



MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

TOTEM FORUM

TOTEM ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

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2015-2016 TOTEM

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TOTEM Office 562-1183

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HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

A Note from the President...



During the first half of this school year ASD has hired, in TOTEM positions, 156 new and 29 returning employees. We welcome them and are glad they are here. The next new and returning member orientation will be January 12th at 5:30 pm at the TOTEM office. All members are welcome to join us.

The District is working on the budget for the 2016/17 school year. Administration is looking

at different scenarios in order to be able to present a balanced budget to the Municipality in March. As we well know, this is a very difficult task when there is a deficit in the funding. This year the District held "community conversations" to get feedback on the upcoming budget. As employees, parents and community members, please share any suggestions you might have.

There is good news for Title I. On December 10, 2015 President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act. This is a reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The new law keeps the best intent of the original law, targeting funding to support the disadvantaged schools and children who need it most. It significantly reduces the amount of testing. This new law is an example of the good that can be accomplished in a true bipartisan partnership. The House passed the law with a vote of 359-64 and the Senate with 85-12. What a positive way to end 2015!

Thank you to everyone who attended the TOTEM Holiday Social and for your generous donations of socks for the ASD Child in Transition Program. Donations of new socks will be accepted at the TOTEM Office through noon on Thursday, December 17.



The TOTEM Board of Directors and I want to wish you a safe and restful Holiday/Winter Break. We hope you will be able to spend time with family and friends and celebrate the season.

-Sharon Baker, TOTEM President

Who needs a TOTEM Scholarship?

Who can apply?

When and where can you apply?

TOTEM provides three (3) scholarships, each year, for TOTEM members, and dependents of TOTEM members. Maybe you or one of your dependents can use one. Applications are available on the TOTEM website (totemassoc.org) the first week in January each year. Member Scholarships will be awarded during Spring Conference in March and for dependents, by mid April. The scholarships are for use from July 1st – June 30th.

The Member \$250 Professional Development scholarships can be used for books for MLP classes and university classes, fees for inservice classes and university classes, study guides and test fees for professional certificates, tuition and tuition for other work related classes.

The Member \$500 Continuing Education scholarships is to for tuition and books at an accredited college or university.

The Member Dependent \$1000 Scholarship is for dependents who are graduation from high school and are going to and be pursuing vocational training, or a two year or four year college program or for those already enrolled and attending college.

The TOTEM member dependent must submit a completed TOTEM Scholarship Application along with these required documents: a typed applicant essay including: major area of study, specific educational and career goals, personal commitment to career choice, statement of financial need including other scholarship applications, a list of extracurricular activities or honors received, and three (3) letters of recommendation from instructors, administrators, employers, and/or counselors, plus current official transcripts. The applications are each read and rated by a group of five (5) the Scholarship Committee judges.

Perhaps a scholarship may be needed in your future or for your dependent. Submit TOTEM applications according to information on the website. Good luck!

Kathy Miller
Scholarship Chair

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A TOTEM MEMBER

In the first TOTEM newsletter of this school year, the Professional Standards Program was introduced and explained. This newsletter brings forth another perk of being a TOTEM member- the Wellness Day. TOTEM is the only bargaining unit in the Anchorage School District to have this perk. Section 401.9 of the TOTEM Bargaining Agreement states "All Association members shall be granted one (1) day of wellness leave each school year, equal to the number of hours regularly worked, in addition to accrued leave as provided in 401.2." In other words, if you are a three and a half hour kindergarten teacher assistant, you can take a Wellness day equal to three and a half hours. If you are a six-hour teacher assistant, you can take a Wellness Day equal to six hours. The same goes for seven, eight, and etc. On this day, you will not be charged leave time. You will simply be paid for a normal day and Wellness leave will be noted in your EmpCenter time card.

All that you need to do is, communicate with your Supervisor/Principal and teacher(s) as to make sure that the day you would like to use for your Wellness Day is not going to cause too much disruption, or that another co-worker is not going to be out the same day, leaving the workplace in need of too many substitutes. Then, upon mutual agreement with your supervisor, input your Wellness leave request into EmpCenter ahead of time. It has its own line within the leave request dropdown.

If you do not use your Wellness Day, you will lose it. It does not carry over to the next school year. A new one is made available on July 1st of the new fiscal year and expires on June 30th of the fiscal year, if unused. They do not accumulate.

Everyone should also be aware that the Wellness Day can't be used the scheduled workday preceding a paid holiday or the workday following a paid holiday. However, it can be used for your birthday, a day to have rest and relaxation, or a day for that special whatever you so choose! It is highly encouraged not to wait until mid-May, as it is the end of the year. With so much going on for the end of the school year, a supervisor may not approve its use.



Amey Tamagni
TOTEM Treasurer,
PSP Chair

ASSOCIATION LEAVE BANK AND SICK LEAVE BANK

With the implementation of EmpCenter, Payroll is now able to notify employees, on their time sheet, when the three (3) hour leave deductions for association and sick leave banks will happen. There was some confusion this year and to prevent future problems Payroll will add a note to the pay stubs so employees will have a message regarding the association and sick leave bank deductions. For next school year, Payroll has scheduled the deduction for association leave to be taken on the second payday in September and for sick leave, on the second payday in October. If a second deduction needs to be taken any time during the year, Payroll will let TOTEM know so employees can be given an advance "heads up". Employees will be notified if any of these plans change.

NOTE: The Sick Leave Bank has an open enrollment period of September 1-15 of each year, during which you can notify HR in writing, your decision to join or withdraw from the Bank.

401.3 Annual Leave Accrual for Initial Probationary Employees

New employees become eligible for taking annual leave upon completing 75 probationary workdays of District employment. During the 75 probationary workdays new employees shall accrue leave in accordance with Section 401.2, but may not take leave with the exception of personal illness and those days designated as Winter and Spring break days on the school calendar for school-based employees. New employees may not use wellness leave during the 75 probationary workdays.



An Invitation from Debbie Geib at NAEOP...

The National Office would like to ask you to participate in a survey to better understand and help with professional development needs in your state. Recently I visited Anchorage, Alaska to get a better feeling of the possibility of holding an Institute in that city. To make this dream of mine a reality we will need to make sure that we are providing you with the professional development you need and to assure that you will participate in this new adventure with us.

Our plans, at this moment, are to hold an Alaska Institute in the middle of September, 2016. We would have workshops begin on Friday morning and end by noon on Sunday. A total of 15 hours of workshops would be offered and attendees would be eligible to use these hours toward their PSP certification. Meals included in registration would be Friday lunch, lunch on Saturday, a dinner/reception Saturday evening, and breakfast on Sunday. These meals and all workshop materials would be in the total of the registration fee. Attendees would be responsible for their own transportation and for making their own room reservations in a block of rooms that would be held at a centrally located Anchorage hotel at a reduced group rate.

Enclosed is the link to the survey that I ask that you please participate in. Please encourage your members to fill out this form so we have the best possible information to use in making our decision on this possible institute. The survey will be open until **December 15**, midnight Central Standard Time.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AKinstitute>