



Anchorage Education Association

Good teaching matters

4100 Spenard Rd.
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e-Advocate

Attendance at Candidate Forum Crucial

Vol.2, Issue 4, 2/13/09

Do you ever wish you could do something to have a positive impact on the attention education receives, to help out your school, and to improve your compensation and benefits?

If so, mark **February 25** on your calendar and come

out to the Marriott Hotel for the mayoral/school board candidate forum, co-hosted this year with APEA affiliates.



Let candidates see a packed room like they saw on Jan. 10.

Consider what happens when the candidates look out on a room packed with people who came because they care about education issues? They realize that education has to stay a top priority.

Also consider that AEA will go to the table next year to bargain a new contract. Having supportive school board members is a must.

On the other hand, if the can-

Forum continued: www.anchorageea.org/e-adv/feb09/candidate.pdf

Town Hall Meeting a Success!

On January 10, 2009, an extremely cold Saturday morning, about 500 people showed at the new DeNa'ina Center to meet with legislators for one issue, returning to a Defined Benefit (DB) Retirement system for Alaska's public employees. You may wonder....did that change anything? If I came, did that matter?

Everyone in the audience was of one mind, and almost all the legislators in attendance professed to be

solidly behind a return to DB. What was accomplished?

The legislators learned that a defined benefit is important to public employees, that they will turn out for this cause, and that having a secure retirement is an issue they will fight for. Like all of us, they have more things to do than they can ever get done in one session. Saturday's turnout showed them that their constituents are watching and want action on this issue.



Lee Butterfield testifies at the Town Hall meeting on Jan. 10.

Meeting continued: www.anchorageea.org/e-adv/feb09/town.pdf

403B Changes: Let AEA know what you think

IRS changes required the Anchorage School District to handle 403B contributions in an entirely new way. (See the 403B link on the AEA website under resources: www.anchorageea.org)

Both AEA and ASD had concerns about the new requirements. One of AEA's concerns was that the requirements might mean significantly fewer choices and/or services for our members. AEA knew that not all members were going to be happy with the changes and advocated for members to have as many fund choices as possible.

ASD was concerned about their increased liability and fiduciary responsibility and the fact that many funds then currently offered had very high fees.

While AEA was kept informed regarding the selection process, none of the ASD unions were allowed to have a

The ASD selected Great West to manage the 403B offerings because in their opinion the company best met the requirements of their Request For Proposal, which was shared with AEA and seemed to keep fees down.

Representatives from Great West have visited school sites, and ASD has provided information on the changes and offerings on their website: www.asdk12.org/HR/Benefits/403b.

As AEA heads into bargaining next year, we would now like to have feedback. How has working with Great West been? Are you happy, frustrated, or confused by the changes? Do you need more information?

If you have questions or comments regarding the new 403B changes and/or the services offered by Great West, please contact AEA@asdk12.org. AEA will do its best to answer questions, gather data, and get you the

Important Dates

Feb. 17 AEA Neg. Committee Meeting, AEA Office, 4:30 p.m.

Feb. 21 AEA Building Rep. Training, AEA Office, 8:00 a.m.

Feb. 23 School Board Meeting, ASD 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 24 Rights Committee Mtg., AEA Office, 4:30 p.m.

Feb. 25 Candidate Forum, Marriott, 4:00 p.m.

Feb. 28 AEA Building Rep. Training, AEA Office, 8:00 a.m.

March 3 AEA Rep. Council

Want to know more about these events? Contact your building rep. http://www.anchorageea.org/docs/Bldg_Reps_08-09.pdf, or call the AEA office.

Who do I contact for...

Health Insurance

Assistance: NEA-Alaska Health Plan—274-7526

A Mentor for New Teachers:

Log into "My Learning Plan." On the left side of the screen, Go to 'MY Mentor Request'.

An Instructional Coach for Professional Support and Plans of Improvement:

donohue_erin@asdk12.org

Contract questions:

Anchorage Education Association—274-0536

then currently offered had very high fees.

While AEA was kept informed regarding the selection process, none of the ASD unions were allowed to have a role in the actual selection of the vendor.

If you have questions or comments regarding the new 403B changes and/or the services offered by Great West, please contact AEA@asdk12.org. AEA will do its best to answer questions, gather data, and get you the information you need.



Facebook: New way to connect and organize

One of the fastest growing demographic groups on the social networking site Facebook is grown-ups, people in the age range of 30 to 55. Many teachers are finding out what students have known for a few years: Facebook is a fast, efficient, and fun way to keep in touch with your friends, whether those friends live across town or across the country.

Educators ought to give it a try because Facebook really isn't like anything else you're used to. It's not quite instant messaging, although it is; it's not quite like email, although it is; and it's not

quite like a web page, although it is a web page full of info and comments about the people you've chosen as friends.

There are some pitfalls. Some people forget that Facebook is quite public. Although, ASD's assistant superintendent and ASD use Facebook to communicate, because of the casual away-from-school atmosphere, teachers need to be especially cautious about what they post.

Also the most recent version of ASD's "Adult/Student Boundaries," states "Don't use MySpace, online discussion boards and other social network-

[Facebook continued: www.anchorageea.org/e-adv/feb09/facebook.pdf](http://www.anchorageea.org/e-adv/feb09/facebook.pdf)



AEA Trivia: How many building reps. can a building have?

What is the ratio of building representatives to members in the building?

Answers received by 5:00, February 25th will be eligible for a \$10.00 gift certificate.

Questions? E-mail us at AEA@asdk12.org or call 274-0536.

Your newsletter is compiled by member volunteers just like you. If you would like to participate in our newsletter, or have helpful suggestions for us, we'd like to hear from you.

To contact us, go to www.anchorageea.org click the AEA Committees link and select "communication." This webpage contains information about your volunteer committee and the appropriate contact person for questions and information.





AEA Trivia: Prizes go to those who respond first

Which "dealer" said, "The school is the last expenditure upon which America should be willing to economize"?

Prizes (\$10.00 gift cards to Barnes and Noble) will be given to the first AEA member to respond correctly in each category: Related Services, High School, Middle Level, Elementary.



