

Reading Education Association
Representative Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 2, 2022

REA Office
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Executive Board Members Present:

Rebecca Titus	Joe Okonski	Jeremy Lowther
Lindsay Evans	Nate Henschel	Chrissie Stauffer
Dana Gerhart	Teresa Heckman	Jennifer Oakes
Brian Benkert	Deb Redcay	
Shanalyn Eckenrod		

Executive Committee Members Absent:

n/a

Committee Chairs Present:

Laura Stauffer	Kevin High	Judy Treichler
Jennifer Mazur	Jennifer Bard	

Committee Chairs Absent: n/a

Rep. Council Members Present:

Aaron Thompson	Deb Ammerall	Lael Schwartz
Adam Gill	Deb Gingrich	Lauren Walton
Alana Jones	Duane Kring	Liza Hoppes
Amanda Bayer	Heather Shutter	Mark Wurster
Amber Marshall	Jamie Folk	Nicole Slickers
Anna Finn	Jaquella Koroma	Rebecca Alexander
Ashley Weiss	Jen Sell	Shane Schlosberg
Bonnie Fox	Jessica Novak	Sherry Katrinak
Brian Miller	Jessica Rizzolo	Steve Hudak
Christina Davis	Joell Koller	Tracey Therrien
Cindy Roberts	Josh Lambert	Thomas Stavitzski
Dana Schaffer	Karl Ruch	Valerie Garvin
Danielle Haubaker	Kelly Snyder	Vicki Halferty
Dara Kluth	Krista Cyran	
David Novello	Kristina Roxburgh	

Rep. Council Members Absent:

Ashley Rambo
Ian Hirschtritt
James Wright
Jamie Petro
Jessica Chinaea
John Reinhard
Shannon Duff
Trista Hanson

PSEA Uni-Serve Representative Present: John McKiernan

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 by Rebecca - make sure everyone has a new rep. packet

- I. Adoption of Agenda with Flexibility – motion to approve agenda with flexibility was made by Joe Okonski and 2nd by Kevin High.
- II. Introduction of Guests – Jeff Ney (PSEA State Treasurer); Jena Broadhead (PSEA Eastern Region President)
- III. Minutes from Rep Council Meeting - October 2022
 - A. Additions/Corrections – n/a
 - B. Questions
 - C. Approval – motion to approve October 2022 Rep Council minutes was made by Vicki Halferty 2nd by Duane Kring
- IV. Treasurer’s Report – in the Google drive as of today
 - A. Explanation
 - a. Few pages this month – next month will be consolidated to one page
 - b. Spreadsheet on computer and a screenshot of all the accounts we have
 - c. We consolidated all of the accounts from before to two new accounts
 - d. From the pages you can see where the accounts were closed and money was transferred
 - e. New savings account is a Money Market Account
 - B. Additions/Corrections - n/a
 - C. Questions
 - D. Motion to approve treasurer’s report – Lindsay Evans 2nd by Aaron Thompson
- V. New Business
 - A. Motion to pay the bills was made by Mark Wurster and 2nd by Duane Kring

- B. Discussion regarding funds discrepancy - Jeff Ney and Jena Broadhead
 - a. Still an ongoing investigation - very lengthy and no timeline
 - b. Jen Oakes - the insurance will be able to reimburse us but she has been told that it is possible that we won't be.
 - i. Jeff Nye - we are completely covered by insurance and we will get the money back.
 - c. Karl Ruch - do we have to wait for the DA to finish up their work before the membership will know what has occurred.
 - i. Jeff Nye - past experiences regarding misappropriations of funds
 - 1. We want to have an actual number of what was misappropriated
 - 2. Past experience led to member to agree to a plea deal of what was misappropriated
 - 3. We want to wait and make sure everything is accounted for
 - 4. We want to be sure there is a complete investigation.
 - d. Karl - is this over or under a year
 - i. Jeff - in his neck of the woods it was a year
 - ii. Jenna - the slower it is going to go, the more thorough the investigation will be.
 - e. Rebecca - REA has found an accountant we have hired
 - f. Part of the issue is the back filing of taxes
 - g. Electronic or hard copy - several of the items the accountant needs we are not in possession of.
 - i. These items need to be provided in December so this will have to be completed over the summer
 - ii. Asked the DA about retrieving the documents - can't make that communication - DA is actively still working on the case.
 - h. Deb - how did PSEA not know that taxes were not filed
 - i. Based on the statement - everyone was led to believe that taxes were filed
 - i. Rebecca - we have insurance to reimburse association
 - j. Will negotiations be affected
 - i. If you look at operating budget we budget \$30,000 for negotiations
 - k. There is some wiggle room in the budget to get us to where we need to be.
 - l. John - any fees are included in the insurance claim (late fees, low balance charges)
 - m. Brian Miller - we will be responsible for penalties on taxes
 - n. Karl Ruch - send a letter to the DA and ask for a waiver for penalties and interest.

- o. Rebecca – in 2020 we lost our non-profit status. The accountant is working on reinstating our non-profit status and requesting the waiver.
- p. Accountant is Kauntiz (Michael) – Trexlertown
- q. Jaquella – moving forward how will we have checks and balances
 - i. Rebecca – the accounting firm will file our taxes and do our audit
 - ii. PSEA has in place that 2 members at large do the audit of all of the books and paperwork they submit to Jeff's office.
 - iii. We will have the accounting firm do the audit and file the 990.
 - iv. We will have 4 people on the account
 - v. Dana is putting the screen shot on every Treasurer's Report
 - vi. Going from 5 accounts down to 2 accounts
 - vii. Lindsey – Constitution and Bylaws Revision
 - viii. All the things that Rebecca, Dana, Deb and Rebecca put in place will be mandated to ensure this doesn't happen again
- r. Tom – how much money are we talking about?
 - i. Jeff Nye – it's not up to us to name the amount because it is an ongoing investigation
 - ii. Rebecca – we don't know the exact number
 - iii. Jena – we want to make sure we have accurate numbers, regardless of what is missing
 - iv. Focus on what we have not what is missing
- s. Karl - in addition to the assets we have, every member has the right to know how much we owe people.
 - i. What our assets and liabilities are
- t. Monthly – statement of financial condition (what do we owe; what do we have; are we getting better or worse)
- u. Rebecca – district only sent the reimbursement on
 - i. Rebecca is losing 3 years of her pension, as 3 years of her service
 - 1. 89,000; \$90,000
 - ii. Per MOU they are to send the bill quarterly
 - iii. Rebecca has sent emails to the district and they have failed to send the bill for her salary and benefits.
 - iv. She reached out to the district and requested and they put a hold on us reimbursing so we would not be put in the red.
- v. Jen – is the insurance from PSEA able to reimburse her
 - i. Jeff – once REA is made whole, she will receive her reimbursement
- w. Jena – the fact that the district is working with us is a positive note.
- x. John – Rebecca's money is being sent to PSER's. As long as the district doesn't contact PSER's and say Rebecca hasn't paid.

- y. Karl – this should be a binding contract
- z. Rebecca – Money Market Account
 - i. President’s reimbursement will come out of this account
- aa. Liza – non-profit status – Rebecca we are re-applying for that status.
- bb. Main focus – taxes are filed on time and appropriately
- cc. Rebecca – reimbursement form - in the office
- dd. Jen – how did we not know that we lost tax exempt status
 - i. Rebecca – not all mail was sent to the office
 - ii. All mail is now sent to the office and goes to 2 officers

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. Speaks for itself

C. High School VP - Brian Benkert

- a. No report

D. Middle School VP East - Shanalyn Eckenrod

- a. Report speaks for itself

E. Middle School VP West - Joe Okonski

- a. Report speaks for itself

F. Secondary Special Services - Jeremy Lowther

- a. Report speaks for itself

G. Elementary East - Teresa Heckman

- a. Report speaks for itself

H. Elementary West - Nate Henschel

- a. Report speaks for itself

I. Elementary Special Services - Chrissie Stauffer

- a. Report speaks for itself

J. NTPE - Jen Oakes

- a. Report speaks for itself

VII. Chairperson Reports

A. Communications (Laura Stauffer)

- a. Report speaks for itself

B. Sick Bank (Jen Mazur)

- a. Read her report

C. Health and Safety (Judy Treichler)

- a. Report speaks for itself

D. Intergroup Welfare (Jen Bard)

- a. Report speaks for itself

E. IPD (Vicki Halferty)

- a. No report

F. Labor Relations (VACANT)

G. SAC (VACANT)

H. PACE (Kevin High)

- a. Remember to vote

VI. President's Report - Rebecca Titus

- A. Report speaks for itself

VII. UniServe Report - John McKiernan

A. Rep Training

a. Union family

- i. Things have changed since Covid – some members may feel disconnected

b. Advocacy

- i. Continues all the time

c. Teacher Shortage

- i. Teachers leaving at a rate they never did before
- ii. There isn't a quick fix
- iii. Stresses it puts on everyone
- iv. Burn out
- v. Consider it exploited
- vi. Mental health issues we never had before
- vii. Focus on what we can do with the practices and policies (issues and solutions)

d. Association Rep

- i. Advisor

- ii. Person member sees first
 - iii. Link that is recognized and bringing information to meetings or bringing information from meetings to members
- e. Many things are not grievances
 - i. Not everything is a grievance or contract violation
- f. Know your contract
 - i. It's ok to direct people to the contract
 - ii. Try to assist members with answers
 - iii. People need to understand what their rights are and what they can't do
 - iv. Vicki Halferty – make people aware of the contract
 - 1. It is online and on the website
- g. Contract enforcer
- h. Organizer
- i. Need to promote membership
 - i. More childline calls from our district than any other Berks County school district combined
 - ii. Need to make sure people understand that PSEA is putting up a \$2500 retainer for the lawyer
- j. Problem Solver
 - i. Many problems can be solved with communication
 - ii. Become a facilitator to help solve problems
- k. Be a leader
 - i. Many people think of you as PSEA
- l. Advocate
- m. Support and defend members
 - i. Help people not get in trouble
 - ii. Help control the situation
- n. Be aware of Rights – Weingarten Rights
 - i. If being called into meeting that is disciplinary you have the right to representation
 - ii. Rep is the one who will take notes; be level headed
 - iii. Rep can stop the meeting (do not have lawyer/client privilege)
 - iv. The type of meeting determines if the Weingarten Rights can be invoked
 - 1. Disciplinary meeting – must be told you can have representation
 - a. Management not required to inform you – you can ask for a rep and if they refuse, you can sit there and refuse to answer questions
 - b. Rep. is another set of eyes and ears in the meeting
 - c. If request for representation is denied
 - i. Say nothing
 - ii. If told about insubordination, it will be taken care of
 - iii. Allow it; call off interview; never let members to waive rights
 - d. At meeting – active participant at meeting

- i. Take notes
 - ii. Take the person out of the meeting and focus on the contract
 - iii. Every right to insert self, stop meeting if it becomes combative; take a caucus to calm member down
 - iv. Keep things calm, keep things focused
 - v. If it goes in a bad direction stop and move it up the chain
 - 1. Don't want people to incriminate themselves
 - 2. Tell the truth
 - e. If it could result in criminal charges – stop the meeting immediately
 - i. The individual will need an attorney
- 2. During a meeting with administration
 - a. Advocate on member's behalf to get back to work
 - b. Admin must tell you what the meeting is about
 - i. Sit down and ask why are we having this meeting
 - ii. Not fair to go to a meeting having no idea what the meeting is about.
 - iii. Take about 10 minutes and talk to the member
 - iv. Have the right to request who the rep is and it doesn't place an undue burden on the district – you can request your rep.
 - v. Do not sign anything
 - 1. If they are asking, pass it up to VP
- v. Criminal Matters
 - 1. Don't be involved in a meeting when someone is involved in something that will be on the news
 - 2. Stop the meeting and have them talk to attorney
- o. Advocacy at all times
 - i. Don't wait for the phone to ring
 - ii. If you know something is going on, check in
- p. Advocate for Yourself
 - i. Make sure people hear you
 - ii. People don't understand what you do for kids on a daily basis
 - iii. Invite school board members to come in and see what you do on a daily basis.

VIII. X. Old Business - n/a

X. Good of the REA

- A. Rebecca – if you have Support Ed in your building and they are putting notes in PAetep, they should not be able to do that.

- B. Monday's message – support ed. If they have had anything put in PAetep – contact the rep; rep contact the officer.
- C. STEM – is this time allowed to be a planning period for teachers
 - a. Rebecca will find out
- D. Jacquella – Friday – Thomas Ford did not have an admin. For about 2 hours
- E. Negotiations
 - a. Does the fact that our money issue factor into negotiations - NO

XI. Next Meeting

- A. Next Rep. Council meeting will be Virtual on December 8th at 4:30.

XI. **Adjournment** – motion to adjourn was made by Kevin High and 2nd by Jamie Folk.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Redcay,
REA Secretary