

Federation Voice

MONROE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
& SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

LFT/AFT/AFL-CIO

MAY 2010

President's Message...



Congratulations, you made it through another school year. This school year once again proved to be very stressful and underappreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to Thank all the Teachers and Support Workers who came to the May 4th school board meeting in support of the sales tax and clean out distribution check. I would like to think it was because of their efforts with the Federation that your check was not taxed as heavily as the last several years. THINK...why was it taxed so differently?

Teachers, just in case you haven't thought about it, your salary is part of the tax check; you need to do the math.

“In a committee meeting to discuss the proposed budget for next year, business manager Derenda Flowers told board members that even with an effort to spend down from the previous year, the amount remained the same because of a 2.8 million increase in revenue from the state's Minimum Foundation Program.”

Also, just in case you didn't read last Tuesday's (May 18, 2010) News-Star, it stated that MCSB has an 11.5 million surplus, 2.8 in MFP funds, and that CFO Flowers tried to spend it down. THINK... how did they get this surplus, and what ever happened to your \$2500 re-occurring MFP money?

I am sure you and your family could use a few extra dollars for the summer, but you need to get involved. What would you do if you knew your child was taking something that didn't belong to them? THINK! People only do to you what you allow them to.

School board elections will be held in the fall. GET INVOLVED!

Have a Blessed and Safe summer.

Sandie



All Aboard

During this school year the Federation launched its “All Aboard” campaign to get members involved with activities and issues. For each activity that each person participated in throughout the year, they received boarding passes. The person who had accumulated the most boarding passes would win a free cruise. April 30, 2010 was the dead line for turning in their boarding passes to be counted for the cruise. At this time the Federation would like to announce **Ms. Rachelle May**, a teacher at Clara Hall, as the winner of the free cruise. **Congratulations!!!**



As the year went by other members wanted to go on the cruise with the winner of the campaign. Those that participated and paid their fees on time will be going with Rachelle May. The Federation Cruise will depart May 31, 2010 from New Orleans. Everyone have a good time and don't forget to bring your sun tan lotion.

Everyone Enjoy Your Summer!

Value-added evaluation bill progresses

Senate Education Committee almost unanimous in approval

As a new form of teacher evaluation took another step toward becoming law on Thursday, it was clear that the Louisiana Federation of Teachers has played a major role in shaping the bill, even while remaining opposed to its adoption.

HB 1033 by Rep. Frank Hoffman (R-West Monroe) would make a new, relatively untested science called the "value added model" an integral part of teacher evaluations in Louisiana. The VAM would add a component to teacher evaluations that measures the progress made by students. While LFT believes there is merit to the concept, the Federation is concerned that writing it into law is premature. The union would prefer to see the VAM field-tested before becoming policy.

But it is obvious that the bill has strong support in the legislature and in the governor's office. After passing by a 68-26 margin in the House of Representatives, the Senate Education Committee approved it with just one member, Yvonne Dorsey (D-Baton Rouge) opposed. Its passage is almost universally regarded as assured.

Faced with that certainty, the Federation chose to engage with Rep. Hoffman in hopes of making it a better bill. In that, the union succeeded.

Because the Federation worked with Rep. Hoffman, the bill ensures that teachers will have a process to challenge evaluations they believe are inaccurate. The evaluation will account for factors beyond a teacher's control, including the socio-economic status of the students. There will be an advisory committee, which includes a majority of teacher members, to oversee development of the evaluation instrument.

Most important, there will be a two-year phase in of the new system. If the advisory committee reports that it is not working as it should, the education committees of the House and Senate will be able to halt the program.

Success of VAM focuses attention on "Red Tape" bill

The apparent success of the value-added evaluation bill makes it essential that lawmakers oppose another of Gov. Bobby Jindal's education initiatives. HB 1368 by Rep. Jane Smith, known as the "Red Tape Reduction and Local Empowerment Waiver Program," would conflict with the new evaluation system and result in very bad public policy.

While the value added plan attempts to impose a standard, unified evaluation in all school districts, HB 1368 would allow school systems to opt out of virtually all the laws and policies that govern our schools. The teachers in those systems would have no voice at all in determining how those waivers would affect teaching and learning.

If HB 1368 passes, teaching and learning conditions would vary greatly from district to district. But all teachers would be held to a single evaluation standard under HB 1033.

LFT President Steve Monaghan told the Senate Education Committee that it would be impossible to test the value added model if the state abandons consistency in other areas of public education. That collision course of conflicting laws adds up to very bad public policy, Monaghan said.

Join Today and No Dues Until September!



Payroll Deduction Authorization

I hereby authorize the Monroe City School Board to deduct in equal installments, from each of my paychecks, current dues for the local chapter of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers. I understand that dues are set by the constitution and by-laws of the Monroe Federation of Teachers/School Employees (Local 4326).

This authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by me through proper written notice to the Monroe School Board Human Resources and the MFT/SE Local 4326. Dues: Teachers \$36.70 School Employees \$17.00

Name _____	School or Worksite _____
Address _____	Position: Teacher or School Employee _____ (Circle One and List Title)
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	Signature _____
Home Phone (318) _____ E-Mail _____	Social Security # _____ Date _____

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