

October 25, 2016

The President's Take

Esteemed colleagues,

As we close in on the end of our first quarter of the year, I wanted to give a big thanks to all of the teachers, counselors, social workers, coaches, and other education professionals for all the hard work you have done throughout this year. I have been out to 25 different sites this school year and I am hoping to visit the rest before the end of first semester. During these visits I have heard the concerns, watched some great lessons, and affirmed my belief that we have the most talented teachers in the state. I know that the beginning of the school year can be a challenge, but you all rise to the occasion every time.

If I haven't reached out to you yet, please talk to your building rep and send me an invite to visit your school. The more I listen to all of you, the more responsive the district will be to our needs and issues.

Site Exception

A site exception for Kimball Middle School was presented regarding their parent/teacher conferences schedule. This exception was vetted by The ETA Board and was approved by the Board. Kimball gave an overview of their exception to be voted on by the RA. The RA questioned and discussed the nature of the exception. The exception was passed. It has been past practice of the RA to approve exceptions when the process has been correctly followed. There was a brief discussion about the future of site exceptions and whether or not there should be vetting based on the merit of the exception and not just the following of the process.

Committees

Contract Improvement Committee

Gary Lorber reported out about Contract Improvement Committee. 10 people have currently signed up to be a part of this committee. The CIC is formed to help inform the contract negotiation team. They are not the negotiation team. Their task is to gather information regarding the concerns and needs of the membership for our upcoming contract negotiations. They also make up the crisis team if the need arises. The first meeting of the CIC will take place on October 24 at 4pm at the IEA office. If you still wish to participate, please contact ETA President Richard Johnson.

Board of Education Communications Team

Barbara Bettis presented about the BOE Communication Team. The purpose of the Board of Education Communication team is to have conversations with board members with the intent of creating a strong working relationship with the BOE. This is a crucial committee. If you see any of these members, make sure to give them a high five to thank them for the time and energy they

put into this committee. Barb has worked hard on pairing the ETA members with members of the BOE. At the RA she shared the pairings with membership. Link to [BOE Teams](#)

IEA Region 24

Doreen Roberts presented for Region 24. Nominations for IEA RA is now open. The nomination window opened on 10/18 and will close on 11/4. Please consider nominating one of your hard working ETA members for this useful and valuable assembly. [Nomination Link](#)
Doreen also presented on an IEA initiative. The NEA has prioritized the learning of Institutional Racism. A definition was given and a poll was taken of the members in attendance. The whole of the presentation can be found on the attached PowerPoint. – [IR Powerpoint](#) - [Question](#)

Grassroots Political Action

Jen Bury and Jeff Horler presented for Grassroots Political Action. The GPA Go Team met at Jen Bury's house to discuss the advocacy and canvassing plan. There are plans to train members on canvassing and door to door actions. If you would like to be part of this crucial work, please email Jeff Horler (High School) etajeff.gpa@gmail.com, Joyce Juenger (Middle School) etajoyce.gpa@gmail.com Jen Bury (Elementary School) etajen.gpa@gmail.com The whole of their presentation can be found on the attached PowerPoint.

Instructional Council

Instructional Council met for the second time this school year on Thursday, October 20th. The meeting was a busy one filled with numerous rich discussions, informative updates and a new curriculum proposal.

Instructional Council approved the high school Publications, Communications, and Theatre proposals heard at September's meeting. Council agreed that each of these proposals offer many positive things for U-46 students.

The Council heard an update on the K-6 Social Studies curriculum which is being aligned to new IL state standards. This curriculum writing team is comprised of members from 15 elementary schools and teachers who span all grade levels. The new curriculum will be 3 units, one per trimester. The team sent the unit drafts to all elementary teachers, and at the time of the IC meeting had only 60 responses. The drafts had gone out a few days before, and the team is using many forms of communication to insure that all teachers have the opportunity to respond. They will meet on November 9th to review the responses, frameworks, and to unpack the new standards.

The Council also heard an update from the Dream Academy. Last spring, the Dream Academy recruited teachers and over the summer new staff invested 60+ hours in PD that emphasized reaching struggling learners and students who have experienced trauma. Each student at the Dream Academy has a Student Success Plan which meets their individual academic and behavior needs. The Dream Academy uses U-46 curriculum that is differentiated to meet the needs of the students. Parents also play an important role in students' success at the Dream Academy and work closely with their student and the staff in various ways. Two touching student letters were

shared with Instructional Council that highlighted the positive things happening at the Dream Academy.

The PreK-12 Information and Digital Literacy proposal was brought to Council. The student goals of this proposal are to create responsible digital citizens, promote individual reading growth, enhance inquiry and research skills and to teach students to use technology to share information. This proposal supports the converting of school libraries into learning commons. Instructional Council will meet again on November 17th.

Officer Updates

Monthly Contract Meeting

Gary Lorber presented about MCM. Monthly, your ETA leadership meets with administration to discuss issues that are brought to us from membership and issues that administration wishes to discuss. We wanted to keep lines of communication and to be transparent about what we are doing. The past three Monthly Contract Meetings have included attendance from most of your ETA Board. Last week's meeting on October 13th was representative of issues that are discussed. The agenda of discussion included PPD/DCD days (we hope you saw the joint email from Tony and myself regarding the outcome of part of this discussion), MTSS, behavior management and discipline, ILP classes, full day kindergarten, substitute shortages (there was a lengthy discussion that followed this subject and we discussed the problems that the RA brought forward—we will continue to work with administration to better this problem), grade reporting timelines (A solution was not made, unfortunately, for this report card. Administration agreed that we will work with them on the timelines in order to have more days after the quarter/semester ends. The first quarter is a particular problem because, as we all know, there is much that goes on at the beginning of the year; therefore, assessments get a little piled up towards the end of the quarter. For next year, administration will work with us to changing this window).

ETA Rep Training

I want to give a big THANK YOU for all the reps that showed up to the training held on October 20. Our trainer Kristine Argue did a great job of giving our reps practical and useful tactics and information for advocating for the ETA. I am sure that the reps in attendance learned some valuable things, I know that I did. Kristine has agreed to send me the powerpoint and handouts that she used in the training. I will send those out to members when I get them.

Aseop and assigning substitutes

I know that the district has turned off the assigning subs option for teachers. I understand that this can be a frustrating experience. The district is encouraging teachers to create a preferred sub list (Favorite Top 5).

The message below is from Judy Huang from district. yinghsuanhuang@u-46.org

Instead of you assigning them, substitutes are now required to log into AESOP to accept the job.

Substitutes included on this list will be given preferential treatment by Aesop when attempting to fill your absences. You can order up to five subs as your top favorites. If they are qualified and available, Aesop will notify them immediately when you register an absence.

AESOP - home page -> account tab on the top ->Preferred Substitutes tab on the left -> Add substitutes

You can also work with the building secretaries; they have the capability of assigning sub for you.

Issues

Supervisory Rates were clarified. PPD/DCD was briefly reviewed again. Class size concerns was reviewed. Grade Level Meetings was reviewed. [Issues Powerpoint](#)