



# 15-B INSIDER



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**MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

**2008**

**Communicating With Your School Board Members**

Many school districts have a Board Policy that covers Board–Staff Communications and from time to time we hear of situations where MEA members feel they have no right to initiate contact with School Board members over issues within their school districts. Please allow me to address this concern.

While it is common knowledge that a collective bargaining agreement may not supersede written law, it is true as well for school board policies. Any Board-Staff Communications Policy may not usurp the law, specifically the Constitution of the United States that guarantees citizens certain rights of free speech and association.

While the courts have carefully defined freedom of speech rights in an employer-employee relationship, they have not removed those rights altogether. Specifically, if an employee wishes to communicate with individual board members over a **“matter of public concern”**, then they certainly have the right to such communication, absent the use of a third party. To deny them that right is a violation of their rights as a citizen of the United States guaranteed them by the Constitution.

So please be assured that when you, as an employee of your school district, speaks to a school board member as a citizen concerning issues **of public concern**, you are acting within your right.

**We will be having a continuation of the training that was held last year for School Board Election Training on October 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at The Cadillac Sands. This year the training will focus on evaluating board members and future candidates, and building positive relationships with our local school boards. Please RSVP to Tabby Grames by October 24<sup>th</sup>.**

**The only way to make sure your voice is heard in this year's elections  
is to get out and vote.**



## **THANK YOU TO NEW MEMBERS**

Thank you to the new members that attended the New Member Workshop on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. It was nice to meet you and have a chance to talk with you. If you were unable to attend, we missed you!! We are glad to have you as a member of the MEA family. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call our office.

## **MEA MEMBERSHIP CARDS**

New MEA Membership cards will begin hitting mailboxes soon!! We have returned to the credit card-style stock that members preferred. New members will receive new cards over the next 4-6 weeks depending on when they were entered into the system and continuing members will be issued new cards next fall. When you receive your card you need to visit [www.mea.org](http://www.mea.org) or call 877-428-4696 to activate them. Once they are activated, members can begin using the Members Only site, which features an easy-to-use interface for finding discounts and and a new MEA News tab that currently features content about Election 2008.

If a member's name needs to be changed on their card or they lose it and need a replacement, they can call 800-292-1934 Ext 3308.

## **UNSETTLED CONTRACTS 08-09**

Cadillac EA  
Evert ESP (re-opener for salary & insurance)  
Evert Transportation  
Manton ESP (salary only)  
Manton EA (salary only)  
Mesick ESP



**Don't forget to change your clocks on November 2<sup>nd</sup>!!**



### **\* MARK YOUR CALENDAR\***

Oct 24	Advocacy Academy (BFCL)	Traverse City
Oct 29	School Board Election Training	Cadillac Sands
Nov 4	Election Day	
Nov 6	President's Council Meeting	MEA office
Nov 17	CC Meeting/Grievance/Advocacy Workshop	TBD
Nov 27 & 28	Thanksgiving Holiday-MEA Office Closed	
Dec 4-6	IPD Conference	Dearborn, MI

