31 to receive credit beginning in September or January 31 to receive credit beginning in February, contingent on negotiations.

Insurance Contribution Increase

As of July 1, 2011 the MTEA's contract will expire. Accordingly, we, as public employees, will be required by law to contribute 1.5% of our salary toward our health insurance. The contribution will be collected by the Board of Education, and will be used to offset the cost of the health insurance premium.