



GLUE

Official Publication of the Kenosha Education Association

Teachers • Substitute Teachers • Educational Assistants • Painters • Carpenters • Noon Hour Supervisors • Interpreters

EDITORIAL

—By Marvin Modder



Last hired, first fired. For teachers, that's the rule. With anywhere from 100,000 to 300,000 teachers reportedly slated to receive pink slips nationwide, seniority as the sole determinant of who stays and who goes is being questioned now as never before. Perhaps seniority is not perfect, but at least it's fair.

The rub lies in the fact that in reference to teaching, unlike some professions, merit or performance cannot be objectively determined. For example, in downhill skiing with Lindsey Vonn or Bode Miller, there is no question about who crosses the finish line first and

is therefore the most skilled and who comes in last and is therefore the least.

The same holds true for the world of business as I found out in no uncertain terms as a destitute twenty-year old college student selling dictionaries door-to-door in upstate New York. Oh, I did okay. At the end of

"WHEN BUDGET CUTTING IS ON the table, our highest paid, most experienced teachers are the most tempting to ax. If as much as 75 percent of a district's budget is spent on teacher salaries, why wouldn't a district be tempted to cut those who cost the most?" —

Heather Wolpert-Gawron

August when I hitchhiked my way back to college in Missouri—it was a different era—I had \$1,500 carefully tucked away in my boot, not bad for nine weeks of work; but my friend Phil, who drove himself mercilessly, earned \$4,500 in the same summer. Did he deserve more money than I? Of course, it's only fair—he sold more books and therefore should receive the extra commission with each sale.

In teaching, however, no such simple measure can be applied. First of all, some education professionals, such as librarians, counselors, nurses, psychologists, translators, deans, therapists, and program directors are not even in the classroom per se. How do you measure their performance, by the number of bandages applied by the nurse or the number of books checked out by the librarian?

Similar problems arise with (cont. on p. 2)

ARTICLE XIV—TEACHER SALARY AND WELFARE AGREEMENT

—By Joe Kiriaki, Executive Director

BECAUSE I AM RECEIVING A NUMBER OF CALLS REGARDING EVALUATIONS, I am providing this summary of how the process works. Of course, I must add some editorial comments from me to start with.

Evaluations are structured to be an assessment process of a corrective nature, not punitive. Some principals just need to prove they're the boss. Mostly, we have evaluations done without issues. However, on the occasions when it appears the process is being used for a punitive purpose, we hear plenty about it. If you think your evaluation is not based on the fundamental principles we've discussed here, you should talk to your principal/supervisor about it and contact the KEA if you need to.

The performance issues should be backed up with solid examples, not just innuendos, rumors, gossip, or based on one's personal flare when it comes to teaching.

Also, we reported at the ratification meeting what we did in this last round of bargaining. We added the following new language to the contract:

The Kenosha Unified School District No.1 (District) and the Kenosha Education Association (KEA) agree that teacher evaluation is solely for purposes of improving instruction and must be based upon criteria that is objective, relevant, and understandable.

Non-probationary teachers may choose an alternative assessment method in lieu of direct observation. Acceptable (cont. on p. 2)

Keep Educators Working

—By Mary Modder, President

I LIKED THE WAY THAT BLOGGER BRAD MONSON PUT IT IN HIS REMARKS ABOUT the importance of good schools and good teachers: "If students are like a crop that is grown, then teachers are the seeds. If you want a good crop (well-educated people), then you need good seeds and enough seeds to do the job. When times are hard, it is not a good idea to plant fewer seeds or poor quality seeds. If you want to get out of hard times, you take your best seeds and plant more of them. It may seem wise in the short term that when people are hungry they eat the seeds. It takes care of an immediate need, but in the long term it creates problems of not enough seed to grow a crop. So, too, at times when things are tough, it is unwise to cut back on teachers. It may have a short-term gain but creates a long-term problem." (cont. on p. 3)

(**Editorial**—cont. from p. 1) reference to art, music, drama, yearbook, newspaper, printing, auto mechanics, physical education, shop, home ec.—you can tell I'm old, but you get the point. Some very valuable areas of instruction other than reading and math don't lend themselves to simple measurement.

Then there's the problem with administering the test. In my field, secondary English, I would get a whole new raft of students every semester, which would mean testing twice a year. Then some kids needed just a half credit so took the class for just nine weeks. Would we test them, too?

Then what would we test them on? Would the questions asked be content-specific to the instruction they had received in my class? Would the evaluation include a writing component, and if so, who would grade it using what criteria?

Not to be overlooked in this whole can of worms is the question of motivation. Why would kids want to try on these tests year after year, especially when they find out that teacher salaries are riding on the results—and they will. American kids may not be the greatest at filling in bubbles, but they're not stupid.

As for input from the administration, what's to protect teachers from the whims and vagaries of a principal who's got nothing more than a score to settle? Talk about the ultimate power. Mere teachers would have to genuflect in the presence.

No, seniority may not be perfect; but it works because time of hire can actually be determined. After my first three years of teaching, I got transferred from Tremper to Bradford, in the process bumping a colleague because of seniority. I felt badly, but it was only fair: I had been hired one day before her.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

KENOSHA EDUCATION SUBSTITUTES ASSOCIATION

- General Membership Meeting
- Tues., May 11, 4-5:30 p.m.
- At the KEA

WELCOME RECEPTION FOR NEW KEA ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARINUS VAN KUILENBURG

- Tuesday, May 18, 4-6 p.m.
 - At the KEA, 5610 – 55th Street
- Please RSVP to the KEA, 262-654-2127

KEA RETIREMENT RECEPTION

- Wednesday, May 26, 2010, 4:00 p.m.
 - At the Fireside Restaurant
- More Information to Follow

(**Article XIV**—cont. from p. 1) *alternative assessment options include presentation of a portfolio or action research.*

If the portfolio review process is replaced with another alternative method of review, the parties agree to meet and discuss any replacement evaluation process.

Regular Evaluation Procedure: Probationary teachers are evaluated for three consecutive years. If a teacher has a Letter of Appointment and receives a contract for the subsequent school year(s), he/she is evaluated for two consecutive years. Likewise, if a newly hired teacher has prior teaching experience, he/she will be evaluated for the first two contracted years of employment.

Post-probationary teachers are evaluated every fourth year.

Probationary teachers are observed twice during the first semester and once during the second semester.

Post-probationary teachers are observed once during the first semester and twice during the second semester.

Each observation should be scheduled and discussed during a pre-observation conference. A post-observation conference should be held within ten contract (school) days of the observation. A written summary prepared by the evaluating administrator should be presented to the teacher during the conference.

Evaluation Out of Sequence: If the evaluating administrator documents and substantiates proven performance problems exist with a teacher on Regular Evaluation, said teacher might be placed on Evaluation Out of Sequence. This is the same evaluation procedure as Regular Review but is considered an intermediary step between Regular Evaluation and Intensive Review.

Intensive Review: Post-probationary teachers who have documented and substantiated performance problems are placed on Intensive Review for either the second semester of a school year when he/she is on the Regular Evaluation cycle or at the start of the school year following the year of Regular Evaluation.

The teacher may select a colleague as a mentor, and the evaluating administrator may also select a teacher to form a four-person advisory committee to draft a performance improvement plan. The teacher on Intensive Review has the option to request the formation of said committee.

Teachers on Intensive Review must be observed/evaluated every four weeks.

If the Intensive Review process concludes satisfactorily, the teacher is placed on Regular Evaluation for the following school year. If the Intensive Review process does not go well, the teacher is placed on Critical Review.

Critical Review: On Critical Review the Intensive Review process is applied. The one exception is if the teacher is found to not satisfactorily complete the Critical Review process, said teacher will be terminated for just cause. If the teacher is found to have satisfactorily concluded the Critical Review process, said teacher will be placed on Intensive Review for the following school year.

Administrative decision to place a teacher on Evaluation Out of Sequence, Intensive Review, or Critical Review must be communicated to the teacher in writing.

Administrative decisions to place a teacher on either Intensive or Critical Review may be challenged through the contractual grievance procedure based upon an arbitrary and capricious standard. This level of protection is substantially less than the just cause standard that (cont. on p. 3)

Self-Care Health Fair for KUSD Employees and Families

GAIN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE TO HELP YOU LIVE a healthier lifestyle and learn how to apply the skills of healthy living.

- **Self-Care Health Fair**
- **Saturday, May 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.**
- **In the Bradford High School Commons**
- **Resistance Training, Zumba Class, Importance of Good Nutrition, Myofascial Release, Lipid Profile Screenings, and More**

Hosted by Kenosha Visiting Nurse Association & Affiliates, e-mail info@kvna.net

39 Percent of Students Qualify for Free or Reduced School Meals

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION RECENTLY released data that shows the largest increase in recent years in Wisconsin public school students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals based on household income.

This school year, 39 percent of public school students in Wisconsin qualified for free or reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. The rate is up from 35.5 percent last year.

While 2009-10 enrollment in school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program went down by 7,440 students from last year, enrollment for free or reduced-price school meals went up by 26,343 students. Overall, the state experienced an 8.8 percent increase in the number of public school students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

For the current school year, Wisconsin has 72 public school districts in which 50 percent or more of students qualified for free or reduced-price meals. The highest rates for the state, where more than 80 percent of students are eligible, are in the Lac du Flambeau, Menominee Indian, and Milwaukee school districts. One hundred and thirty-six school districts had eligibility increases of 20 percent or more from last year to this school year. Five districts — Brighton, Cedar Grove-Belgium, Erin, Howards Grove, and Parkview — had eligibility increases of more than 80 percent.

Only 16 of the 413 participating public school districts reported they had a lower rate of children eligible for free or reduced-price school meals from last year.

(Article XIV—cont. from p. 2) is applied to disciplinary proceedings. The KEA has been vigilant in protecting member rights in regard to abuse of the evaluation procedure. Abuse occurs whenever the evaluation procedure is used in a punitive manner rather than as a process to strengthen skills.

No teacher serving on an Intensive Review or Critical Review Committee may be called to testify in any employment-related hearing.

Just Cause: No one covered by the agreement may be disciplined unless the administration reaches the Just Cause standard. This standard has been established through decades of arbitration hearings concerning the management right to discipline an employee covered by a union contract.

Other Provisions: Personnel files must be made available to teachers for inspection within seventy-two hours of the request. References and interview notes will be removed from the file before it is provided to the teacher. Teachers have the right to review any document that may be placed in his/her personnel file before it is submitted.

(Keep Educators Working—cont. from p. 1) Brad's comments provide a good rationale behind the "Keep Our Educators Working Act of 2010" that would provide \$23 billion to extend the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Introduced by Tom Harkin, Democrat from Iowa, the bill had 24 sponsors as of the end of April.

This emergency funding is designed to help the nation's schools fight the "pink slip epidemic" currently plaguing them. Even though the economy seems to be recovering, the way that the school budgets work this recovery won't be felt in the schools for at least a year. Meanwhile, an estimated 300,000 teachers nationwide are in danger of losing their jobs!

The Keep Educators Bill would mean about \$416 million for Wisconsin, according to NEA sources. Most states would receive more education funds under the Keep Our Educators Working Act of 2010 (S. 3206) than they would if they were awarded grants under round two of the Administration's Race to the Top (RTTT) competition. The maximum award under RTTT would be \$400 million, according to Department of Education guidelines for each state.

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel commented, "We have an ailing economy, and education is the medicine. Our educators are in our schools every day administering the cure. This crucial education funding would save hundreds of thousands of education jobs, and it would be a tremendous help to states in dire financial circumstances. But more importantly, it ensures that millions of America's students will not have to bear the brunt of our nation's economic woes."

Here in Kenosha, we have not had the massive layoffs that have occurred in some of the other districts and states around the country. However, cuts to vital programs and staffs continue to erode our educational effectiveness. I urge you to contact your legislators and tell them to support this vital legislation!

For more information on saving educators' jobs, go to: <http://www.educationvotes.nea.org/>.

NOMINATE NOW! KEA ELECTION MAY 21

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY YOU CAN FILE YOUR NOMINATION paper for the upcoming election of KEA Officers and Board of Director seats. Your nomination paper is due in the KEA office by 4:30 p.m., TODAY, May 7. The election will be held Friday, May 21; the winners will take office on June 15.

Officers:

President – 2-yr. term
Vice President – 2-yr. term
Treasurer – 2-yr. term

Board of Directors:

3 Elementary Reps – 2-year terms
1 Middle School Rep – 2-year term
2 High School Reps – 2-year terms
1 ESP Rep – 2-year term
WEAC Board Delegate – 3-yr. term
WEAC Board Alternate – 3-yr. term

In addition, all Association Rep (AR) seats will be up for election or reelection. Each building is allowed one AR per 15 KEA members. Each school that is eligible for only one AR is entitled to elect an alternate.

AR nomination papers are not necessary. The Election Committee requests a list of candidate(s) for each school by Friday, May 7, 2010. Elections for ARs will also be held on Friday, May 21, 2010.

If you have any questions concerning eligibility for an office or total numbers of ARs for your school, contact the KEA office, 654-2127.

CLARIFICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS AND NOON HR. SUPERVISORS: If any ESP Active member in your building is interested in having their name on the KEA-ESP AR ballot, please notify the KEA office, 262-654-2127, by Friday, May 7, 2010.

KEA PRESIDENT'S BUILDING VISITS

ITA—Tuesday, May 11

Tremper—Thursday, May 13

PDP TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED FOR UPCOMING PDP GOAL APPROVAL SESSIONS

KENOSHA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE KENOSHA EDUCATION Association are looking for interested PDP Team members who have completed the DPI's official PDP Team Member training to participate in PDP Goal Approval sessions with our Initial or Professional Educators. These sessions will occur in the Board Room at the ESC on May 24 and June 3 from 4:00-6:30 p.m.

Please contact Marie Patterson (359-7682 or mpatters@kUSD.edu), KUSD Office of Professional Development, by May 17 if you are interested in supporting our Initial Educators by participating on their PDP Team.

Thank you for your support of Kenosha Unified School District's Initial Educators.

DISTRICTS IN CALIFORNIA HAVE GIVEN PINK SLIPS TO 22,000 TEACHERS. Illinois authorities are predicting 17,000, and New York is projecting another 15,000 positions will have to be eliminated to balance the budget. Across Wisconsin from Milwaukee to the Fox Valley, from Madison to Stevens Point and Menasha, teaching positions are being cut. A record 13 percent of the nation's school districts are considering a four-day school week.

CALENDAR

KENOSHA EDUCATION SUBSTITUTES ASSOCIATION (KESA) GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, Tues., May 11, 4-5:30 p.m., at the KEA

KUSD STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS; Tues., May 11; 5:30, 6:20, and 7:10 p.m.; in the ESC Board Rm.

PROFESSIONAL INSERVICE HALF DAY, Wed., May 12

KEA SCHOLARSHIP READING, Wed., May 12, 4 p.m., at the KEA

ARENA SCHEDULING MEETING, Wed., May 12, 4:30 p.m., in the Mahone M.S. Auditorium

KEA-RETIRED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, Mon., May 17, 1 p.m., at the KEA

KEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, Mon., May 17, 4:15 p.m., at the KEA

WELCOME RECEPTION FOR NEW KEA ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MARINUS VAN KUILENBURG, Tues., May 18, 4-6 p.m., at the KEA

AR ASSEMBLY MEETING, Thurs., May 20, 4:15 p.m., at the KEA

KEA OFFICER, BOARD OF DIRECTOR, AND ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS, Fri., May 21

PDP GOAL APPROVAL SIGNING, Mon., May 24, 4-6:30 p.m., at the ESC

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, Tues., May 25, 7 p.m., in the ESC Board Rm.

KEA RETIREMENT RECEPTION, Wed., May 26, 4-6 p.m., at the Fireside Restaurant

ESP CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS SESSION, Thurs., May 27, 4-6 p.m. in ESC Rm. 119B

GLUE is published weekly (except for the week of WEAC Convention and during Thanksgiving, winter, spring, and summer recesses) by the Kenosha Education Association, 5610-55th St., Kenosha, WI 53144, Ph. 262-654-2127, e-mail kiriakij@weac.org, vankuilenburgm@weac.org, modderm@weac.org, studeyj@weac.org, wennerholmm@weac.org, marvmodder@yahoo.com. GLUE submissions must be received in the KEA office by Monday, 4:00 p.m., the week of publication. All submissions are subject to the editing policies established by the KEA. Ads now appear on the KEA web page; submit your ad by visiting www.keanow.com. **Executive Director:** Joe Kiriaki • **Assistant Executive Director:** Marinus van Kuilenburg • **President:** Mary Modder • **Vice-President:** Anne Knapp • **Treasurer:** Jim Jorsch • **Staff:** Marvin Modder (Editor), Neal Skrenes (Webmaster), Marge Wennerholm, and Jan Studey