

To: Executive Board

From: W.E.A. Secretary

Re: Board Meeting, September 20, 2021

The meeting was held via Google Meet and was called to order at 3:50 pm by President Lori Lyncosky. The following members were present: (see attached).

REPORTS

MTA

Paul Ryan reports that there was a hearing 2 weeks ago on the Early Retirement Incentive. Lori presented at it and did an amazing job. Paul also shared information about the Fair Share Amendment Ballot Initiative. This would make it so anyone earning over a million \$, anything above the million would be taxed at 4%. This additional revenue would go directly to roads, bridges and education.

MEMBERSHIP

Pam Collins reports that dues are as follows:

FOR all full-time members starting at the beginning of the SY Unit A/B \$765; Unit D UNDER \$18,000 \$269.25; Unit D OVER \$18,000 \$317.50. She also shared that she has sent membership forms to all reps via interoffice mail. Please have members complete the forms and return them to Pam ASAP. Any member who was on an unpaid leave or has a change in name or address MUST complete a new form. Please be sure to let members know this.

SECRETARY

A motion to accept the June 2021 meeting minutes was made by Janet Baush and seconded by Christy Roselli. A vote was taken and the minutes were accepted.

TREASURER

The Treasurer's Report for July and August 2021 was presented and Karen Gomez moved to receive the report. Eileen Wiechec seconded. A vote was taken and the report was received.

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Kristen Biancuzzo reports that there were 4 grievances at Paper Mill at the end of last school year. All 4 ended with positive solutions for our members. Currently there are no new/current grievances.

WEBPAGE:

Tom Dearborn is keeping the WEA webpage current. Please remind members that the website exists and can be found at: westfield.massteacher.org

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Matt Wroth reminded members that both PD days for Unit A (November and March) will be taught by colleagues with the opportunity for members to choose what they'd like to go to. Also, this year members will NOT be given the opportunity to attend PD during school hours, unless it goes through and is approved by Susan Dargie's office. However, members have the opportunity to submit PD proposals to the PD committee that can include reimbursement at \$36 per hour to attend PD outside of the school day, in addition to reimbursement for the cost of the PD. All paperwork must be completed, submitted and approved by the PD committee prior to the member attending in order to be considered for reimbursement. This year, members also have the opportunity to be reimbursed \$1,000 for college classes, with prior approval of the PD committee.

NEW BUSINESS

1. We can't stress enough how important it is for members to check their pay stubs. Lori reviewed line by line all components of our pay stubs. Reps are requested to use this information to "coach" members so they are able to make sure their paychecks are correct. We will also be posting a video on the website. Please keep in mind and share with members the following:
 - a. State law states that if Westfield "overpays" an employee, you MUST pay ALL of the money back...we can negotiate how it's repaid, but it MUST be paid.
 - b. However...if Westfield "under pays" an employee they have NO obligation to pay YOU back anything more than that 1 current school year.
 - c. We have had cases where members were NOT paid the salary they should have been over many years...we can't say it enough...please, check your pay stubs and make sure you're being paid correctly.
 - d. Per Diem Rate = your salary divided by 184. This is what you will lose if you take a non-pay day.

2. Our monthly EBoard meeting day has been impacted by this year's Faculty and PLC meeting schedule. A vote was taken in the chat regarding changing our meeting to accommodate all reps. Outcome of the vote is to move our EBoard meeting to the 4th Monday of the month beginning in October. Our next meeting will be October 25.

3. Lori reviewed the latest MOA in detail which will be voted on by the EBoard. Questions arose regarding why the entire membership isn't voting on this MOA. MOAs do not require a vote of the membership. Last year was unique given the many contract implications we faced due to the pandemic, therefore given that those issues affected the entire membership, MOAs were voted on by the entire membership. Previous to that time, the majority (if not all) MOAs were not voted on. Given the nature of this MOA, there is not a need to present it to the entire membership. **A link will be sent to the EBoard to vote and voting will open on Thursday 9/23 and will close at 3:00 on Friday, 9/24.**

4. Emails - this has already emerged as an issue. Please please please check your SCHOOL email several times a day. If your administration sends you something regardless of if there is a question asked, you need to respond with a "thank you" or "recieved". This is a professional obligation. If parents email you, you need to respond to them within 24 hours. If it is a situation that you think might go the wrong way make sure you Cc an administrator or a guidance counselor. This is a professional obligation.

Also...if you load your personal email on your school issued chromebook while you are at school, you are utilizing the district's internet and everything you do is monitored. If you check your personal email, they have access to it. If you pay your electric bill, they

have access to it. If you pay your credit card, they have access to it. If you access your bank account, they have access to it.

5. Cyber security training prompts - for the third year YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DO THESE.
6. The GCN training must be completed by October 10th.
7. NPTS (Non Professional Teaching Status) and Professional Rights - Lori recently had a conversation with a second year teacher who shared that she had been told that NPTS teachers don't have any rights during their first three years. This is not accurate. Please note that:
 - a. NPTS teachers have all the rights and responsibilities that all teachers have and if they are subject to a contract violation that is not okay and the Union will absolutely take steps to mediate the situation.
 - b. The only thing we can't mediate or grieve is a non-renewal that is done correctly.
8. Non-Renewals - Lori spent the majority of the summer dealing with unhappy people who had been non-renewed by the district. When they didn't like what Lori told them they promptly went over her head to Paul Ryan, and then over his head to MTA legal who sent them back to Paul and Lori. Please note...
 - a. Mass General Law states that the district has the ability/right to nonrenew a teacher in the first three years of their employment. A reason does not need to be given. Westfield learned a very hard lesson this year when one of the principals did in fact give a reason, we grieved it and won.
9. Unit D will begin negotiations prior to November.
 - a. At tonight's School Committee meeting there will be a vote on a Unit D MOA that involves reassignment of Unit D members that are not currently assigned as 1:1s due to a staffing shortage and the legal obligation of the district to fill 1:1 positions. The MOA states that any member who is reassigned will get a step increase to the next step this year and then will still get a step increase next year.

A motion to adjourn was made by Janet Baush and seconded by Matt Wroth.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Aimee Blair
WEA Secretary