

UNION NOTES

MVEA NEWS

ISSUE 9 JANUARY 2026

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

I know--tiny writing--but there's a lot to say! Each time we meet with District administrators our meetings contain a common thread--the need for clear and increased communication. Good news: we have seen the District make positive strides in this regard. Though there will always be areas and situations in which we can improve, we do appreciate all of the efforts they are making.

How can we help improve communication and transparency? Below you'll find some tips I often give to members who have situations that also have to do with communication. How do I talk to my administrator about difficult topics? How should I bring up this topic? How do I resolve a dispute?

For most situations I recommend honesty/transparency as the first policy--even if it requires some vulnerability on our part. If we are seeking that honesty and transparency, it helps if we extend that bridge. Here are the steps I recommend:

1. Try to solve your problem at the lowest level possible. Go to the source first. Approach a colleague or administrator with honesty and grace. Start with a question, tell them how you're feeling, use "I" statements. If you're nervous or wander during hard conversations, make notes beforehand about what you'd like to say. This often resolves most issues and questions. In both cases you might learn about other circumstances that affected their decision or actions. Bonus: most of the time your administrators can help you solve the problem or be a support to you--they can't help unless we tell them we need it. This all sounds so cliché--but it truly is advice I've given hundreds of times over years and it usually works. It's also hard to remember when we are feeling frustrated.
2. If this doesn't go how you thought it would, reach out to your building rep to bounce ideas off of them. They can help you!
3. Still need support? Reach out to Cheryl for other avenues that might help you pursue a positive result. Remember--your goal is understanding and support!

There is outstanding work going on to support students and families in our buildings. We solve hundreds of problems each day. Don't forget to advocate for yourself too!

SEE YOU AT MVEA BREW NIGHT!

Our next MVEA Brew Night will be January 30th from 3-5 at Farmstrong Brewing. Don't forget that Farmstrong doesn't only serve alcohol! If you have another spot you'd like us to have casual social events, let us know.



SOCIAL MEDIA

 mountvernonea  Mount Vernon Education Association

CONTRACTUAL DATES TO BE AWARE OF:

- Don't forget January 26th is a non-student, non-contract day BUT if you work from home or come to school you can use those hours toward your 7.5 teacher directed hours!
- If you know you'll be ready to retire at the end of this school year and you've worked for the District for 5 or more years, email Jon Ronngren of your intent by February 1st for a \$500 lump sum!
- Renewing your certificate this year? I've already missed the OSPI arbitrary January 1st date--which means I need to hustle to get that paperwork in! If you're in the same boat--don't wait. Getting your paperwork in ASAP will ensure your certificate is renewed before next school year!

ADVOCATING

A small bit of what we've been advocating for:

- Resource Room Caseload
- Dual Language Strand Clarification
- Dual Language Secondary plans
- Elementary music stipend
- Joint Behavior and Discipline Committee
- Clarity in building and district communication
- Increased support for provisional educators
- Increased support for new bilingual educators



CONTRACT QUIZ

Welcome to this new section of the newsletter--where you familiarize yourself with the contract and could win a gift card to a local MV business! Here's the question:

In what article and how many types of leave exist in the contract?

Email Cheryl at mvea.prez@gmail.com with your answer! The first 5 people with the correct answer will get a gift card!

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