

Reading Education Association  
Representative Council Meeting

Thursday, December 9 , 2021

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**Executive Board Members Present:**

Rebecca Titus	Evan Jack	Lisa Herbinko
Nathan Henschel	Chrissie Stauffer	Joe Okonski
Deb Redcay	Lindsay Evans	Chrissie Stauffer
Dana Gerhart	Jessica Steffy	Jen Oakes
Beth Planer	Aaron Thompson	

**Executive Committee Members Absent: n/a**

**Committee Chairs Present:**

Laura Stauffer	Jennifer Bard	Desiree Wagner
Jennifer Mazur	Shanalyn Eckenrod	Judy Treichler

**Committee Chairs Absent: n/a**

**Rep. Council Members Present:**

Ashley Rambo	Jamie Petro	Kristen Moyer-Ringler
Ashley Weiss	Jamie Folk	Krista Cyran
Bonnie Fox	Jacquella Koroma	Lael Schwartz
Brian Benkert	Jen Brumbach	Lauren Walton
Brian Miller	Jen Sell	Liza Hoppes
Christine Reichardt	Jeremy Lowther	Mark Wurster
Christina Davis	Jessica Chinea	Michael Metzger
Dana Shaffer	Jessica Rizzolo	Megan Fox
Dara Kluth	John Reinhard	Michelle Metz
Deb Gingrich	Josh Lambert	Nicole Slickers
Desiree Wagner	Josh Stoica	Patricia Swartz
Elizabeth Reach	Karl Ruch	Sara Frederick
Heather Scholl	Kelly Fuller	Shannon Duff
Heather Shutter	Kelly Snyder	Sherry Katrinak
Jacob Maurer	Kevin High	Steve Hudak
James Wright	Kristina Roxburgh	Teresa Heckman

Tracey Therrien  
Vicki Halferty

Rep. Council Members Absent:

Danielle Smith      Duane Kring      Lori Snyder

PSEA Uni-Serve Representative absent::

John McKiernan

The zoom meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm. by President Rebecca Titus

- I. Adoption of Agenda with Flexibility – motion to approve agenda with flexibility was made by Lindsay Evans and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jessica Steffy
  - A. Rebecca referred to The Constitution and Bylaws page 2, Article VIII, Section 3 - “Any member of the Association who is not a member of the Representative Council may attend its meetings and may be recognized by the chair, but shall not have the right to make or second a motion or vote.”
- II. Introduction of Guests – Eric Knorr
- III. Minutes from Rep Council Meeting - November 2021
  - A. Additions/Corrections – Deb commented some members may be marked absent but were present; she had some formatting issues. Send her an email and she will correct it.
  - B. Questions - n/a
  - C. Approval – motion to approve November Rep Council minutes was made by Evan Jack and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Okonski.
- IV. Treasurer’s Report – Lisa Herbinko
  - A. Addition/Corrections – n/a
  - B. Questions: n/a
  - C. Approval – motion to approve Treasurer’s report was made by Aaron Thompson and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jen Mazur.
- V. New Business
  - A. Pay the Bills - motion made to pay the bills was made by Lael Schwartz and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Evan Jack. Motion passes and bills will be paid.
  - B. Meeting with Senator Schwank
    - a. 3 members (Eric Knorr, Dana Schaffer and Kevin High met with Senator)
      - i. Eric Knorr - many teachers/staff are struggling at HS; he made the suggestion to reach out to Senator Schwank; a very productive meeting as current issues were discussed; Senator felt the number one issue facing members is safety. Teacher retention and teacher shortage issues have been in discussion

with the legislature as there is currently a bill in legislation to revamp the certification process.

- ii. Dana Schaffer - very productive meeting; very open to our concerns
- iii. Kevin High - Senator Schwank was very thankful to us for reaching out to her; he spoke about coverages, teacher shortages, security guards, unsafe conditions; the meeting put the students first; feels she will be a strong advocate for us
- b. Senator Schwank's Chief of Staff has reached out stating that the Senator would like a follow up call from PSEA.

## VI. Officer Reports

### A. Membership - Dana Gerhardt

- a. Speaks for itself

### B. VP/Grievance - Lindsay Evans

- a. VP
  - i. Speaks for itself
- b. Grievance
  - i. Grievances will be on for 2 months and then taken off of the agenda
  - ii. Grievance 21-22-2
    - 1. A survey was included in the Monday Message for all Special Education teachers to complete. The survey will stay open until December 15th, but the district must have the information by December 17th.

### C. High School VP - Jessica Steffy

- a. Report speaks for itself
- b. Danger letter
  - i. Jess sent a message on Remind letting teachers know they need to send information if they have been injured or felt in danger when approached by students.. This information needs to get to PSEA legal

### B. Middle School VP East/West - Aaron Thompson/Joe Okonski

- a. Report speaks for itself
- b. The more documentation we have, the better chance we have of anything moving in the right direction

### C. Special Services - Beth Ploner/Chrissie Stauffer

- a. Report speaks for itself

D. Elementary East VP - Evan Jack

- a. Report speaks for itself

E. Elementary West VP - Nathan Henschel

- a. Report speaks for itself
  - i. Safe Schools modules are now posted

F. NTPE - Jen Oakes

- a. Please let Jen know if your building has any members falling under the NTPE category so she can have their contact information.
  - i. Nurses, social workers, dental hygienists, school counselors, psychologists

VII. Chairperson Reports

A. Communications (Laura Stauffer)

- a. Report speaks for itself

B. Sick Bank (Jen Mazur)

- a. Report speaks for itself

C. Health and Safety (Judy Treichler)

- a. Report speaks for itself
  - i. If you have any safety issues regarding the ongoing construction please email your principal first.

D. Intergroup Welfare (Jen Bard)

- a. No report
  - i. We got a thank you from Tim Raub for the donation made in memory of his mother
- b. Let Jen know if you have any members who are on an extended illness, as we do send them flowers, etc.

E. IPD (Shanalyn Eckenrod)

- a. Report speaks for itself

F. SAC (Desiree Wagner)

- a. SAC held yesterday - minutes will be in the January Rep. Council minutes.

VI. President's Report - Rebecca Titus

- A. Report speaks for itself
- B. The changes to insurance begin in the new year
  - a. Several changes to our plan come January 2022

- i. Prescription deductible (\$50/\$100) - members will pay that amount before the co-pay begins.
- ii. Brand name and non-preferred brand name price changes.

VII. UniServe Report - John McKiernan (absent)

IX. Old Business - n/a

X. Good of the REA

A. Shannon Duff - introduces a petition for the removal or resignation for President Rebecca Titus and is asking for a recall vote for Rebecca or asking her to resign.

- a. Petition is aligned to the constitution and bylaws
- b. 25% of membership needs to sign the petition to move forward
  - i. This equates to 280 signatures and there are 318 signatures.

c. Rebecca is transferring control of the meeting to Lindsay so she can speak to the charges. (all beginning with Rebecca Titus...)

- i. ... through her words and actions, consistently led certain members to believe they are not on equal standing as other members of the Bargaining Unit.
  - 1. When she became unaware of this, she worked with the by-laws and constitution committee to create an NTPE officer.
- ii. ...does not encourage communication, growth and collaboration by consistently isolating members who voice opinions different than her own.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- iii. ...does not advocate for educators as represented by the number of decisions that reflect benefits for administration.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- iv. ....appears to advocate for the administration and their interests ahead of the interests of the Bargaining Unit ahead she represents
  - 1. This is an opinion
- v. ...does not act with integrity and honor as she actively works against the membership that entrusted her to represent their interests.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- vi. ...has used membership funds to further her own interests in endeavors outside of the Bargaining Unit
  - 1. Moved office space when she became president (saved \$750)
  - 2. Switched copier companies (saved \$5,000)
  - 3. Elimination of Office Staff due to full-time release (saved \$40,000)

4. Eliminated phone lines (saved \$300/month)
5. REA paid for daughter's cheer camp
  - a. Daughter was offered to cheer in Big 33 - she came to the meeting and provided a presentation and the Executive Board unanimously voted to sponsor an ad in the program.
6. Kept local dues at \$200
- vii. ...does not build relationships unless they are with people who further her self-interests and/or do not contest her authority.
  1. This is an opinion
- viii. ...does not represent the issues or concerns of the membership she was elected to represent, but rather appears to further the interests of the district
  1. This is an opinion
- ix. ...does not provide time to meet with members and listen to their concerns outside of Representative Council meetings
  1. She schedules meetings when groups of members request a meeting
- x. ...does not visit buildings to speak with staff regarding their concerns; maintains a "hands off" approach by requiring members to only contact her through their level officer building representative and building representatives through their level officer.
  1. First line of communication will always be the chain of command. Members are entitled to representation but not a specific representative so it is imperative that all possible representatives are aware of situations.
- xi. ...fails to seek resolutions to members concerns that represent the interest of the membership or the contract in the favor of membership
  1. This is opinion
- xii. ...does not effectively communicate with members the results of meetings regarding their concerns
  1. Weekly meetings have been sent in the Monday messages and specialized messages are sent to the necessary members.
- xiii. ...interpreting contract language to the benefit of the district rather than the benefit of the membership
  1. This is an opinion
- xiv. ...failure to know and enforce the contract language when there are specific expectations listed for both parties.
  1. This is an opinion

- xv. ...does not support membership in their desire to seek grievances against the district.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- xvi. ...engages in retaliation
  - 1. This is an opinion
- xvii. ...does not require the membership officer to communicate with building representatives about the status of members in the buildings.
  - 1. This is opinion
- xviii. ...does not require her officers to meet monthly with the building representatives that they represent
  - 1. This happened during in person meetings
  - 2. Did not happen when we went virtual because Zoom did not have break out rooms.
  - 3. We switched to Google Meets and are in the process of setting up break out rooms for level officers to meet with their building reps.
- xix. ...schedules meetings and then does not include Special Services Officers in meetings related to the membership they represent. This prevents them from coordinating efforts between the REA and the district.
  - 1. Investigations will be conducted by VP (C&BL17, 5, D)
- xx. ...does not have or required a report from all a report from all the standing committees listed in the By-Laws; Nor does she have all of the committees required by the By-Laws, i.e. Political Liaison and Labor Relations
  - 1. There are months where chairpersons have no reports, such as but not limited to SAC, since monthly meetings are not held
  - 2. PACE and Labor Relations are vacant
- xxi. ... ran the election which is against the policy which prevents candidates on the ballot from serving on the elections committee
  - 1. Election committee in May (Bonnie Fox, James Wright and Jessica Chinea)
- xxii. ...did not announce the Nomination and Election Committee during the February Representative Council as stated in the By-Laws during the 2021 election. This occurred in March.
  - 1. Election committee was named and email was sent on 2/1/2021
- xxiii. ...did not require the Nomination and Election Committee to announce and publish all open positions up for election to Representative Council in March as stated in the By-Law.
  - 1. Open positions were sent out on 3/1/2021

- xxiv. Rebecca Titus' actions regarding Section 3B led to the lack of intent to run forms being submitted and numerous positions being run as unopposed as building representatives did not receive them to disseminate them to the staff.
  - 1. Intent to Run forms can be found on the REA website and were in the Monday message
- xxv. ...did not require a report from the Nomination and Election committee listing the names to be presented on the ballot for elections.
  - 1. Report was sent 4/6/2021
- xxvi. ...does not maintain a Communications Officer or Office Manager whose job is to disseminate information to the membership regarding voting results.
  - 1. Laura Stauffer is the Communications Chair
  - 2. Election results were posted
  - 3. Article 8 section 7
- xxvii. ...directed elementary members to not vote for the Secondary Special Services officer which led to having some buildings vote for the position and others having votes destroyed at Rebecca Titus's direction.
  - 1. No votes were ever destroyed
  - 2. They were counted on 5/21/21
- xxviii. ...does not avail the Bargaining Unit members the rights under Contract and Law.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- xxix. ...does not honor the right of every employee to equitably have the contract interpreted when meanings are called into question.
  - 1. This is an opinion
- xxx. ...actively discourages staff from contacting the police in response to physical assaults tp students.
  - 1. Rebecca provided clarification as provided in the RSD handbook. At no time did she instruct members to NOT call the police
- d. It is her hope that everyone will see the facts and not the opinions
  - i. Rebecca beat 4 other candidates for her first election
  - ii. She beat out 1 other candidate for her second election
  - iii. She ran unopposed for her third election
- e. Rebecca will not resign her position
- f. Rebecca requests that all signatures be verified as active members in good standing by the Membership Chair and Executive Committee.

B. Discussion

- a. Ashley Rambo - speak to validity of position
  - i. Member questioned if she had anything given to her or presented anything to her members

- ii. Heard about the petition from others
- iii. Member was given petition to sign without knowing what she was signing
  - 1. Given nothing to read
  - 2. Was told to just sign it
  - 3. How many other signatures were obtained without an explanation as to what they were signing.
- b. Kevin High
  - i. Asked Ashley which school she is from - Amanda Stoudt
  - ii. Questioned Shannon about the numbers of signatures over the required number
    - 1. Shannon commented we have 1,132 members
      - a. 25% is 283 members
  - iii. His concern is the way the signatures were received as he received texts and calls about the petition.
    - 1. Members wanted names removed
    - 2. Members didn't know what they were signing
- c. Joe Okonski
  - i. A member was approached to sign the petition; they read what was given to them. The member questioned the person with the petition and that person would not share who they were; they were just asking to sign the petition.
- d. Aaron Thompson
  - i. 100% pro-union and pro REA - there is a divide
  - ii. Things are being done in the best interest of everyone
  - iii. Things are happening that not everyone knows about and can't know until it transpires
  - iv. We are dealing with administration who do not know how to handle behavioral issues
  - v. If we start backing down, it will show how weak we are going into a year we are negotiating
  - vi. We need to come together stronger than we have been; we need to fight for our rights in the contract as a union
  - vii. Its very hard to correctly represent a building if you are unaware of circumstances
- e. Jessica Chinae
  - i. Everyone has the right to go through proper channels to address their opinions
  - ii. Appreciates that someone in the membership felt a certain way and put some action into those feelings
  - iii. Can't hate on someone for creating a petition
- f. Jeremy Lowther
  - i. He took the petition to NWMS; CMS and HS
  - ii. He had meetings at RHS and sent petitions to people who requested it

- iii. If people signed it without reading it, that is not on the person who asked members to sign it.
  - iv. CMS
    - 1. he collected signatures outside; if someone asked his name, he would have given it
    - 2. If people wanted names removed, Jeremy would remove their names
  - v. NWMS
    - 1. no one spoke to him other than saying "I will not sign it".
  - vi. Rebecca says some of the charges are opinions
    - 1. These may be opinions to some people; but that doesn't make them facts.
- g. Joe Okonski
- i. Asked Jeremy if he was the only one at the buildings and he commented that Karl Ruch was also present the same time he was.
    - 1. Regarding questions - it was the people Jeremy spoke to
    - 2. At NWMS Karl was at one door and Jeremy was at the other
    - 3. Central Middle School had Jeremy and Karl present
- h. Rebecca Titus
- i. Peoples opinions
    - 1. we are entitled to our own opinions
    - 2. it doesn't mean it is based in fact
    - 3. People were upset something didn't go down the way they wanted it to
      - a. The district makes the decision or it gets moved along the way it is supposed to go.
    - 4. If there is gross negligence, it should be fact not opinions
  - i. Aaron Thompson
    - i. Very disheartening and frustrating that comments are being put in the chat box regarding people signing petition even if they didn't read it
      - 1. These are the members we are here to support
- j. Kevin High
- i. Clarify - feelings are not facts
  - ii. Appreciate meetings were held at HS
    - 1. There were no meetings at CMS
    - 2. People were asked to sign something
    - 3. 3 members asked to have their names removed and they were denied this option.
- k. Bonnie Fox
- i. You don't sign something unless you know what it is

- ii. It is not the building reps responsibility to go to the members that didn't attend the meeting and tell them what they missed.
  - iii. When there was a vote on the bylaws, they were told to read the Monday Message
  - iv. No one was shoving papers and forced to sign
    - 1. Members in her building signed because they are unhappy.
    - 2. It's not about being upset with Rebecca; there are so many things we can be advocating and fighting for and not being heard.
- l. Lindsay Evans
- i. Notified on Tuesday by Jeremy Lowther that this petition would be presented today
  - ii. Received response from PSEA legal as to how to proceed.
  - iii. Page 3 - recall language
    - 1. Article 12 section 1 (read by Lindsay)
  - iv. Rep. Council must accept the petition
    - 1. Vote will happen within 2 weeks only if the following criteria are met:
      - a. Every name on the petition is a member in good standing with REA, PSEA and NEA
        - i. Dana Gerhart and Lindsay will go through the petition to verify members are in good standing according to PSEA (dues up to date).
      - b. Lindsay will be sending out an email to those members who signed the petition.
        - i. confirm that they intended to sign the petition (consulted with PSEA legal).
          - 1. Signatures should only be deemed invalid if member sends it in writing
        - ii. Petition is invalid only if the number of signatures are under 25% of membership.
          - 1. As of today we have 1,132 members
          - 2. 25 % is 283 signatures
    - 2. If we still have 283 signatures we shall have a recall vote within 2 weeks (before December 23rd; looking at December 21 or 22nd to have the vote).
    - 3. The Executive Board will discuss whether we have an in-person vote or electronic vote.
  - v. First steps
    - 1. Verify membership status
    - 2. Verify members intended to sign the petition

3. Lindsay will reach out to Rep. Council with the results of petition signatures

m. Heather Scholl

- i. Concerned that members were asked to sign petition while under the influence of alcohol
- ii. Considered making a motion to remove an Executive Board or Rep. Council member if they obtained signatures while alcohol or narcotics were involved.
  - 1. Lindsay spoke with Jena Broadhead and she stated that we should not take a vote on removing members
  - 2. After the investigation, if it is found that signatures were obtained while a member was under the influence of alcohol or narcotics or by using coercion, REA will make a recommendation to the PSEA PR&R board.
    - a. Alcohol would have to be explicitly stated in Constitution and By-Laws

n. Megan Fox

- i. told it might happen but the petition never showed up to her school.

o. Jacquella Koroma

- i. many people did sign the petition knowingly

p. Evan Jack

- i. Point of reference - questioned James Wright's message
  - 1. He was asking if Jeremy would be removed.
  - 2. Lindsay commented that we can refer the person to PSEA's PR&R board to make a recommendation to suspend membership; remove membership or expel member

q. Lindsay Evans

- i. Members can run even if they are removed from office
- ii. Any signature of a non-member or a member not in good standing will have their name removed from the petition.

r. Josh Lambert

- i. This is something that should not happen

s. Deb Gingrich

- i. This does not look good for us as a whole. We need the support of each other and band together

t. Aaron Thompson

- i. This is a screenshot of some union members, not everyone in the union.

XI. Adjournment – motion made by Joe Okonski and 2nd by Desiree Wagner

Meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Redcay,  
REA Secretary