

Release Time for Local Presidents

This pamphlet contains guidelines and supporting materials to assist you in your efforts to obtain appropriate release time for your association representative(s).

Background

The role of local leaders has expanded to accommodate the increased number of services required by and provided to members. Additionally, the complexity of issues related to the collective bargaining process, professional issues, legal issues, and individual services require a commitment of time beyond that available to most association leaders.

There are only a few local associations that have full-time or part-time officers. Beyond the president, others who may be logical choices for release time include the grievance chair, membership chair, or other members whose duties require time beyond that currently available.

Workplan

The association should first establish an ad-hoc committee to conduct a needs assessment to determine what position(s) require release time and the amount of time needed.

Consider how adding a release time position may impact your local and others. What will you need to accomplish to establish and sustain a release time position. These considerations, constituencies and tasks include:

- Local association executive board and officers
 - Start with a timeline on what you must accomplish
 - Do a cost analysis and determine the impact on budget and local dues
 - Consider if you will need to amend your bylaws and how that must be accomplished
 - Gather information from locals with release time positions
 - List of locals
 - Details on paid release positions
 - Interview release time presidents and others
 - Build your case to get support from your membership and the school committee and superintendent (you will need to amend your contract).
- Local association membership
 - Prepare informational/educational materials to build support
 - Schedule required meetings and votes to amend bylaws and increase dues if necessary
 - Work with negotiations team to develop your contract proposal.
- Superintendent/Mayor (as ex officio member of the school committee)
 - Discuss how release time will facilitate working on district/school goals and issues
 - Connect superintendent with other superintendents who have had positive experiences
- School Committee
 - Same as above
 - With proposal, offer examples from other districts
- Selected individuals who can impact public officials
 - Identify other potential community supporters
 - Task someone with speaking with them

10 Reasons Why Release Time = Better Run Locals

The past few years has seen many changes in the educational process and in the role local teacher associations play in assisting policymakers and administrators in school matters. An increasing number of communities are providing release time for association leaders so that they may develop better run locals through better service to members and the school community at large. Where release time is provided, the benefits to the school system are apparent.

The following are advantages to local association members and the school district:

- **Accessibility to members:** Association representatives can visit school buildings during the day to meet with members.
- **Availability of association representatives for meetings** with school officials and public officials, including state legislators in Boston.
- **Ability to serve as community liaison** with community groups, business groups, service groups, social service agencies and others who can positively contribute to education.
- **Improved public relations:** Association representatives help promote the school system as a positive, visible part of the community.
- **Administrative efficiency:** Internal management of the local association is improved in areas of communications, membership services, and problem resolution.
- **Communication between association members and administration staff** is enhanced through the efforts of a release-time representative.
- **Ability to deal with crisis situations:** Working with the administration to resolve work-related problems impacting members and administration.
- **Facilitates collective bargaining** through better coordination of internal and external bargaining activities.
- **Improved work performance of release time representative** because the individual carries a reasonable workload, thus reducing burn-out.
- **Stability of local association:** Ability to develop long range planning including new programs and projects with appropriate follow up activities.

MTA Local President Release Time Grant Program Application

Purpose

The Massachusetts Teachers Association is relaunching its Local President Release-Time Grant Program (LPRGP), which is designed specifically to establish first-time release presidents to help develop full capacity locals. The program was created to assist PK-12 locals and higher education chapters that have limited or no release time. The presence of a local/chapter president with some release time helps build and develop full capacity locals.

Program Goal

Support locals/chapters in obtaining release time for local/chapter presidents to build internal capacity.

Program Objective

To provide a limited level of financial assistance to establish full or half-time release for local/chapter presidents. Locals may also request support for alternative forms of union time, including, but not limited to, reduced teaching loads or schedules and release time in terms of days or hours. Alternative plans must identify the ratio of reduced work time that the plan reflects.

The MTA contributes to the cost incurred by the local/chapter for the release-time president in the following manner:

		FT	HT
Year One:	MTA funds up to	\$40,000	\$20,000
Year Two:	MTA funds up to	\$30,000	\$15,000
Year Three:	MTA funds up to	\$10,000	\$ 5,000
Year Four:	Local/chapter assumes full funding of program		

The program is administered by the MTA Executive Committee.

Application Process

Roles and Responsibilities

* In December of each year, the MTA president sends a cover letter and the application form to all local/chapter presidents. The letter will indicate that the deadline for receiving applications for funding is March 15. (Application form is attached.)

* Once all the applications are received, the MTA Executive Committee will meet to decide who will receive the grants. The MTA Executive Committee will review grants based on how they meet the grant program goals of implementing a Local Organizing & Member Engagement Program and ensuring the financial viability of the program in the local.

* Decisions will be made by April 15 and a letter will be sent from the MTA president and vice president informing the applicants of the determination on their application.

* The grant money will be sent to the locals/chapters in two payments, in October and April. The Director of Field and Organizing will process requests for payment from Finance and Accounting.

* In February of each year of payment, the Director of the Division of Field and Organizing will send the local/chapter president an evaluation form that must be completed and returned before the second payment is made. (Evaluation form is attached.)

* Local/chapter must develop and implement a Local Organizing and Member Engagement Plan and submit their plan for each year of the grant as part of the grant. If the local has already initiated and partially completed a plan, this should be noted on the application and the local must submit the original and all annual plans, noting progress on plan goals. Annual plans must include a commitment to participating in MTA statewide initiatives. By June 15 of the first year of the grant, the local/chapter shall submit a record of the minutes of a local meeting showing a vote indicating that the local will financially support the program past year one, and that the local is making a commitment to make this a permanent part of its association.

* At the end of each year and at the end of the sixth year (three years after the end of the program), participating locals/chapters will be sent a questionnaire. This questionnaire will be used to determine the long-term effects of participation in the program. (Attached is the Sixth-Year Questionnaire.)

Task Completion

The Director of Field and Organizing is responsible for ensuring that the application process is followed and that the successful applicants receive reimbursement and complete the requirements of the grant.

Information for Applicants

Selection Guidelines

- ❖ Up to \$200,000 in grants may be awarded each year.
- ❖ It is intended that grants be awarded equitably among the eight MTA regions.
- ❖ If there is an insufficient number of qualified grant applications in a region, grants shall be allocated to locals/chapters in other MTA regions.

Eligibility Rules

Locals/chapters that at present have no release time or a limited release time for presidents are encouraged to apply if their current budgets will allow them to sustain their share of the cost of the program without impairing existing programs. The grant money shall not be used to subsidize a current release-time arrangement, but may be used to increase any current paid release time.

Program Duration

- ❖ The duration of the program is a three-year period, with annual review by the MTA Executive Committee.
- ❖ Failure to complete and participate in annual evaluations, to provide any required information or to satisfy any other conditions will result in the withdrawal of program funding.

Program Funding

The participating local/chapter and the Massachusetts Teachers Association will fund the Local President Release-Time Program.

The MTA shall contribute the cost incurred by the local or chapter for the release-time presidents in the following manner:

		FT	HT
Year One:	MTA funds up to	\$40,000	\$20,000
Year Two:	MTA funds up to	\$30,000	\$15,000
Year Three:	MTA funds up to	\$10,000	\$ 5,000
Year Four:	Local/chapter assumes full funding of program		

Payment timeline: The MTA will send payments to locals/chapters in two installments, in October and April. Locals are not eligible for MTA Release Time Funds if the local has already, or during the grant period, receives similar funding from NEA. Locals are only eligible to receive this grant one time. Locals may petition the Executive Committee for an exemption to the two restrictions listed above.

Participation Requirements

- ✓ Locals/chapters must have a signed agreement between the local/chapter and the employer agreeing to the release time.
- ✓ Upon request, the MTA Division of Legal Services will provide advice to locals/chapters regarding the pension impact of release-time agreements.

- ✓ The officers and Executive Committee of the local/chapter must agree to participate in the Local Organizing and Member Engagement Program and shall provide a copy of the initial plan and subsequent annual plans.
- ✓ By June 15 of the first year of the grant, the local/chapter shall submit a record of the minutes of a local meeting showing a vote indicating that the local will financially support the program past year one, and that the local is making a commitment to make this a permanent part of its association.

Application Instructions

Eligible locals/chapters shall complete the enclosed application and submit it to the Director of Field and Organizing Division and to the MTA president for consideration by the MTA Executive Committee not later than April 15.

Program Evaluations

The progress of participating locals/chapters in the Local Organizing and Member Engagement Program will be evaluated annually. Failure to submit evaluations and participate in the process will result in the withdrawal of funding from the program.

Sixth-Year Evaluation

At the end of the sixth year, or three years after the end of their program, participating locals/chapters will be asked to participate in an evaluation process.

To apply for Local President Release Time funds, please download and fill out the following forms. Save the document and rename with the name of the local association first, then email it to the next person whose signature is needed.

For example, a request filed by the Belmont Education Association would be renamed BelmontLocalPresidentRelease.pdf.

MTA Local President Release-Time Grant Program Application

All information must be typed

Local/Chapter _____

Local/Chapter President _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone Number _____ E-mail Address _____

Membership (Please provide membership figures)

	Potential*		Actual		
	Last Year	Current Year	Last Year	Current Year	
K-12					
ESP**					
Higher Ed.					
Admin.					
Total					

**Education Support Professionals

* "Potential" means the total number of district/college employees eligible for membership.

Current Local Dues Structure (Please provide dues figures)

K-12	Last Year	Current Year
Local	\$	\$
State	\$	\$
National (NEA)	\$	\$
County	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

Education Support Professionals K-12	Last Year	Current Year
Local	\$	\$
State	\$	\$
National (NEA)	\$	\$
County	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

Higher Education	Last Year	Current Year
Local/chapter	\$	\$
State	\$	\$
National (NEA)	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

K-12 Administrative	Last Year	Current Year
Local	\$	\$
State	\$	\$
National (NEA)	\$	\$
County	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$

Local/Chapter Three-Year Budget for Release-Time President. Please attach minutes of the local/chapter meeting adopting a three-year plan for funding the local/chapter cost portion of the release-time program and committing to participate in the MTA Full Capacity Local Assessment and Development process.

Year One Budget

1. Total Cost (Please identify the total cost for release time) \$ _____
2. MTA Cost \$ _____
3. Local/Chapter Cost \$ _____

Year Two Budget

1. Total Cost (Please identify the total cost for release time) \$ _____
2. MTA Cost \$ _____
3. Local/Chapter Cost \$ _____

Year Three Budget

1. Total Cost (Please identify the total cost for release time) \$ _____
2. MTA Cost \$ _____
3. Local/Chapter Cost \$ _____

I. Explain reasons for interest in the grant program and indicate any current release time.

II. Describe the local's/chapter's three-year plan to fund local/chapter costs for release.

III. Describe the local's/chapter's plan for sustaining the release-time program after the third year.

IV. Attach plan for participation in FCL for year one or initial plan if FCL Planning and Training program was previously completed. The FCL plan should identify at least three goals as part of the local's/chapter's FCL work for that year.

V. Negotiated local/ chapter agreement. Please attach agreement negotiated with applicable employer providing for implementation of release-time program.

VI. Evaluation process.

Each participating local/chapter must submit an annual evaluation form to the MTA Executive Committee no later than June.

Agreement and Required Signatures

We have read and comply with the requirements of this application form.

Local/Chapter President's Printed Name _____ Date _____

Local/Chapter President's Signature _____ Date _____

Local/chapter Treasurer's Printed Name _____ Date _____

Local/Chapter Treasurer's Signature _____ Date _____

(Certifying budget/financial information)

Field Rep/Organizer Printed Name _____ Date _____

Field Rep/Organizer Signature _____ Date _____

(Field rep signature indicates that grant has been reviewed by regional manager)

MTA Local President Release-Time Grant Program

Annual Evaluation Form

All information must be typed

Please attach your Local Member Engagement and Organizing Plan annual evaluation form. Please describe any additional activities that have occurred in the last year that are attributable to the president's release time.

President's Signature _____ Date _____

MTA Local President Release-Time Grant Program

Sixth-Year Questionnaire

All information must be typed

This questionnaire is designed to determine the long-term effects of local/chapter participation in the MTA Local President Release-Time Grant Program.

1. Does your local/chapter continue to fund a release-time president? Yes___ No___
2. Have there been long-term benefits from participating in the program? Yes___ No___

3. If you answered yes to #2, please describe the benefits to the local/chapter.

President's Signature _____ Date _____

Full-Time or Part-Time Release

Springfield

Association Leave

A member of the bargaining unit who is elected a full-time paid officer of the Springfield Education Association or the Massachusetts Teachers Association or the National Education Association or who is employed to assist the Association in discharging its duties shall, upon proper application, be granted an unpaid leave of absence for two (2) school years. At the option of the Association the leave of absence shall be a paid leave of absence provided the Association pays the full cost of salary and benefits including health and life insurance premiums to the School Committee. Upon return from leave of absence, the member of the bargaining unit will be considered as if he/she were actively employed during the leave and will be placed on the salary schedule at the level he/she would have achieved if he/she had not been on leave of absence.

Brookline

Paid Leave for BEU President

- a. A full time paid leave of absence shall be granted annually to the BEU President in each year of this Agreement for the purpose of conducting BEU business. The BEU agrees to reimburse the BSC for the entire cost of wages and all fringe benefits attributable to each paid leave. The reimbursement of wages will be calculated by adding the President's salary for that year to the average salary of persons newly employed on the same salary schedule as the President on or before September 1 of that year, and by dividing such total by two. Such reimbursement shall in no event be higher than the BEU

President's salary. In any year when there are no new hires, the parties will use the average salary calculated from the prior year, adjusted by the percentage change on the salary schedule for the year of no new hires.

- b. The BEU must notify the Superintendent by March 1 of the intention of the BEU President not to return to active employment in his or her bargaining unit the following school year.
- c. The classroom re-entry procedures

applicable to the BEU President in office on March 1, 2000 are set forth in a side letter dated March 22, 2000. Classroom re-entry procedures applicable to a subsequent Union President who has been absent from a classroom for more than four consecutive years while on Union President leave will be subject to negotiations between the parties in a successor agreement.

Belmont

The Belmont Education Association President who has been assigned to the High School or Middle School will be relieved of two teaching classes or, at the option of the President, a

mutually agreed upon equivalent time. If the President is assigned to the elementary school, he/she shall be given a clerk aide for 15 hours per week and shall be released from two hours of instructional time per day or an equivalent time per agreement of the parties. At the Middle School, if it is not possible to locate a teacher to fill the 2/5 position, the parties will mutually agree on an alternative such as the clerk aide described for the elementary level. To fund the expenses caused by this paragraph, the Belmont Education Association will pay the cost of the replacement employee for the President to the extent he/she is replacing the President's workload but, in any event, not more than forty (40) percent of the President's salary.

Bedford

The President of the Association shall be relieved of two (2) periods of teaching assignment. The Association will reimburse the School District \$5000 per year as compensation for the reduced teaching load. If the President is an elementary teacher, the load reduction will be negotiated with the Superintendent.

Danvers

The Danvers Teachers Association President will be a 20% release time position. The DTA will contribute 1/2 of the cost of 1/5 of the Presidents' base salary.

Malden

The position of the Association President shall be a full-time release position. The Association will reimburse the Malden Public Schools the cost of the replacement up to \$40,000 in each of the three years of this Agreement.

Attleboro

The District will provide the President of the Attleboro Education Association with release time, which is equivalent to one-third (1/3) of the total available instructional periods per week (e.g., under the present high school schedule, release time would be for five blocks out of a total of fifteen) for the purpose of attending to the business of the Association, and the District will make reasonable efforts to schedule the planning period of the Vice President/Grievance Chairpersons of the Association for the last block of the school day.

Winchester

The COMMITTEE will pay for the WEA president to be released for 50% of any and all of his/her respective teaching and all associated duties.

Arlington

The teacher who is elected president of the Association shall be released from a portion of classroom responsibilities, a minimum of four-tenths assignment each day, to fulfill responsibilities to the Association and to the district.

Relieved of Duties

Waltham

8.5 The Association President and Vice President, or two co-Presidents, shall be relieved of any non-teaching duties.

8.6 The administration will endeavor to schedule the President and Vice President (or two Co-Presidents) in such a way as to facilitate joint meetings with the administration when necessary.

Stoneham

The Association president, while serving in that office, shall be relieved of as many duties as possible except teaching. This relief from non-teaching assignments may include homeroom, study classes, extra assignments and non-teacher classroom duties. In addition, the Association President will be granted up to five (5) approved days annually to conduct STA business with substitute coverage, if needed. Additional days may be granted to the Association President, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Bellingham

The President of the Bellingham Teachers' Association shall not be assigned any scheduled duties for purposes of this provision, scheduled duties include student rest room supervision, bus duty and homeroom at the high school and morning duty, recess duty and cafeteria supervision in the elementary schools. This provision does not apply to regularly assigned study halls.

Monomoy

The President of the Monomoy Regional Education Association will not be assigned any supervisory duties.

Higher Ed

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGE FACULTY (MSCF)

Section 1. Administration of Contract. The Employer agrees that the MSCF grievance representative on each campus shall be provided the opportunity to investigate and process grievances, and the MSCF president on each campus shall be provided the opportunity to confer with the college president or designee concerning the provisions and application of this Contract.

Meetings with the administration or arbitration or arbitration hearings regarding the processing of grievances shall be during the normal work day whenever practicable, and the grievant, the local MSCF grievance representative and MSCF local president shall not lose wages due to their participation.

Upon request of the MSCF president, the college president shall afford release time not to exceed twelve (12) credits per year to be shared by one (1) or more local MSCF officers on each campus for the purposes of conducting MSCF duties.

Section 5. Release Time for the MSCF President. The president of the MSCF shall be granted up to full release time from college-assigned duties to conduct the business of the MSCF.

Subd. 1. Additional Release Time. The MSCF, at its request, may also provide for additional release time for the president for the forty percent (40%) overload. The MSCF shall reimburse the Employer for the actual cost of the overload payment based on the president's actual salary schedule placement for the academic year.

Section 6. Release Time for Other MSCF State Officers. The MSCF may buy release time for up to five (5) other state officers. The amount of release time shall be specified by the MSCF before the beginning of each academic year or at other times by mutual agreement. The release time for an individual officer may be in credits or in days, as agreed to by the State MSCF President and the Chancellor or designee. For purposes of reimbursement the days shall be converted to a reasonable credit equivalency. Such officers shall remain on the state payroll at their regular salary and lose no benefits. Effort will be made to schedule such officers' college duties to accommodate their MSCF responsibilities.

Section 7. Release Time for Other MSCF Representatives.

Subd. 1. MSCF Representatives. The parties agree that the following faculty members shall be granted reasonable amounts of paid release time to conduct MSCF business.

- A. Negotiations Team. As needed to conduct contract negotiations.
- B. Board of Directors Members. Up to five (5) days per academic year.
- C. Executive Committee. Up to nine (9) days per academic year.

Subd. 2. Conditions. Paid release time will occur under the following conditions:

- A. Faculty assignments are rescheduled to another day and/or evening; or
- B. Alternate assignments/activities, which can be accomplished in the absence of the instructor are assigned to the class; or

Section 9. Reimbursement Rate. The MSCF shall reimburse the colleges at the rate of \$1,000.00 per credit for actual release time utilized.