

The Educator

THE MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS E-NEWSLETTER



FOR YOUR CALENDAR

STATE SUPERINTENDENT

Give us your thoughts

Deadline July 30

JACKSON SAFE WATER

**Has Jackson's unclean,
unsafe water affected you?**

Deadline August 25

NOTICE ANYTHING?

If you haven't visited www.maetoday.org in a while, you don't know what you're missing!

Pictured above is the new home page with one of our favorite pictures ever front and center. This was when we got EVERYBODY's attention at the State Capitol ... you know the rest of the story on that.

We've got an easy-to-navigate new format that will take you straight where you want to go, plus by scrolling down, you'll find even more links to the things that matter to you - security, benefits, advocacy and other important issues.

We hope you find it informative, easy, and useful!

We need YOU!



ADD YOUR VOICE TO POWER!

TERESA ROBINSON | *Membership Director*

Annual membership packets are slated to be mailed the week of August 1 thru August 5, 2022. If you do not receive your membership packet by August 16, please contact MAE headquarters at 601.354.4463.

If you have retired, be sure to complete the change form in your membership packet.

Why join MAE? Here are a few reasons:

POWER | Being an MAE member means that your voice will join thousands of others rallying in support of public education. Most recently, MAE's strong advocacy resulted in the largest pay raise for teachers in Mississippi's history. We're proud of that record-breaking achievement, but we know the fight for Mississippi educators, our students, and communities isn't over. That's why we need you.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | We are proud to offer our members the opportunity to continue their education

throughout their entire careers. Our Professional Development Advisory Committee identifies each year's professional development priorities in order to provide a full slate of continuing education workshops.

SECURITY | MAE knows that being an educator is a noble profession, and one that carries with it a certain amount of legal risk. No one is immune, and that's why we provide an excellent legal safety net for our members.



Membership Change/Update Record Form

Please give us correct information about you. We want to serve you better.

Have you retired?

Has your address, cell phone, or email changed?

Did your school district or worksite change?

If so, click on the blue QR code above to update your records.



**Are you ready to join MAE?
Use the QR code above
or go to www.maetoday.org and click
"Join MAE"**

A Note from Our President



SUMMERTIME ISN'T LAZY FOR US!

ERICA JONES | MAE President

The lazy days of summer are here! Well, maybe not for educators. Many of you are attending conferences, creating lesson plans, and spending countless hours on Pinterest looking for that oh so awesome classroom setup.

As we head into the last weeks of summer break, I encourage you to take time to reflect over this past year. Use time to relax, reset, and recharge!

Here at MAE, we have just finished up a very successful Virtual Summer Leadership Conference. I was inspired to see so many new faces join us. Summer Leadership was just a preview of some of the exciting things that we have in store for you this year! Feel free to send us a note if there are any professional development opportunities that you would like for us to explore.

As we head into back-to-school season, please look for MAE representatives in your area. Stop by their tables to get the latest information on services that we offer. I look forward to seeing you in a few weeks as I begin touring the state. If you'd like for me to be a guest reader, reading fair or project judge, or simply to visit your site send me an email to ejones@maetoday.org.

Happy Summer!

Erica

mae Mississippi Association of Educators

Virtual 2022 Summer Leadership Summit
"Stronger Schools, Stronger Mississippi"

Agenda Overview
June 16 - 17, 2022

THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022		FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 2022	
10:00 am - 10:50 am	General Session - Welcome What is Leadership?	10:00 am - 10:50 am	General Session Your Leadership Journey
10:50 am - 11:00 am	Break	10:50 am - 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am - 11:50 am	1st Role Track Session	11:00 am - 11:50 am	2nd Role Track Session
11:50 am - 12:00 pm	Break	11:50 am - 12:00 pm	Break
12:00 pm - 12:50 pm	General Session Preparing for Back to School	12:00 pm - 12:50 pm	2nd Interest Breakout
12:50 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch	12:50 pm - 2:00 pm	Lunch
2:00 pm - 2:50 pm	1st Interest Breakout	2:00 pm - 2:50 pm	General Session Social & Racial Justice in Education
2:50 pm - 3:00 pm	Break	2:50 pm - 3:00 pm	Break
3:00 pm - 3:50 pm	2nd Role Track Session	3:00 pm - 3:50 pm	3rd Interest Breakout
3:50 pm - 4:00 pm	General Session Wrap up	3:50 pm - 4:00 pm	General Session "Stronger Schools, Stronger MS"

2022 Virtual Summer Leadership Summit Offerings

Role Tracks and Presenters	Interest Breakouts and Presenters
Presidents President Erica Jones, Lerenda Dixon, Chastli Paige	Member Benefits Chastli Paige and Glenda Jones (NEA MB)
Vice Presidents V.P. Darein Spann, Teri Rounsaville, Rhonda Thompson, Jasmine Cleark-Gibson	Legislative Activism 101 Pam Johnson and Lee Hedgepeth
Secretary/Treasurers S.T. Suzanne Smith, Debbie Moore, Teresa Robinson, Isha Joshi	Do you want to be a: Member Organizer? Pam McLendon and Keiona Cavett Association Representative? Lisa Wilson and Teri Rounsaville Local Leader? Jasmine Cleark-Gibson and Vicki Rodriguez
Association Representatives Lisa Wilson, Antonio Castanon Luna, Vicki Rodriguez	Building a Strong Local Teresa Robinson and Antonio Castanon Luna
Member Organizers Pam McLendon, Brenda Fenner, Sherry Latham	Organizing around issues Brian Phillips and Robin Wilson
Early Career Educators Keiona Cavett, Robin Wilson	Gripe or Grievance: Legal Workshop Kenneth Grigsby
MAE 101: New Members Kenneth Grigsby, Pam Johnson, Brian Phillips	

Register by clicking on the link or scanning the QR code below:

bit.ly/3vp4A0s

\$25 digital gift cards will be provided to all registered participants who attend both days

mae Mississippi Association of Educators

"Stronger Schools, Stronger Mississippi"

News from the South Unit



RIDING THE WAVE WITH MAE

PAM McLENDON | UniServ Director

The conference always allows us the opportunity to connect with educators from around the state. We saw a lot of our members as they came by our table to thank us for our part in the Educator Pay Raise of 2022.

Some past members even rejoined our association because of the work we're doing. Potential members took information about our organization, and we also gained some new members.

It was clear to them, and to Team MAE at the conference, that when the Mississippi Association of Educators is in the house, things happen!



We were blessed to attend the Making Connections Conference in Biloxi on June 7 - 10 -- so what better way to connect on the Coast than with surfboards and a big old wave!

We had an amazing amount of interest in MAE, and signed up 38 new members! And, who knows? We may have had even more sign up since then.



News from the North Unit



SAY HELLO TO A NEW LEADER

TERI ROUNSAVILLE | *UniServ Director*

We welcome the new MAE Aspiring Educator Chair Cali Reinhart and wish her all the best as she leads a dynamic group of dedicated students who want to make a difference in their schools and communities.

Hi, all!

I am Cali Reinhart, and I am the MAE Aspiring Educators Chair for the 2022-23 School year. I am from Diamondhead, Mississippi. I attend the University of Southern Mississippi where I am a sophomore that studies Elementary Education with an emphasis in English. I love being involved with my school and major specific communities.

I am involved in many activities including being a President Honors College Scholar as well as a member of the Student Government Association, Eagle Catholic, National Association of Educators, and National Residence Hall Honorary.

I am excited to hold this position. As I lead the Aspiring Educators in our state, I hope to increase student awareness of MAE resources and help others find a community of teachers who are willing to help and give advice. I cannot wait to see what this position will hold, and I am excited for the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Cali Reinhart



News from the Capital Unit



MEMBER OUTREACH SUCCESSFUL

CHASITI PAIGE | *UniServ Director*

As an organization, MAE works to advocate for students and teachers across the state of Mississippi. Supporting them includes addressing teacher pay, safe working environments, resource access, and community needs. Currently, a critical condition to be discussed in our community is key to safe drinking water.

Due to ongoing water issues in the state's capital area, citizens have often been without running water for several days. Schools have been forced to close, forcing teachers and students to pivot to digital learning or relocate to other buildings quickly.

We are working hard to speak with community members from all parts of Jackson to capture and project the voices of those who must deal with boiling water before cooking or going to city distribution sites with buckets in search of water to flush their toilets. We aim to utilize survey data and research to hold city officials and those in decision-making positions accountable. What is being done about this critical need? How are funds being allocated? How long before we see change? These are questions we are demanding answers to! To complete the survey follow this link:
<https://bit.ly/3jkzOiE>.

MAE has also been working with the Our JPS coalition to develop community schools across Mississippi. Community schools are neighborhood schools that partner with families and community organizations to provide well-rounded educational experiences and support for students' school success.

Community schools offer hope, opportunity, and transformation to entire communities. They are built on the understanding that students often come to the classroom with challenges that impact their ability to learn, explore, and develop to their most significant potential.

Community schools create a safe and effective environment for children. Community schools also allow teachers to receive the support necessary to educate the younger minds. Our JPS has partnered with Quitman County and Jackson Public Schools to uplift this work. Although it starts in one district, the plan is to spread it across the state.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me at cpaige@maetoday.org or 601-529-2342.

In your corner: MAE Member Advocacy



Rest, Restore, and Reengage

KENNETH GRIGSBY | *Member Rights Advocate*

REST

As the son, nephew, brother-in-law, and, of course, spouse of an educator, I know all too well the importance of educational professionals having the ability to have a relaxing and, hopefully, professionally uneventful summer. To be sure, the last few years have been quite trying for many educators and, thus, a relaxing and stress-free summer is the absolute minimum that educators across our state should be asking for. MAE is acutely aware that physical, mental and emotional stability are important qualities for any vocation, but they are particularly indispensable necessities for educators. So, yes, you are “ordered” to rest and recharge as you prepare for the upcoming school year.

RULES

In tandem with your rest “mandate”, your summer vacation avails an optimum time to ensure you are adequately prepared for the upcoming school year. One important goal is to ensure you have a copy of important work documents, including but not limited to, employment contract, district’s employee handbook, and your district grievance policy. Reviewing these documents and outlining potential areas of confusion and/or concern can be particularly helpful.

Once you have examined this information, it may be beneficial to schedule a meeting with your principal or immediate supervisor. Soliciting a meeting during the summer can be advantageous as the meeting can be used to clarify objectives and expectations. Prior experiences have demonstrated that holding this meeting over the summer break significantly reduces the likelihood the conference will be viewed as adversarial or accusatorial. While it is imperative to discuss concerns, information, and policies already memorialized in writing, such conferences may also be used to understand instructional objectives and responsibilities, student discipline procedures, and classroom management expectations. While the covid

crisis seems to have lessened over the past year, proactively engaging in individual or group discussion around what health safeguards will continue to be employed can prove beneficial.

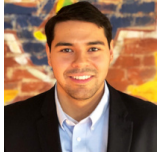
One issue that often arises for many educators is the need to be released from their employment contract due to personal, health or family emergencies that did not exist at the time they signed their contract to return to the school district. Should situations arise prompting your need to request a release from your employment obligations for the upcoming year, please contact our office immediately so that we can assist you in navigating through that process. As your advocate, it is extremely important that we help our members not be relegated to fulfill an employment contact when their health and family circumstances are directly and adversely compromised. Nevertheless, failing to adhere to the statutory guidelines in requesting a release can prove problematic and ultimately place the educator’s license in peril.

REENGAGE

Finally, educators should use this summer to prepare to reengage with students and colleagues for the upcoming school year. To accomplish this, teachers should reexamine evaluation metrics and standards to shield themselves from unfair evaluations. Moreover, perusing classroom management strategies and possibly attending professional development sessions can inure a benefit to educators. Additionally, review the Mississippi State Department’s Educator Code of Ethics to ensure you are completely knowledgeable about the demands and expectations is an important prophylactic measure instructors can take as they prepare to reassume school.

Then ... Rest Again. Have a wonderful Summer!

A word from our Executive Director



We're working to make your school year a success!

ANTONIO CASTANON LUNA | *Executive Director*

Dear MAE members,

Your MAE staff has been busy this summer – both here and beyond – making sure we have everything in place to make your 2022-2023 school year a success.

As our “Stronger Schools. Stronger Mississippi” advocacy and organizing theme for this year uplifts, we will focus our work on ensuring that you and our students have safe, fully-resourced, and supportive school communities. This vision will take all of us, members, leadership, and staff, working together to identify the needs and improvements necessary to bring forth the change that will make Mississippi stronger.

To help build this momentum internally, MAE leaders hosted the 2022 Board Member retreat, which also met in person for the first time since the pandemic started. This time focused on empowering the board of directors to build a community of support, make plans to engage with members across the state, and grow their knowledge of the MAE power model.

Externally, expanding into your districts and schoolhouses, our staff and leadership will continue to diligently be at district orientations and school sites during the back-to-school and into the Fall to take advantage of every opportunity to learn how to better support you from you, our members. Our hope is that personal engagement will elevate enthusiasm and grow our state-wide community of educators and education partners. This effort is also supported by an enhanced MAE website and social media presence to help relay information to you as well as to collect it electronically.

And at a national level, our affiliation with NEA has provided us the platform to uplift our successes including the historic salary raise and EEF card enhancements. This recognition has given us additional access to tools and resources that will help enliven your experience in the classroom as well as in collaboration and fellowship with fellow members and your communities. Moreover, Mississippi’s presence was significant at the Annual Representative Assembly in Chicago where your elected members were given the right to vote on the national education agenda for the year. Attendees were energized to be meeting in person for the first time since 2019, and we all made the most of the opportunity.

I hope that these updates provide you the hope and excitement that all of us at MAE are feeling for this upcoming year. Together we can achieve more, together we can continue to make history!

Comms/Public Affairs Report



MAE HQ BUZZING THIS SUMMER

PAM JOHNSON | Communications/Public Affairs

Our office has been buzzing with action since the last school bell rang in May. This is prime time for trainings and recruiting new members. And figuring out where we go from here for next year's action.

Speaking of recruitment, an MAE crew signed in 36 new members in a couple of days at the Biloxi Connections Conference in June. If there's ever been a time when people recognize what MAE means to the lives of public school educators, it's right now.

Although we have gained deserved, national recognition for the pay raise, which went into effect this month, we are not resting on our laurels. Right now, we've got advocacy measures out there to make sure we are heard on issues important to public school educators, students, families and communities across the state.

First, we need your input on what you think the attributes of a great State Superintendent should be. [You can answer our survey HERE.](#) We will be issuing a public report on our findings. Already, we have several hundred responses, but there are about 8,000 MAE members! Be on the lookout for more on this important opportunity to have your voices heard!

Second, we are not going to sit on our hands while Jackson's water system continues to fail -- affecting the health of students and educators, not to mention disrupting instruction and students' emotional well-being that comes with having access to clean water. As I write this,

the City of Jackson is piecemealing a return to citizens' being able to use tap water. This after the City, community organizations, and religious organizations held massive water distributions for those who couldn't even take a bath safely in their own homes.

Ms. Jasmine Clark-Gibson (read about her on the next page) is coordinating our effort to gain information from Jackson residents on how the very present danger of nasty water is affecting them. Look for more on this issue in the near future.

Following the tragedy in Uvalde, we helped coordinate a Stop Gun Violence rally on the Sillers Green across from the State Capitol. We, along with others, were advocating for the establishment of reasonable laws that will help prevent any such horrors from happening again. Unfortunately, since our effort, several other mass shootings have occurred. We agree with NEA that it is clearly time for change. We are grateful for the bipartisan effort that has led to some law changes on the federal level, and we hope that others will follow. It's important to note that we are not asking for a confiscation of guns; rather, we are asking that the issues resulting in mass shootings be addressed, which includes funding for effective mental health services in schools.

We are working to strengthen our online presence and hope you find the new web site to be a pleasant change. We also broke FaceBook last week with a post about EEP cards -- over 90,000 individuals were reached.

Take care and take pictures! And let me know if I can help.

Around the office

SAY HELLO TO NEW STAFFERS!

We are excited to introduce you to your new HQ staff members and intern. We know that with their expertise and help, MAE is positioned to make an even greater impact on public education and the greater community in the coming year.



Mrs. Clearke-Gibson joins MAE staff as Organizational Specialist

Our newest MAE team member is Jasmine Cleark-Gibson, a native of Clarksdale, and an Advanced Placement Honor graduate of Clarksdale High School. Jasmine has 13 years of experience working with youth in an educational setting and leadership of various teams and initiatives. She now serves as our Organizational Specialist.

Mrs. Cleark-Gibson earned a Masters of Community Development and Bachelor of Communications Studies from Delta State University. Her Masters of Arts In Teaching courses were completed at Mississippi Valley State University.

She most recently wrapped her 7th year in the Mississippi Public School System as the Library Media Specialist at Byram Middle School in the Hinds County School District. She and her wife, Vic, are parents to two fantastic boys and two rambunctious dogs. In her spare time, Jazz likes to read, cook, paint, exercise, travel, spend time with her loved ones, and binge-watch t.v. shows like Blue Bloods, Criminal Minds and NCIS.

She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated and attends Word of Life Church in Highland Colony. Jazz is committed to seeing Mississippi communities, educators, and schools grow stronger so that every child succeeds. Her areas of focus include Jackson, Rankin, Hinds and Madison Counties. Her email address is jcgibson@maetoday.org.



Jakob Myers-Heldt is Intern for Public Affairs

We welcome Jakob Myers-Heldt as a member of the Communications/Public Affairs team. A rising junior at Millsaps College, Jakob is a member of the school's track and field team in discus and javelin throwing. He is majoring in technical theatre and minoring in Classics, so he understands the benefit of a well-rounded education. He is president of his fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha.

Jakob is a native of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and a graduate of Bosque High School. In addition to track and field, his high school career was punctuated with stage management for many school and community productions. Importantly, we have learned he is an unflappable tech guy who is also unfazed in the face of manual labor, having spent a good portion of his growing up years on his grandfather's farm.

Right now, he's the point man for gathering information and helping coordinate MAE's Safe Water Campaign for the City of Jackson.

Around the office, cont'd.

Ms Sanchioni Butler is ARP Coordinator

Ms Sanchioni Butler currently serves as the (ARP) America Rescue Plan Coordinator for MAE following a 34 year career as a worker and organizer for the UAW.



A Bossier City, LA native, Ms Butler began her professional career with United Auto Workers in 1988 at Ford Motor Company at the Dallas Parts Distribution facility in Texas. During her time as a member of UAW Local 870, she served on various Standing Committees and played an intricate role in facilitating joint training programs to assist workers., which included, but are not limited to, United in Diversity Ford National Joint Diversity Committee Facilitator Training and UAW-Ford Employee Involvement Facilitator Training for Respect and Recognition.

Sanchioni relocated to Memphis where she was selected to attend an organizing training and discovered she had a passion for social and economic justice with an emphasis on human and worker rights. She began organizing and has participated in as well as led campaigns in AL, TN, South Carolina, North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Florida and MS for Region 8.

After becoming an International Representative in the Organizing Department with the UAW, Sanchioni relocated and resides in Raymond. She served as lead organizer for the Nissan workers in Canton who were fighting for workplace democracy, the right to organize, and equal human rights. This work has also transcended across the globe where Ms Butler has built relationships with trade unionists from South Africa, Brazil, and Japan sharing the plight of Southern workers and how to build momentum to effectively exercise rights even in hostile work environments.

After retiring from Ford Motor Co and UAW, Ms. Butler stepped in as Political Campaign Coordinator for the MS AFL-CIO to push legislation in the state for working people

An active member of community organizations, Sanchioni serves as Executive Board member for Mississippi Immigrants' Rights Alliance (MIRA) and is a lifetime member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and serves as Executive Committee member and Labor and Industry Chair for the Jackson City NAACP Branch, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Women For Progress of MS, and A. Phillip Randolph Institute (APRI).

MAE was a proud sponsor of the recent visit to Jackson by Labor Secretary Marin Walsh. Ms Sanchioni Butler was facilitator; Ms Pam Johnson was a panelist representing MAE.



Last and definitely not least

Get your Year-Round Organizer Card! Together, we are stronger.

**We are the National Education Association, and together we can win the changes we need to be our best and make a real difference in our students' lives.
Let's Connect!**

Click on one of the links below or text "CONNECT" to 48744. The texting service is free for affiliates, but charges may apply to members depending on their cellphone plan.

**<https://join.nea.org/esp/>
<https://join.nea.org/highered/>
<https://join.nea.org/pk12/>**



Executive Director Antonio Castanon-Luna urged sensible measures to stop gun violence at the rally June 11 in front of the State Capitol.