



WHEN & WHERE

February 3
Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee
OEA-CAF

February 4
OEA Board Meeting
4:30 p.m.

February 10
AR Assembly
4:15 p.m. Wilson Middle School
FYI-General Election Filing Deadline

February 11
Ad Hoc Finance Committee
Instructional Advocacy Committee

February 12
PACE

February 16
OEA Closed
Presidents Day Observance

**All meetings begin at 4:15 p.m.
@ OEA unless otherwise noted.**

OEA Tip-Off

The OEA *Tip-Off* is a bi-monthly publication printed for members of the Omaha Education Association.

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Visit us on the web at:
www.omahaoea.org

**Omaha Education Association
Omaha Food Bank Drive**

January 14th through February 10th.
Please bring items to the AR Assembly
on February 10th at Wilson Middle School,
5141 F Street.

**Canned or Boxed Food, Personal Items,
Household Goods, Toiletries and
Monetary Donations are all welcome!**

**The staff with the greatest per member
contribution (of items and/or money) will be
provided a free breakfast cooked by
OEA President Maddie Fennell!**

**METROPOLITAN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Instructors Needed – Non-Credit
College for Kids and
College for Teens**

College for Kids

Metropolitan Community College is looking for part-time instructors for our “College for Kids” summer program. Courses will be offered Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon during June and July, 2009 at several locations.

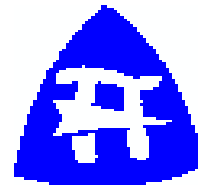
Each instructor will teach all three age groups:
6-7, 8-9, and 10-11 year olds.

College for Teens

Metropolitan Community College is looking for part-time instructors for our “College for Teens” summer program which will be offered June 15-19 and July 13-17, 2009.

Courses will be offered Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon for **ages 12-15.**

Instructors for the **College for Kids Program** and the **College for Teens Program** submit ideas for classes to the coordinator with their application and will write their own lesson plans if selected. Previous classes have included, but are not limited to the following subject areas: science, math games, art, acting, dance, drill team/cheerleading, space, outdoor games, weather, animals/insects. Week long classes are held at Arbor Park Middle School in Blair, Kiewit Middle School in Millard, Gretna Elementary and Palisades Elementary in Gretna, Fort Omaha Campus, and South Omaha Campus. \$18.00/hour. Some teaching experience with elementary/middle school ages preferred. **Deadline: February 6th, 2009.** Applications may be requested by calling the Community Education office at 457-2620 or found online at: www.mccneb.edu/ce Click on Instructor Application, save as a Word document, and submit to tmorgan@mccneb.edu



OEA

Tip-Off

January 30, 2009

**WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THE
STREAMLINING REPORT?**

BY MADDIE FENNELL

In December, I received the following email from a member*:

Hey Maddie, whatever happened to that whole streamlining idea? You know the one where teachers actually keep their students in the classroom and teach during the day? We here at ---, especially the intermediate, are feeling very frustrated with the amount of time our students are OUT of our classroom OR programs are brought INTO the classroom: band, strings, challenge, read right, human growth and development, author visits, bully presentations, candy kick off sales, candy reward sales, behavior celebrations, program rehearsals, read to succeed, picture day, ballroom dancing, harvest party, plays, red ribbon week events, fire safety, youth congress, conflict managers, safety patrol, cafeteria helpers, recycling helpers....And I KNOW I'm missing stuff.

Here's my question: As educators, we have been told, point blank, "Everything you do in your classroom should be directly related to improving achievement." At some meetings they say "To improving CRT/CAT scores"; "If you can't show how it impacts achievement, you shouldn't be doing it." Now if that's the standard we are being held to, then how do all of the above fit in?

I shared this email with Dr. Mackiel at our December leadership meeting (each month Dennis Gehringer, Tim Krapp and I meet with Dr. Mackiel, Dr. Pool and Mrs. Huber to discuss district-wide issues). Dr. Mackiel responded right away, sharing the email at the January Principals’ meetings and dedicating the cover of the January 21st Administrative Bulletin to the need for streamlining activities and staying focused on maximizing instruction time.

The complete article can be found in the January 21st Administrative Bulletin posted on the district icon on First Class, but I want to share with you the final two paragraphs from Dr. Mackiel’s response:

Time is a finite and most precious commodity available to schools. Productive use of the hours in school is critical to student success. Assemblies, field trips and the various activities that are part of the school day must compliment and support the instructional program. Those that do not enhance student learning need to be eliminated or at the least minimized to maximize time on task for youngsters.

As we pursue instruction of youngsters at every grade level during these next most productive and fulfilling months of the school year, let us resolve to streamline school goals and activities to make the best use of time in the school day for the educational benefit of every student in the Omaha Public Schools.

The goal of the Streamlining Report is still in effect today—to maximize instructional learning time. We all need to stay diligent and raise concerns with our building leaders and AR’s when asked to engage in activities that take away from teaching time. If we are to reach our goal of Raising Achievement and Closing the Gaps for ALL students, we must continually ask “How is this project, activity or task going to positively impact my students’ achievement?”

*edited for space

Horizontal Movement on Salary Schedule

All certified personnel expecting to qualify for “horizontal” movement on salary schedule are reminded that the following must be on file in the department of Human Resources by February 2, 2009.

BA + 18

Complete application form; request official transcript be sent by the University Registrar’s office. Application forms are available in each building.

MASTER’S DEGREE

Certified by official transcript noting degree. Since this is a conferred degree, no application is necessary.

MA + 30

Complete application form; request official transcript be sent by the University Registrar’s office. Application forms are available in each building.

DOCTOR’S DEGREE

Certified by official transcript noting degree. Since this is a conferred degree, no application is necessary.

Note: Request an official transcript be sent directly to the department of Human Resources. A transcript marked “Issued to Student” is not considered an official transcript.

BA + 18 and MA + 30 applications may be obtained from school offices or by calling the Human Resources department at 557-2300.

TIP-OFF CORRECTIONS

The *Retirement Notice* article stated that all paperwork for retirement must be signed by March 1st. This year March 1st is on a Sunday, so the deadline is actually **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27th**. Any certificated staff member who will be at least 55 but not yet 62 years of age on August 31, 2009 and who has completed at least 18 years of certificated creditable experience with the Omaha Public Schools is eligible for the Early Leaving Incentive Program in addition to benefits from the retirement system and social security. Applications must be submitted to the Retirement Office by Friday, February 27, 2009. If you have any questions, contact the Retirement Office @ 557-2102.

The “*Who Ya’ Gonna’ Call?*” article should have directed you to Kari Meisenbach for help with absence management (making sure you were correctly credited or docked for leave) @ 557-2152. To obtain approval for leaves of absence or to return to work (sick leave, personal leave, FMLA) contact Sherri McNair @ 557-2315.

2008 Income Tax Deductions for Dues

The amount of OEA/NSEA/NEA dues is deductible (less \$0.22 allocated for lobbying expenses) for income taxes. 99.97 % of your Total Dues Paid in 2008 is tax deductible.

The amount for 2008 is listed under the “year-to-date” column on your December pay record. This is the amount for association dues less any other deductions you have requested through the OEA (OEA-CAF, NEA-PAC, TAAA, American Family Intensive Care Insurance, or OEA Foundation). Multiply the amount for 2008 listed under the “year-to-date” column on your December pay record by .9997 to determine the amount of dues you may deduct.

For most OEA full time members, the dues that can be reported for deduction purposes for the 2008 tax year would be \$688.54. (\$688.76 less the \$0.22 OEA spent on lobbying expenses)



CHECK YOUR PAYCHECK!

Thanks to the hard work of OEA staff, a member was issued a check last month for almost \$2,000 to cover back pay due to incorrect placement on the salary schedule.

Have you checked your paycheck to see if you are being paid on the correct step and lane? The OEA icon on First Class has both the article “How to Read Your Paycheck” from the September 12th Tip-Off and the salary schedule.

If you think you are being paid incorrectly, contact Compensation and Benefits. If you need further assistance, call OEA.

Are You Even CONSIDERING a Transfer?

ONLY those teachers who request a transfer by February 3rd will be allowed to enter the transfer pool. If you are not sure, it is better to submit a letter of interest; you can decline interviews or withdraw from the process at any time. If your letter is NOT in by February 3rd, you will not be allowed to use the transfer process this year. See the fliers posted in your building or the Jan. 12th OEA Tip-Off for complete information.

OEA Retirement Benefits Workshop Scheduled for January 29th

You must sign the Early-Leave Incentive forms by March 1st to be eligible for the Early Leave benefit. This year March 1st is on a Sunday, so the deadline is actually **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27th**. To help you understand your other retirement benefits, OEA-Retired and the OEA Retirement Committee will host a workshop on retirement benefits on January 29. The workshop will be held at the OEA Office, 4202 S. 57th Street. The workshop will start at 4:15 p.m. and last until approximately 6:00 p.m. Coffee and cookies will be provided. If you need directions to the OEA Office, you can request directions when you make your reservation.

Roger Rea, member of both OEA-Retired and the OEA Retirement Committee, will again lead the session and will present information on:

- How to estimate your retirement benefits
- Which of the six payment options might be best for you
- What are the buy-in and buy-back provisions
- Key items to remember as you prepare for retirement
- Health insurance after you retire
- The benefits of belonging to the Retired organizations



Mark your calendar now for January 29th, and plan to bring a friend and attend this important informational session. The more you know about your retirement benefits, the better prepared you will be when you actually do decide to retire. Please call the OEA office at 346-0400 to reserve a place at this session. Do it today!

Collegebound Nebraska Q&A

Q. What is Collegebound Nebraska?

A. Collegebound Nebraska is a University of Nebraska tuition assistance program that promises that any Nebraska resident who is eligible for a Federal Pell Grant and meets NU admission requirements can attend the University of Nebraska and pay **no tuition** as an undergraduate. This fall, the university expanded the program to include more Nebraska families – those whose income is just above Pell guidelines. There are a number of considerations for eligibility, but generally speaking, a student from a family of four with one student in college and a family income of **\$45,000 or less** will qualify for full tuition coverage under Collegebound Nebraska.

Q. What if my family income is too high for Collegebound Nebraska? Is there assistance for me?

A. Yes. The University of Nebraska has many resources available to help students pay for college: other publicly and privately funded scholarships, work-study programs, grants and loans. Talk to an admissions counselor at any University of Nebraska campus for assistance. Since 2004, total University-funded need-based aid has increased 73% (excluding remissions) from \$5.2 million in 2003-04 to \$9 million in 2008-09.

Q. How many students currently receive Collegebound Nebraska funding?

A. For the 2008-09 school year, about 4,300 students across the university’s four campuses are receiving assistance through Collegebound Nebraska. We hope to extend the program to more students next year by increasing awareness of the program among high school and community college students.

Q. How do you apply?

A. There is no separate application for Collegebound Nebraska, but students **must** complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form by April 1st of the year in which they plan to enroll. The earlier students complete the FAFSA the better, as applications are treated on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligibility will be automatically determined through the campus offices of financial aid.

Q. What other initiatives are designed to help students prepare for college?

A. In Nebraska, several major initiatives include the [EducationQuest Foundation](#), the [Nebraska P-16 Initiative](#), the [Thompson Scholars Program](#), [KnowHow2GoNebraska](#), and the [Building Bright Futures](#) program.