

Southern Regional Council Meeting March 12, 2015

5:11pm call to order

Special guest: Rick Trombly and Brendan Brown

NEA NH is currently tracking over 100 bills. Brendan highlighted some of the major ones:

- HB 116: lower probationary period back to 3 years from 5 – defeated
- Restore ESP pay periods to be equalized – passed unanimously – on the way to the senate – being treated as a house keeping bill
- Prohibit public employee from having health care due to excise tax
- HB 563 – passed today – increase funding to charter schools by \$1000/pupil
- Senate Bill: Fully fund all-day kindergarten – passed by committee- tied in the house
- SB 246: remove certain personnel from being covered by the term “teacher” – librarians, guidance counselors relative to non-renewal
- House passed a version to right to work based on the Wisconsin model – it was a very close vote
- Pension bills are being retained in special committee but will begin working on them next month to get them into the building

Rick discussed the retirement case and potential loss of agency fee.

Affordable Care Act: if excise tax would need to be paid, the employee would be expected to pick up the extra cost – HB 696 – the tax is actually levied against the insurance company who will in turn pass it onto the school district which will be passed onto employees. This goes into effect 2017.

School District meetings for contracts – 79 contracts only 2 defeated – this is great news!

Agency Fee: court case out of CA in the Supreme Court – decried unconstitutional – by June NEA believes agency fee will be found illegal – nation wide - declared unconstitutional – states that have lost agency fee have also lost approximately 33% of their members.

What NEA NH is going to do – we need to convince agency fee to join – we are going to develop a plan and pull in all those who attended the organizing institute to figure out what we can do.

Retirement: from highest 3 years to highest 5 years.

Legislature can determine the % we pay into pension and they can change it anytime they want.

We lost – legislature can change our benefit up to the day we retire...

We need grass roots action from the membership to make a difference and be heard!

Retirement planning coalition is going to put forth request to bond the money already paid into the system...

We need members to contribute to Apple Corps...

Treasurer's report:

\$7357.81 current balance – no dues collected this year from the region.

May 14, 2015 is the membership dinner. The 2015-2016 Regional Council budget needs to be done.

Volunteers: Carolyn, Barbara, Jill and Chuck.

Motion to accept the report: Barbara ; second by Nate Cooper; Vote was unanimous.

Executive Board Report: phone meeting for the purpose of approving the budget for the DA. The next Executive Board Meeting is the night before the delegate assembly in Keene.

Uniserv Director report:

Lorri shared some pictures from the National ESP Conference in New Orleans that were sent to her by regional members who attended.

Brentwood update – lost vote by 4 votes last year – they were extremely active and won their vote by over 300 votes! Congratulations!

HB 347 – see Lorri's report – Southern Region took a lot of action!

Southern Region was very successful in passing contracts – different strategies were discussed as to how to get the message out to the community and how to actively participate in passing your contract.

Membership Dinner: It will be held at The Yard which is anti-union – Lorri will look into this.

There was a discussion around an article Lorri shared regarding why young teachers leave the profession so quickly.

Lorri has emailed Rick asking if we can poll the taxpayers asking their perception of the pension issue.

DonorsChoose.org is an online charity for educators. There was a flyer outlining the program in Lorri's packet. We need to spread the word!

How teachers unions must change – by a union leader: the council will discuss this article for next meeting – like a book study – review the document prior to next meeting (April 9, 2015).

The Council received a request from Merrimack ESSA for membership – \$100 request for informational meetings to promote their local with refreshments and door prizes. They currently have 95 out of 330 members. Carolyn volunteered to work with them to help with membership as part of the membership committee.

Motion: Barbara motion; Second by Nate – unanimous vote.

School Calendar Start Date: Greg is looking for information for Salem EA – his district looking to start 2 weeks prior to Labor Day. If Salem EA responds, they are looking for information. Bedford shared

information. Pelham ESSA also shared they give input. Greg is looking for sound educational reasons to give to supt.

Calendars for 2014-15 forward them to Kris Fessenden to be shared with other regional leaders.

FMLA: Carolyn is working with Melissa Alexander from the Monadnock Region to change the federal law regarding the number of hours needed to be eligible for FMLA. This federal law adversely affects ESP and part-time teachers. Carolyn and Melissa are looking for stories to substantiate the change. Carolyn will get information to Lorri and Kris Fessenden to be emailed to all leaders in the Southern Region.

Lorri answered a few questions regarding FMLA and use of sick leaves.

Postpone ESP Conference update – 1st on the agenda in April

Adjourn 7:14pm