

**S0447 Missouri Federation Of Teachers (1957-)
Records, 1957-1985
26 Folders, 3 Slides, 1 Negative**

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Diane Killion donated the records of the Missouri Federation of Teachers to the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on October 6, 1983.

On September 3, 1957, the American Federation of Teachers (AFL-CIO) granted charters to the Teachers Federation of St. Louis and the St. Louis County Local 420, and the Teachers' Federation of Kansas City and North Kansas City and Independence, Missouri. These unions constituted the Missouri State Federation of Teachers, the statewide branch of the American Federation of Teachers.

The Missouri Federation of Teachers represented teachers' unions in disputes with the Lindbergh, North St. Francois County, and the St. Clair County school boards in the 1970s. The disputes involved additional pay for after-school work, the right to post notices of union meetings on bulletin boards, to have union dues deducted from teachers' paychecks, and to present petitions for redress and grievances to school boards.

In 1981, MFT president, Kathryn Cormack, named the organizing of Missouri's approximately 50,000 teachers as the Federation's top priority and began efforts to improve the MFT's status with the American Federation of Teachers. The Missouri Federation of Teachers also lobbied for collective bargaining legislation for all Missouri public employees in 1981 and to reduce the number of years needed for teacher tenure from five to three.

The Missouri Federation of Teachers provided legal representation for Theresa Banks, a Social Studies teacher at Hanley Junior High School accused by the University City School Board of providing students with answers to the Basic Essential Skills Test in 1981. Despite Banks' assertion that she had no access to the test or the answers, Superintendent Irene M. Lober recommended her dismissal and a reprimand for several other teachers involved. At a public hearing on July 30, 1981, the University City School Administration charged Banks with immoral conduct. The school board approved her firing, and the St. Louis County Circuit Court upheld the decision.

The Missouri Federation of Teachers moved to have the board dismiss the request for termination on grounds that the district administration failed to prove Banks cheated or engaged in conduct adversely affecting her teaching performance. MFT asked the board to reinstate Banks and expunge from her record all materials related to the charges. The board refused.

In July 1983 the implementation of the voluntary desegregation plan in St. Louis schools created approximately 800 teaching jobs during its first year. MFT issued a statement requesting the Board to fill the positions with teachers laid off during a 1982 financial crisis before hiring new teachers. The Federation also encouraged laid-off black St. Louis teachers

to apply for positions in county districts, and created guidelines governing the staff exchange program between the city and the voluntary participating county districts of Clayton, Kirkwood, Ritenour, Pattonville, and University City.

Also in 1983, MFT president, Kathryn Cormack, accepted an appointment to the Children's Trust Fund Board of Directors. The Children's Trust Fund, established by Governor Bond and the Missouri Legislature, accepted contributions to help prevent child abuse and neglect.

Student enrollment declined in the early 1980s and many school districts initiated a point system RIF-RECALL policy to reduce the number of teachers. The policy awarded points to teachers based on the number of subjects for which they had earned certification and "rified" teachers with fewer points. The Missouri Federation of Teachers supported a RIF policy based on seniority. It encouraged teachers to vote against the point system policy, which MFT regarded as subjective and disproportionate in its reduction of minority teachers.

In 1984, Diane Killion, president of the University City Federation of Teachers, a local branch of the MFT, declined to participate on a Merit Recognition Screening Committee until the committee determined specific guidelines for awarding merit pay to teachers.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Missouri Federation of Teachers Records, 1962-1974, are divided into six series: 1) Administrative, 1978-1984; 2) Theresa Banks' Dismissal, 1970-1981; 3) Desegregation, 1982-1983; 4) Legal Correspondence, Petitions, and Memoranda, 1974-1980; 5) Newsletters, 1981-1985; 6) Photographs and Slides, 1962-1984.

The collection primarily documents the Missouri Federation of Teachers' activities from 1974-1984. It contains little manuscript material from the late 1950s and 1960s. However, the photograph series document teacher strikes in St. Louis and East St. Louis from 1982 to 1984.

The administrative series contains the Federation's 1957 charter, correspondence on legal fees and Children's Trust Fund, and Merit and RIF-RECALL memoranda from 1974-1984.

Series 2 documents Theresa Banks' dismissal in August 1981. It contains Banks' teacher evaluation reports from 1970-1981, correspondence and a transcript on the hearing, written testimony, and newsclippings. The series also documents the St. Louis County Circuit Court's decision upholding Banks' firing.

Series 3 contains correspondence on desegregation, the St. Louis Teachers Union Local 420's position on the desegregation plan, and its guidelines concerning the voluntary exchange of teachers between the city and county. The series also includes issues of two newspapers: The Insider, a monthly publication for MFT local presidents, treasurers and elected MFT delegates, 1982-1985; and The Missouri Unionist, the official newspaper of the MFT published monthly, 1980-1981.

The photograph and slides series document the East St. Louis and the St. Louis Teachers' strikes from 1962-1984. These photographs document teachers and union members picketing, scabs teaching in classrooms, students and police. Other photographs include: the St. Louis Decentralization Conference in 1969, held as part of a nationwide movement to reorganize

the centralized school district into smaller community districts, the Ritenour Federation of Teachers 1981 bargaining team, and Missouri Locals at a workshop in fall 1977.

SERIES DESCRIPTION

SERIES 1 - ADMINISTRATION, 1978-1984, FOLDERS 1-3

Arranged alphabetically. Includes the MFT 1957 Charter, correspondence on legal fees and the Children's Trust Fund, Merit and RIF-RECALL memoranda.

SERIES 2 - THERESA BANKS DISMISSAL, 1970-1981, FOLDERS 4-8

Arranged chronologically. Contains teacher evaluation reports, correspondence, written testimony, newsclippings, transcript of hearing, copies of test answers, and legal petitions.

SERIES 3 - DESEGREGATION, 1982-1983, FOLDERS 9-11

Arranged alphabetically. Contains correspondence, desegregation plans, and teaching staff exchange policies.

SERIES 4 - LEGAL CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS, AND MEMORANDA, 1974-1980, FOLDERS 12-14

Arranged alphabetically by school district. Contains correspondence, petitions, and memorandums on disputes with local school boards.

SERIES 5 - NEWSLETTERS, 1981-1985, FOLDERS 15-16

Arranged alphabetically. Includes issues of The Insider, September 1982-May 1985 and issues of the Missouri Unionist, November 1980-March 1981.

SERIES 6 - PHOTOGRAPHS AND SLIDES, 1962-1984, FOLDERS 17-26

447.1-447.142

Includes photographs of the East St. Louis and the St. Louis Teachers' strikes from 1962-1984, the 1969 St. Louis Decentralization Conference, the Ritenour Federation of Teachers 1981 bargaining team, and the Missouri Local's workshop in fall 1977.

FOLDER LIST

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2. Correspondence, 1978-1984
3. University City: Merit and RIF-RECALL Policies and Teacher of the Year Award, 1983-1984
4. Banks, R. Theresa: Teacher Evaluation Reports, 1970-1981
5. Banks, R. Theresa: Student-Teacher Conflict, 1979-1980
6. Banks, R. Theresa: Dismissal, Mar.-Jun. 1981
7. Banks, R. Theresa: July 1981
8. Banks, R. Theresa: Aug.-Sept. 1981
9. Correspondence, Desegregation, 1983
10. St. Louis Teachers' Union petition on desegregation plan, c. 1982-1983
11. Voluntary Metro Teaching Staff Exchange, 1982
12. Lindbergh Teachers vs. Lindbergh School District, 1974

13. North County Teachers' Union vs. North St. Francois County School District, 1977-1980
14. St. Clair Federation of Teachers vs. St. Clair, R-13 School District, 1979
15. Newsletters, The Insider, Sept. 1982-May 1985
16. Newsletters, Missouri Unionists, Nov. 1980, Jan.-Mar. 1981
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