



The VOICE

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A Note About Retirement

The Washington Elementary School District offers a wonderful benefit to its employees to assist with investing towards retirement. Employees may invest in a 403b/457b and/or a Roth IRA. Many often think the Arizona State Retirement System will provide a solid retirement benefit, but that is a misconception. The amount that you will need in retirement depends on many factors. In many cases, your pension needs to be supplemented with other investments. While some employees are already taking advantage of this opportunity, many are not.

Recently, the Federal Government has made some changes to how these investments are offered. Because of this, the District held regional meetings to inform employees of the changes and which companies may services to our employees. The approved companies are: Security Benefits Group, Met Life, AIG, ING, and The Hartford. Security Benefits is the NEA endorsed provider and Met Life is the AEA endorsed vendor. Each of these companies has assigned specific representatives to handle enrollments for our district. At this time, representatives for the approved vendors will be making visits to schools independently.

If you currently have payroll deductions that contribute to any of these investments and you choose **not** to sign up with one of the approved vendors, your deductions will stop as of January 1st, 2009. Even if you currently have investments through one of the approved companies, you will need to complete paperwork to continue investing through payroll deduction.

If you do not currently take advantage of this opportunity and would like more information, contact the Payroll Department at 602-347-2618 or e-mail your questions to payroll@wesdschools.org. This is a valuable opportunity that everyone should take a look at and see how it can help you prepare for retirement!

Submitted by Laurie Richards, WDEA Area Delegate and Committee Volunteer

Did You Know?

ESP=Educational Support Professional

When I first started my career as an ESP, I had planned to continue my education and obtain my Teaching Certificate. I was first hired as a Title I Teaching Assistant. I had wonderful leadership at the site and enjoyed what I was doing from the first day. The students have taught me more than I would have ever imagined.

After the first several years, I took a long, hard look at education and knew that I did not want all of the responsibilities and paperwork that a classroom teacher has.

I am so thankful for the commitment and dedication that our teachers have for our students. I admire them with all my heart. As I have a serving nature, I enjoy stepping in and helping a teacher in any way that I can. I so often get to work with small groups; this is a blessing. What greater joy can there be than the look on a child's face when they finally "get it"?

An ESP wears many hats and does many different things. Whenever there is a task to be done, an ESP is usually on his/her way to do it. Our days are always busy and full of surprises, with new challenges jumping out at us constantly. I have never regretted the decision of choosing to be an ESP for my career.

Submitted by Lyndy McKay, WDEA Area Delegate and ESP Extraordinaire



The Voice Continued



Representatives of the Month

Meet All of Our November Recruiters!

I can't believe the way our new membership drive has taken off! There are so many representatives actively inviting new members. When we represent more people, our bargaining power grows. With that in mind, here are our Recruiters:

Peggy Pitts-Miller, Tumbleweed School

Sally Abbey, Chaparral School

Wren Schultz, Manzanita School

Lori Fox, Moon Mountain School

Donna Maese, Ocotillo School

Carol Masser, Sunset School

Caren Oliver, Arroyo School

Kristy Gill, Sahuaro School

Susan Clark, Washington School

Josette Berg, Roadrunner School

Any other Building Representative that is inviting new members to join, thank you for all you do to build the WDEA!

Submitted by Sara Hester, Area Delegate and Voice Editor

New Membership Cards

Members should have received their new membership cards through the mail recently. The AEA membership card provides members with discounts at over 200,000 businesses nationwide. To access this member benefit, visit the AEA Website at www.arizonaaea.org and click on the picture of the membership card to the right of the page. Also, the membership card Website has been revamped and offers more features and search capabilities.

It's that time of year again when plans are made to travel "over the river and through the woods" for the holiday season. With that in mind, this month's flyer focuses on ways to save while you travel! Whether they have a long trip or a short visit planned, the AEA membership card can help members save money on hotels, airfare, luggage, and even presents!

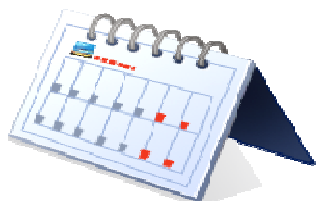
If you haven't received your new card in the mail yet, please contact your Building Representative or Nancy Putman, Membership Chair.

Calendar

Dates:

December 11	Governing Board Meeting
December 19	Teacher Work Day, No Students
December 20-January 4	Winter Break
January 8	Governing Board Meeting

If you would like more information on any of these events, please contact your Building Representative.



Note from the PAC Chair!

The WDEA is excited about our two new school board members Aaron Jahneke and Clorinda Graziano. They will be joining the board in January. It took enormous effort and dedication from a lot of people to interview potential candidates and decide if they shared same basic beliefs about education that we do.

Our biggest accomplishment was going door-to-door to ask voters for signatures to get the candidates on the ballot. We achieved this goal and our candidates are now ready to take their seats.

The WDEA is very proud of all the members who put time and energy into getting these two new Board Members into office. This is another reminder of how dedicated our members are to making the district a greater place for students and employees. Thanks to all of you for your contribution to this school board election.

Submitted by Mike Scantlin, WDEA Area Rep and PAC Chair