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## REPORT

### MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

FRIDAY/SATURDAY MARCH 20-21, 2009

The MTA Board met recently in Natick on Friday evening and all day Saturday. The Board received a variety of reports focusing on budget, by-laws, current task forces, political and legislative updates, as well as briefings by MTA Officers. Phil Mahler was unable to attend because of pressing business in the MCCC office.

#### **Mass TeLLS Survey:**

The meeting opened with a final report on the Massachusetts Teaching, Learning and Leading Survey (Mass TeLLS). The survey was conducted by a broad coalition of foundations and associations which included teachers, school committees, superintendents, administrators, principals, and the MA Business Alliance for Education. The survey was conducted based on the belief that educators' views are important considerations when developing school improvement strategies. More than 40,000 K-12 teachers responded to the survey. The results pointed out a strong correlation between a teacher's working conditions and student outcomes as well as a strong connection between working conditions and the retention of educators.

#### **MTA Resolutions Committee:**

MTA Resolutions Committee Chair, Ted Kempinski presented proposed amendments to the *MTA Bylaws and Rules* - which were subsequently discussed and voted on. The recommendations will be put forth at the MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates on May 1 – 2 at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston.

#### **PHENOM Presentation:**

Guest speaker, UMass Lowell Professor, Craig Slatin, spoke on behalf of the Public Higher Education Network of MA (PHENOM) and thanked the MTA for its past and current support. He also discussed the history, purpose, and current legislative agenda of the group and answered questions.

#### **MTA Budget and Dues Recommendations:**

Vice President Paul Toner led a discussion on the proposed MTA Operating Budget and Dues and the Proposed Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Budget and Dues for recommendation to the 2009 Annual Meeting of Delegates. Given the trimming of expenses incorporated into the proposed budget and the conservative estimates of a 5 percent reduction in membership for the year ahead, the Board of Directors supported the proposed dues increase of \$17 per year for most educators that was recommended by the Executive Committee Meeting of March 6 – 7, 2009



The BOD also supported a motion that would allow for \$1,594,400 of this proposed operating budget to be allocated to the public relations/organizing campaign. This figure is lower than anticipated because of a current one million dollar balance in this fund.

**Grant Programs for Advanced Placement Classes:**

MTA President Anne Wass discussed issues related to new grant programs that would expand the teaching of AP classes in math, history, science and English and provide teachers with bonuses based on student test scores. President Wass emphasized that teachers would love to participate in these programs, but the MTA and teachers don't support such bonuses. The use of "merit" pay for teachers is divisive – and not effective in the long run. For further understanding of the current controversy, read the MTA President's letter of March 24 in the Boston Globe:

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/letters/articles/2009/03/24/merit\\_pay\\_unfair\\_and\\_divisive/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/letters/articles/2009/03/24/merit_pay_unfair_and_divisive/)

**Legislative and Political Report:**

Jo Blum, Director of MTA's Governmental Services Division provided the Board with a legislative and political update. She focused on the state budget challenges and the various ways the state and public education would benefit from the federal stimulus monies, indicating that details were still being worked out. Higher education support from these funds were estimated to be over \$300 million dollars over the next two years. Director Blum reminded Board members that State Representatives will be finalizing their budget by mid-April, so MTA members should be contacting these legislators to emphasize the need for new revenues and more support for public education as well as share concerns about health insurance contribution costs.

Jo Blum also distributed a handout which listed MTA supported bills and identified their numbers, their legislative sponsors, and the committees that would review these bills initially. Hearing dates for bills have not yet been scheduled.

Preliminary reports were also provided on the Building Task force, Revenue Enhancement Task Force, and Organizing Private Pre-K Staff Task Force.

Respectfully Submitted

Donnie McGee

Phil Mahler

MTA Directors for the MCCC