



EBEA NEWSLETTER

East Brunswick Education Association

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United in Excellence

January 2014

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Just as “mid-term” examinations are administered to students in the “middle of an academic term,” the half way point of this school year also provides our members with an opportunity to assess their involvement in their Associations and evaluate their knowledge about professional issues affecting public school employment.

As a member of the National Education Association (NEA), the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), the Middlesex County Education Association (MCEA) and the East Brunswick Education Association (EBEA), your mid-term questions are listed below. How well will you score?

- *The EBEA distributes valuable information to its members through its monthly EBEA Newsletter and monthly Rep. Council Minutes. What pertinent information is provided for you in these monthly communications?*
- *The NJEA mails monthly publications to its members. Are you reading the Reporter and The Review to keep current with all issues affecting both certificated and ESP member?*
- *The MCEA advertises ESP member workshops as well as Instructional and Professional Development workshops throughout the year. How many workshops have you attended to gain beneficial information about your specific job category?*
- *NEA, NJEA, MCEA and EBEA all have websites with regular updates. How often do you visit these sites to learn about events or opportunities available to you throughout the year?*
- *Our newly structured EBEA collective bargaining agreement (contract) contains twenty-six (26) articles about your terms and conditions of employment. Are you familiar with the “Common Provisions” articles AND those that pertain to your specific job category?*
- *Our Association Representatives are your building advocates. When they ask for your assistance to organize or take action on current issues affecting your employment, do you help individually or collectively in making your voice heard?*
- *Our Association Representatives are your contract enforcers. Are you seeking their assistance to resolve minor difficulties before they become major association concerns?*
- *Are you aware that the EBEA office provides essential information and assistance regarding: evaluation procedures, leaves of absence, retirement, member assistance, disability programs and legal services?*

SAVE THE DATES



January 27th
MCEA XYZ's of Retirement

January 31st
NJEA ESP Conference

February 12th
EBEA Rep. Council Meeting

February 15th
NJEA Legislative & Political Action Conference

February 26th
MCEA PLC Workshop

A **BASIC** score is a characteristic of members who are new to public school employment.

A **PROFICIENT** score represents members who are knowledgeable and have an understanding of the need to engage in association activities.

A **DISTINGUISHED** score, indicative of many of our EBEA leaders, suggests dedication and commitment in achieving excellence in public education while guarding the interest of all members.

Now that you've completed and scored your mid-term exam, ask yourself –

“How can I become more involved?”

(See your Association Representative or contact the EBEA office!)

Ruth Davitt

Employees' Right to Union Representation

Provided to You by the Grievance Committee

1. As a union member you have certain rights known as the Weingarten Rights.
2. Weingarten rights are only used during investigatory interviews where a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information, which may be used as a basis for disciplinary action, or when an employee is asked to defend his/her conduct.
3. Prior to a meeting, the employee has the right to ask what the meeting is about. If an employee has a reasonable belief that disciplinary action may be taken, or that he/she is being questioned as a witness, he/she has the right to ask for union representation. The right to union representation may also occur midway through an interview, especially if it began without a reasonable belief that discipline might result.
4. Management **is not required** to inform an employee of his/her Weingarten rights.
5. Upon the request for union representation, management can:
 - Grant union representation
 - Discontinue the interview
 - Offer the employee a choice between discontinuing the interview or proceeding without union representation. (An employee should never waive his/her right to representation.)
6. If management refuses to allow union representation or if it is not available at that time, the employee should say nothing. If management continues to ask questions, then they have committed an unfair labor practice.
7. Prior to the start of the interview, the employee has the right to speak privately with the union rep before the questioning begins.
8. During the interview management must inform the union representative of the subject of the interview. The representative may assist during the interview by clarifying confusing questions. Many management personnel believe that the union representative is there only to observe and take notes. (This is not true.)
9. While the interview is in progress the union representative cannot tell the employee what to say or answer for the employee. The representative may ask to speak privately with the employee.
10. When the questioning ends, the union representative can provide additional information to management.
11. If you are called into a meeting with management, you should read this statement to management before the meeting starts: **"If this discussion could in anyway lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative be present at this meeting. Without representation I choose not to answer any questions."**
12. Remember, **you cannot refuse to meet.** If you do you will be insubordinate.
13. If you need union representation, you should not say anything until your representative is present.

Remember, the union representative:

- Can speak at this meeting.
- Can advise the employee not to answer questions that are abusive, misleading, badgering, confusing or harassing.
- Cannot take control of the meeting, bargain over the purpose of the interview, or obstruct the interview. In doing so, the representative could then forfeit the right to act as a Weingarten representative.

If you are in need of a pocket size Weingarten Rights card, please see your building representative to obtain one.

News from the Nominations/Elections Committee

In accordance with the EBEA Constitution, the offices of President and Treasurer shall be filled in even number years. The offices of Vice President, Secretary and Director of Active Support Members shall be filled in odd number years.

Therefore, the Nominations/Elections Committee is now seeking out, screening and nominating candidates for the following elected positions:

**President
Treasurer
and
Delegates to the NEA-RA**

The filing deadline for election to one of these offices is **February 28, 2014** as per the February 3, 2014 memo that will be sent to all EBEA members. The slate of candidates will be presented to Representative Council on March 12, 2014. This year's elections will take place on **Thursday, April 3, 2014**. Watch for further announcements in your building.



Working After Retirement

As a newly retired member or a member about to retire, you might be thinking about getting a part time job in the public employment sector to keep busy during your retirement. As a matter of fact, some of you may have already called the EBEA office to inquire about the limitations affecting public school employees seeking additional public employment after retirement.

The following information was provided to local associations through an NJEA advisory from its Research and Economic Services Division for service and early retirees who plan on working after retirement:

The New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits stipulates that a retiree must have a “bona fide” retirement in order to return to public sector employment in New Jersey. *A “bona fide” retirement is defined as a completely severed relationship between employer and employee for at least 30 days from the day of retirement.* **Federal regulations** regarding returning to work for the same employer, however, are determined by **the age of the retiree.**

The NJEA has also provided a quick reference guide to working after retirement for service and early retirees. The guide can be found on NJEA’s website at <http://www.njea.org/news/2014-01-07/working-after-retirement>. Additional questions should be directed to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at (609) 292-7524.

Member Benefit Online System (MBOS) Update

Since the inception of the Division of Pensions and Benefits Member Benefit Online System approximately six years ago, TPAF and PERS members were encouraged to register for online access to their personal benefits account. While many of our members are now registered MBOS users, others are not. In order to view your pension account information, to apply for a pension loan, to designate your beneficiary, to purchase service credit, and to apply for retirement, you must do so through MBOS.

The following information is provided to assist our members in using or registering for the member benefit online system:

- If you are a registered MBOS user, simply log on to your account at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.shtml>. For help logging in follow the instruction under the link *“Log On Instructions for Registered Users.”* If you forgot your Log On ID or Password the “LOG ON HERE” link will bring you to additional links to retrieve your ID or password.
- If you are a first time user of MBOS, you must register with both **MBOS** and the **myNewJersey** web site. Registration is free but requires several steps. Registration instructions are provided for you using the link “REGISTER FOR MBOS” provided at the Division of Pensions and Benefits link above.
- If you have difficulty registering for MBOS or using MBOS, call the MBOS Automated Help Line at (609) 777-0534. Calls can also be made to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at (609) 292-7524, Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Wall of Honor 2014

The Wall of Honor in the Board of Education meeting room recognizes individuals who have made a significant and/or extraordinary contribution to the East Brunswick Public Schools. Individuals selected for the Wall of Honor are chosen by the Recognition Committee, composed of representatives from the EBEA, the EBPSA, the Board of Education, and chaired by the Director of Human Resources.

At this time the Human Resources department is accepting nominations until **January 30, 2014**. A list of eligible nominees can be obtained from the Human Resources department or by contacting the EBEA office.



Cheers and Tears

Congratulations to:

Abe Brockstein, EBHS aide, on the birth of his granddaughter Logan Rose (in January)

Barbara Brockstein, retiree, on the birth of her granddaughter Logan Rose (in January)

Catherine Todd, EBHS secretary, on the birth of her grandson Edward Louis (in January)



Chris Yannazzo, EBHS Phys. Ed. teacher, on the birth of his daughter Noelle Marie (in January)

Paula Yannazzo, special ed. secretary, on the birth of her granddaughter Noelle Marie (in January)

Condolences to:

Wendy Leonhardt, EBHS aide, on the death of her mother (in December)

Veronica Schreyer, DC English, on the death of her father-in-law (in December)

Amanda Ingargiola, HMS teacher, on the death of her father (in December)

Vincent Castoria, EBHS custodian, on the death of his mother (in December)

Joyce Mourounas, Chittick instructional aide, on the death of her father-in-law (in January)

The family of **Carol Lisiecki**, retiree, on her death (in January)



Karyn Grant, Bowne-Monro teacher, on the death of her mother (in January)

Joseph Geis, CJHS teacher, on the death of his father-in-law (in January)

Kenneth Wnorowski, Maintenance and Grounds, on the death of his mother (in January)

Rachel Burke, HMS teacher, on the death of her mother-in-law (in January)

Karen Takac, EBHS secretary, on the death of her father-in-law (in January)

Martha Perez, EBHS Spanish teacher, on the death of her mother (in January)

Get Well Wishes to:

Mike Zielinski, EBHS special ed. teacher

Laurie Smith, Admin driver

Elaine Swoboda, EBHS bookkeeper



Elizabeth Caracciolo, Lawrence Brook aide

Kerstin Stewart, DC Guidance

Jill Ventrice, elementary teacher

“There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.”

~Albert Einstein ~



East Brunswick Education Association

We are an all-inclusive local NJEA/NEA affiliate representing approximately 1,400 members in East Brunswick, New Jersey.



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