

DeSoto

DCAE EDUCATOR

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TEACHERS SEND LEGISLATORS STRONG MESSAGES

DeSoto County Schools recently participated in a united effort of communication to our state legislature. MAE employees visited every school in the district asking teachers to write messages to their senators and house members regarding education budget cuts, fully funding MAEP and other issues. Through this effort, hundreds of postcards were sent to legislators from this area.

This Association also attempted to gather interest inventories from members across the county. DCAE officers and building reps will use this information to address issues concerning our teachers. The inventories will also help identify teachers who want to become more involved in DCAE.

Sharon Mullins, building rep at OBHS, is coordinating the project and is compiling the data and statistics from the inventories. If you are a member of DCAE and have not completed and returned the inventory, please do so as soon as possible. You may return the inventory to the building rep at your school or put it on the pony to Sharon Mullins at OBHS. **YOUR OPINION COUNTS AND YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR ORGANIZATION!**

CLASSROOM TEACHER IS BEST RESOURCE

by Andy Wilson

It seems that daily we see proposals that paint a bleak picture for educational funding in Mississippi. Salary cuts are mentioned for administration from top to bottom; days subtracted from the calendar; teacher assistants not being used in third grade - or replaced when they resign or retire; bus drivers being paid hourly; cut backs in supplies and 1% money; class room sizes back to 30 and over; National Board Certified teachers worry about their supplement; and the list goes on and on. None of us will know what will happen until the dust clears after this legislative session and our local school district looks at the aftermath. But one fact seems pretty clear to many teachers: we will have to do more with less.

Our jobs are not usually tied to cyclical effects of the economy – schools must always be open and children must always be taught. And when we look around the landscape littered with unemployed workers, simply having a job makes many of the problems we face due to these funding shortages seem small by comparison.

But one resource that I hope will be utilized by those in positions of authority will be the classroom teacher. Many of us understand where waste is and what can be cut; just as we also understand the things that are essential to doing our jobs well. What looks essential in Hernando might not seem essential in room A-3, or B-16. Let teachers have an input into how we could save money – I just bet you would be surprised at what we see that so often goes unnoticed by those above. This kind of teamwork would make all those expected cuts and changes easier to swallow by all.



IT'S TIME TO GET DELICIOUS!

OBHS's science department uses a bookmarking website called Delicious to file all of our school-related bookmarks in a common place that everyone can access from any computer. The site is free and easy. Users are able to save websites and attach "tags" to websites that describe the content. You can then search your own bookmarks (or others) by the tag you are interested in. Our department has formed a network within Delicious so that any one of us can see all of the others bookmarks on one page. You can view my bookmarks at www.delicious.com/mandyrhyme.

Amanda Rhymer



On March 2, the National Education Association calls for every child to be reading in the company of a caring adult. Check it out at www.nea.org.

**CHECK OUT
OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.DCAE.ORG**

LOBBY DAY 2010


by Tim Gardner

Lobby Day was held on January 26th 2009. Due to the budget crunch DCAE was not able to send as many members to Jackson this year. Tim Gardner and Connie Mah from SHS and Grace Williams from SMS attended. The delegation was able to make face to face contact with many of Desoto County's elected officials. We spoke with both Senator Merle Flowers and Senator Doug Davis as they were leaving a Senate education committee meeting. They did not have much to say on budget cuts other than they should all be administrative cuts, and none to classroom teachers. The senate committee did pass a bill supported by MAE which called for a task force to study teacher attrition rates in Mississippi. The Representatives all echoed the same tale. It is a tough year, possibly tougher than we have seen, and we will be struggling for a while. Representative Forrest Hamilton (OB) said that if it gets bad enough the county board of supervisors have a responsibility to raise local taxes to cover the shortfall. Representative Jennings was not hopeful and explained that cuts were coming. Representative John Mayo spoke positively about keeping NBCT funding in place. All legislators did stress that the budget was an ongoing process and that nothing was set in stone yet. The legislators reiterated that Governor Barbour's budget proposal was just that; a proposal. We felt that we had a successful trip as we were able to convey our concerns to so many of our elected officials face to face.



These officers and building representatives pictured above attended the February DCAE meeting at Memphis Pizza Café.

JOYCE'S CORNER



I have been thinking a lot lately about what being in this organization really means to me. I have a list quite long, most of which you have heard over and over...being a spokesperson for my profession, being involved in professional development, working with our law makers to make sure education remains THE MOST IMPORTANT issue in this state, and the list goes on. However, there is one thing that has been foremost in my mind and that is the wonderful friends I have made over the past few years. Recently, Sharon, Amanda, Renee, Teri and I were involved in a workshop day at OB. One of our good friends, Billie Leeth (now an ESP member) came walking in with the cutest cookies ever (good too). What can I say? Thanks Billie, you are one of the best. MAE is proud!!!



Grace Williams, Connie Mah, and Tim Gardner discuss educational funding and the budget with Representative Wanda Jennings at the state capitol on Lobby Day.

**One of our own
Running for state office**

Joyce Helmick

For

MAE Vice President

VOTE FOR JOYCE!

Election coming in March