

Meeting called to order at 8:30 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions - Malia Huddle, Chair

VEA Staff in attendance:

JoAnn Karsh, Director of Field Services
Beblon Parks, Office of Field Support (Friday only)
Christy Sullivan, UniServ Director
Bob Whitehead, Executive Director (Friday only)

Bob's comments:

- ~ Don't forget to vote and encourage family, friends, neighbors, etc. to get out and vote
- ~ President Obama has heard of our efforts and will be in Virginia next week
- ~ We need to protect our VRS!
- ~ Brenda Cloyd is retiring. We have hired a replacement - Beth McNamee.

A Quick Review of the Folder Contents

Discussion of Meeting Time for Tomorrow's meeting: Start time at 8:30 a.m.

Saturday Morning

President Kitty:

Debrief of 2009-2010 Statewide Membership Plan

- Trained about 700 members this summer
- Evaluation is a snapshot
- Discussion as a whole of the Strategy

Association Activist Training

- How did we select who would attend?
 - We sent invitation to existing reps; targeted those who had been involved in other training opportunities.
 - Time was an issue; late notice. We were able to contact those who traditionally are involved but harder to get those who are new.
 - Need to have the dates ahead of time; districts and regions need to set the dates earlier.
 - JoAnn - This will plan will go before the Board and if approved, UniServ Chairs should have the information and be ready to set dates by February. Additionally, we have all of the participants in a database that would aid in planning additional training.
 - We targeted the reps and encouraged them to bring someone with them. Roanoke City had this on an in-service day.
 - My concern is do we do this separately from rep training? We need good rep training. Is this training something this committee should address or should I, as a local leader, do my own rep training?
 - Super Rep Guide - Is there a way we could produce these? Many of us have never seen this.

- We are only as strong as the Rep in the building. Perhaps we need to survey our locals and find their strong Reps and find out what they are doing to see if we can replicate this.
- Maryland has *scripted responses* they use to address questions.
- We did use the Super Rep Guide. We used it to put together *kits* that were personalized for our folks. These kits contained tips and ideas.
- We have a rep contract which asked reps to do five things. We created bulletin boards and packaged these for our reps. Our goal was to show our reps we appreciated their efforts and to increase our visibility.
- We did a one and half hour session for our reps. We talked about how to build a rep team; how to do a bulletin board; etc. NEA developed the responses to tough questions. We also did a make and take for bulletin boards. We are willing to share this session with anyone.
- We also had the make and take bulletin board. We talked about the compensation of reps but ours voted it down because they felt like it was a *sales job*.
- We used a program of giving *Cool Points* that gave incentives for doing specific things that could be used to get stuff like movie tickets.
- One thing to keep in mind is the appreciation. We want folks to know we appreciate their efforts. It is a balancing act.
- One of things we need to consider is saving our Building Rep TIME. We need to give them *something* to make their lives easier.
- We are making school visits. We are planning to have a bulletin board contest. We want to use good examples to share with others so they can use this and then tweak to use in their schools.
- How does the contract work with co-reps or more than one rep in a school? Flexibility except for the key component of getting four members. As a rep, I need to know what I can discuss in regards to what may have happened to others. What can we tell and what shouldn't we tell?
 - JoAnn - Don't use names and schools. Basically you can tell most everything. The VEA News is a great resource. Don't give enough information that they can identify the individual. Promoting the many benefits - ask the members if you can share the great things they have done thanks to membership in our association.

Key Concern - membership growth is tied to having good Reps!

- Continual change/adaptation is also important. People get tired of doing the same thing again and again. Food is also a great way to get folks involved. We have a hard time getting folks to come together. We are working on taking the training to them.
- Time is a huge element. Customize the emails - quick read for those involved --- reps - and a more in-depth email that could be forwarded to the members. It would also be great to send out some form of *welcome back* that we can give to our folks when they come back each year.
- We generate a bulleted list of things that are important with detailed information at the bottom of the list.

- Tuesday Talk is generated with quick information that is short and to the point but at the end it states where to locate more information. This has evolved into a Tuesday Live campaign where the Prez travels to the schools to answer questions.
- We send our three key points on a regular basis. These are quick and easy to get out to our members.
 - JoAnn - You are sharing great ideas that you need to take back home to share with your local presidents.
- Websites - We just redesigned ours and before we need we check other locals' sites. It would be good for each local to have a website and for these to have some basic shared components (local and VEA brand, link to VEA, etc.). All don't need to be the same but similar would be good. Additionally during the training it was great that our members got to meet others from VEA.
- Websites - At all committee weekend the communications committee had talked about this. Locals may want to consider using Blogspot. It is very easy to use.
- Websites - Cannot be stagnant; should always be changing. Should be updated on a regular basis.
- Websites that are not up to date can hurt your organization. It may be worth the money to pay someone to generate/maintain the site.
- Website - This would also be a great to promote individual members.

Another good thing to consider is doing something with websites.

- JoAnn - These are great ideas but we have a very limited pot of money. What type of training do we need?
- Rep training and activist training is not mutually exclusive. In this training our reps learned by listening to each other.
- I attended several of the activist trainings and came away from one a bit frustrated because I felt it didn't give our folks stuff to take back to their building (it followed the activist training exactly). At another the training had been customized to fit the needs of the local.
- Another issue was the time constraints; the amount of time our folks put in. Would it be possible to have folks come to just part of the training depending on what they need?
- We did an overnight bringing in a variety of sessions and offered each twice so folks could pick what they wanted. We also included some political information. We chose these based on what our locals indicated they wanted.
- Look at our membership numbers. These indicate that what we have been doing has not been working. We need to look not at what we have done in the past but rather to consider what we need to be doing. Our new teachers do not know about our organization. Our SVEA programs need to be examined. We need to find a way to build these up. We need to look at three things: 1-We need to concentrate on the new teachers who are coming in; 2-Our mid-level teachers who are joining other organizations because the insurance is cheaper; 3-We are not using our retired teachers as we should. They could work with our colleges/universities to help the SVEA programs. We've got to be what we say we are. We need to convince others too.

- Another thing we need to consider is our younger generation is not of the belief of joining organizations; they are individuals who don't really join. Different mindset. We are addressing the SVEA situation. We are pairing chapters with NBCTs. We have had mixed success with this. Kitty will be attending the college educators' conference and will emphasize the importance of our organization to them. Competition is another issue we must address. We need to be prepared to deal with these.
- We are not using our retired folks well enough. We do need to have a more focused effort to keep these folks involved. We need to move beyond the baby steps; we could package things together {example - Rep training and PAC info -- Super Rep and CAPE (Children and Public Education)}. We need to think beyond the conference room and move to another environment. We can go to the ball diamond and play catch; building our team.
- Key point to consider - what does your local need? We need customize what we do.
- We are teachers. We know how to plan. We know how to differentiate (and we need to do that in our training) and we know that we need to focus on key skills and don't overwhelm our folks. We need to give them time for practice. We also need to look at who is attending and why? If it is the same folks, why are they coming? We also need to identify strengths and weaknesses and meet people where they are. Sometimes we forget that less is more. What are essential skills that every rep needs to know how to do? We need to ask our younger members what we need to do to get them involved.
 - JoAnn - We need specific directions from you to see where we need to go with VEA monies. We want you to be more involved in this.
 - Before we leave today, we need a solid outline of what we want to do.
- For some it was a repeat... world café. ☺ The training was fine. If we can customize this, it works better.
 - Can we agree to do some type of training that can easily be customized for the locals/regions?
- The people in our area had good things to say about the training. The problem we have is translating this into our folks doing something. We have issues getting folks motivated to go out and do something. This year it is really worst than in the past. Perhaps we need to take a team approach and find folks who are willing to do stuff.
- In our area it wasn't what we really expected. They wanted more rep training. Ours went straight by the book. We wanted more rep training; even our seasonal reps wanted refreshers.
- We wanted more information (reps) as to what to do; how to do. We wanted concrete things we could do.
- We enjoyed the training but it is difficult to get the new and some of the older members involved. We invited members to attend but they had conflicts. It is hard to get folks involved.
- We were the same five who always attend everything. We are still in the process of building our reps in our schools. We need strong reps so we can move forward. I've gotten a lot of good ideas that I plan to use.

- Ditto to much of what has been said. To those who have been members awhile, the training was a good training to provide them with more information about our association.
- We did our rep training the very next day after the activist training. We look at what is going on in our local to customize our training. We look at these issues in our local and use these to generate our trainings.

Review of the Notes from the Membership and Organizing Specialists

What if the morning were *building the skill of communicating about the organization*? Then have a menu of opportunities for the afternoon. Also try to give some time for the locals to meet as a group.

- We need a distinction between Rep and Activist (Rep is internal communication and Activist is external communication)
- Another issue to consider is when the training is held. More people are working in August.
 - The goal of the Activist training was to increase access for all members to the information about the association.
- Perhaps we need to change the word *activist* to *advocate*?
- If our goal is to get people interested who don't want to be reps, then we do need to have the distinction.
- We know we've got to give folks some training. We know we've got to give folks more information about association.
- We used to do themes and used these focus our trainings. And we put something in people's hands as they left.

Terry - I move that we just do that. ☺ I move that we take the approach we used last year and *tweak* it some to incorporate much of what we have discussed today.

Our hope would be that our activists; those we are training would be interested in become our reps.

- Perhaps there would be a way to have the rep training portion open in such a way that others can also attend
- Keep in mind our overall goal is to build membership. Let's keep that focus.
- Is there a way we could do Morning Activist and Afternoon Rep training?
 - Can we give JoAnn the opportunity to go back and develop what we are asking for?
 - JoAnn - we provided money to cover the cost of the training. Locals/districts can also provide funding to cover parts of the training such as overnights, meals, etc. It doesn't have to be just the one day training. . . it can be customized to what you feel you need.

The motion before us - That we take the training we did last year, we incorporate the various pieces we have discussed today (rep training, differentiation of sessions), but that this process be what we use again.

This would mean we use the plan from last year again. Tweak the sessions and fine tune them.

Block 1 - Communication

Block - This is what we do

Other little blocks - GR, 10 minute meetings, Leg. Agenda, VRS, etc. from which people can select what they want to do or we pick one on which to focus. We want to make some of the sections short enough that folks can take the information and use right away.

We build our day from the blocks.

Super Rep

I make the motion that the Office of Communication (or whomever is in charge) put together this information into a Rep Manual. Also have the information available online. (motion by Bonnie K, second by Dominic M.; passed)

- Can we post this online and let reps print their own.
- We need to have this as a campaign
- Perhaps this could be something we order as needed?
- This manual should be placed in the hands of each rep

Fall Membership Drive info
(refer to notes handout)

Recommendations to the Board:

- Membership Plan and Training
- Designing of a Rep Manual
- VRS Information be utilized as an organization and membership tools

Dominic presented his VBEA 10 minute meeting PowerPoint. Good information in a concise format. VEA will be working on and sending out a standardized PowerPoint which addresses the issue of VRS. This will be good to share with your members and not-yet-members. This will be available shortly after Nov 10.

Dates for USAC Spring Retreat

May 1 & 2 - weekend after VEA RA

Option 2 - May 7 & 8 - Mother's Day Weekend (Friday night/Saturday)

Option 1 - May 14, 15 & 16 - JoAnn not available (Friday night/Saturday/Sunday morning)

May 21 & 22 - Presidents' Training

May 29 & 30 - Memorial Day Weekend

Option 3 - June 4, 5, & 6

Typically we meet on Friday night, all day on Saturday and Sunday morning.
We will meet on May 14, 15, & 16. Location? Richmond area?

Review of USAC Guidelines

Changes To Uniserv Program Guidelines, 2009

- Removed Lap Top Reimbursement Program
- Procedure for Filling Vacancies -- Added in RED about VASO getting vacancy announcement for 5 days
- Appendix C Job Description -- Removed the words Job Description and replaced it with Core Functions - also replaced on table of contents page

VEA will do a Non-Member polling.

What are some things we would want to include in the polling? What would help you?

- Why aren't you a member?
- Have you heard of us?
- What do you know about VEA?
- What professional organizations are you a member of?
- Why are you a member of these (above)
- Are you aware of the benefits of membership?
- What can we do to get you to become a member?
- How do we ask - have you ever been asked?
- Were you a member in the past? If so, why did you leave?
- How were you asked to be a member? What was the approach?
- What turned you off to membership?
- Is professional development something that would entice you to join?
- (Possible listing of reasons to join)
- How long do you plan to teach?
- How do you feel about unions? Or labor in general? Your attitude toward anti-labor?
- Do you feel you should belong to a professional organization?
- What is a professional organization? What should it look like?
- Would you support the right of teachers and other public employees to collective bargaining?
- Is teaching a job? --- distinction between job and a *calling*
- Which conditions under which you work do you find to be acceptable and which one needs improvement?
- Address politics - do you understand how political decisions affect public education
- Where do you get your educational and/or professional literature from?
- What is your interpretation of social justice and/or civil rights?
- Do you know anything the VEA has done for educators? (put out positive information to reveal the great stuff we do)
- Multiple Choice - When you have a problem who do you go to?
- Multiple Choice - What other profession do you see your job most like? What other professions did you consider?
-

This polling will be done via the phone. We are also planning to do focus group polling.

Brand - when you put out information from your local with your brand on it; also include VEA & NEA on it. ☺

Are you having trouble with *win.dat*? If so, email Kitty and let her know. ☺

Spotsylvania CEA is having a few issues with their Superintendent. To show your support send a text to SCEA President Renee Beverly - 540-273-3816; #6 Pond Circle, Fredericksburg, VA 22407-1350; email rbeverly_2000@yahoo.com

Don't forget to submit your voucher (today or soon). ☺