

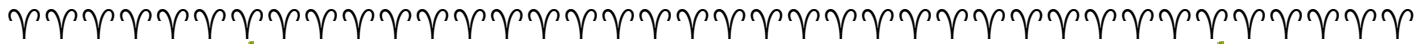
15-B INSIDER

<http://www.me15b.org>

Marty Lankford
UniServ Director

mlankford@mea.org
mrexford@mea.org

Mickey Rexford
Temp. UniServ Field Assistant

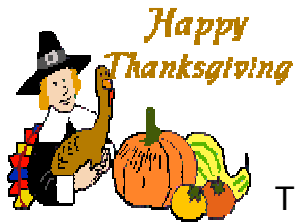
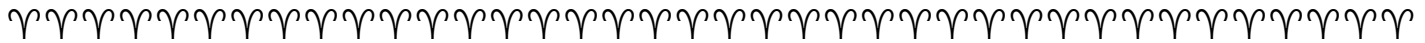


November



MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2007



Elementary Test Not an Option for Secondary Special Education Teachers to Meet “Highly Qualified” Requirement

The Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) elementary test is not an option for secondary special education teachers to fulfill the “highly qualified” requirement.

MEA learned in October, 2007, that federal auditors told the Michigan Department of Education that it would not be allowed. How many teachers will be impacted is not known at this time.

“We will be working with the Department of Education for more definitive answers and solutions,” said Linda Keway, of the MEA Professional Development and Human Resources Department, “and we will be updating our members as soon as we receive more information.”

Frank Ciloski of the Department of Education emphasized that teachers will have until June 30, 2009, to meet the “highly qualified” requirement through other options.

“We will be working with the department regarding these options,” Keway said. “Members should be aware that districts may pressure teachers to meet the requirement sooner, but you do have until June 2009 to fulfill requirements.”

Special Education teachers that work in co-teaching assignments (inclusion classroom) with a general education teacher are not required to demonstrate competence as a highly qualified teacher. Similarly, where the special education teacher is facilitating instruction provided by a general education teacher it is not necessary for the special education teacher to demonstrate competence as a highly qualified teacher.

Some districts may ask secondary special education teachers to sign a document – the Official Michigan Highly Qualified Secondary Special Education Teacher Report – on how they met the highly qualified option. It is advised that teachers not sign the document if they used the MTTC elementary test to demonstrate their highly qualified teacher status until all issues are resolved with the Department of Education.

SAVE THE DATE: February 21, 2008

The upcoming **Pre-Retirement Workshop** will be held on Thursday, February 21, 2008, at 6:00 PM. The workshop will be held at the Wexford-Missaukee Area Career Technical Center in the Lake Superior Room. During the workshop a panel including retired EA and ESP members will discuss topics such as:

Can I make it financially?

How well does the retirement insurance work? Etc.....

SAVE THE DATE: February 21, 2008 (Continued)

A short Power Point presentation explaining the retirement program and how to prepare for what needs to be done, as well as retirement packets will also be distributed to members.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



November 19	CC/Grievance/Advocacy Training –McGuire’s	5:30 PM
November 22-23	MEA Office Closed – Thanksgiving Holiday	
November 29-Dec.1	MEA – IDP Conference	Dearborn, MI
December 17	Coordinating Council	7:07 PM

BARGAINING UPDATE

Ratified Contract 07-08
Manton EA
Unsettled Contract 07-08
Mesick EA

MPSERS PA 300 Questions & Answers:

The Michigan State legislature recently reformed the Michigan Public Schools Employees Retirement System (MPSERS) slashing retirement benefits for new school employees starting next summer. Following are some of the questions and answers as they pertain to Public Act 300:

Q. I am a retired school employee; will my insurance benefits be changed by this law?

A. The legislation only impacts school employees hired after June 30, 2008.

Q. I am currently employed in a school; are my retirement benefits impacted?

A. No. Your benefits are not affected by this legislation.

Q. What is a "graded premium" system?

A. Under a "graded premium" system, you earn your entitlement to insurance benefits in retirement as you work through your career. In this case, you start with 30 percent entitlement when you vest in the system after 10 years, and then earn 4 percent per year for each subsequent year you work. That maximum insurance premium subsidy you are entitled to earn is 90 percent of the total insurance cost. The legislation will implement this system for new hires after June 30, 2008.

Q. As a school employee, am I going to have to pay more for my Member Investment Plan (MIP) contribution?

A. This part of the legislation only impacts employees hired after July 1, 2008. Those employees will have to pay approximately 2 percent more – or about 6 percent of their salary – into the retirement system.

Q. Will new employees get more or different benefits for the additional contribution?

A. No. The MIP benefits did not change.

Q. How does this legislation affect service credit purchases?

A. Service credit purchases for new employees will be affected in two ways. First, they can't purchase service credit for the first two years of employment. Second, they will not be able to use any purchased service credit to qualify for health insurance in retirement.



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