



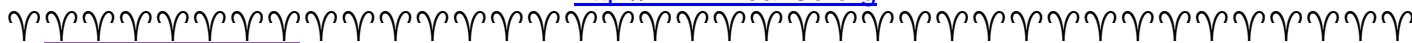
**Marty Lankford**  
**UniServ Director**  
[mlankford@mea.org](mailto:mlankford@mea.org)

# 15-B INSIDER



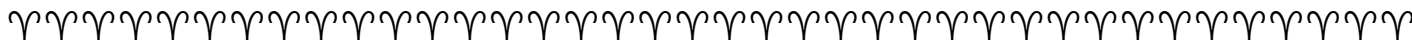
**Tabby Grames**  
**UniServ Field Assistant**  
[tgrames@mea.org](mailto:tgrames@mea.org)

**1-800-300-1162**  
<http://www.mea15b.org>



## **MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

**2009**



### **Retirement Proposal Would Plug \$410 million Hole in School Budget**

Lansing, MI-January 28, 2009-The Michigan Education Association and a bipartisan group of lawmakers unveiled a plan to keep devastating school cuts from impacting Michigan classrooms. The proposal for the School Employee Retirement Stimulus encourages public school employees who are eligible to retire to do so in the near future. The savings come when school districts are able to replace retiring teachers and staff with newer employees starting at a lower salary. The program would also open badly needed jobs for the next generation of dedicated school employees and keep young families here in Michigan.

If just 10 percent of employees already eligible for retirement take advantage, this stimulus would save more than \$410 million next year, helping balance the projected shortfall in the School Aid Fund. Over the next decade, the plan would save schools more than \$1.7 billion. "These are tough financial times and everyone in Michigan is making sacrifices," said MEA President Iris K. Salters. "The Michigan Education Association is proud to be part of a solution that saves schools money while investing in the education that will prepare students for the jobs Michigan needs."

MEA's support for this retirement stimulus hinges on keeping the savings in public education – filling the gap in school budgets and ensuring that there are not further cuts in programs to help prepare students for the changing workforce. Furthermore, these savings also must spur greater investment in programs that are proven to help students achieve. "We have to address our state's dropout crisis and these savings provide a unique opportunity to invest in early childhood programs, class size reduction and other proven methods to help more students graduate from high school," Salters said. Investing some of the savings in teacher training and mentoring is also critical, making sure new, less-experienced teachers gain and maintain all the necessary tools to help students succeed.

### **CONGRATULATIONS TO MCBAIN!!**



McBain Rural Agricultural Schools has won a "Michigan's Best" award from the Michigan Association of School Boards. They won the award for their Child Study Investigation program. The award was granted in the category of Improving Student Achievement for At-Risk Students. The programs' innovation coupled with the impact on student achievement helped the school win the award. We congratulate you on this outstanding achievement.

### **OPIE REMINDER**

Our banquet will be held on **Thursday, April 16th** at Timber Wolf Lake on M-66 in Lake City. Reservation forms are available through your local association or the MEA website at [www.mea15b.org](http://www.mea15b.org). We are continuing to hold the price at \$15.00 per person on a first come-first served basis. Reservations are limited, so get yours in early!



## **Reminder--15-B COORDINATING COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP**

The Coordinating Council is awarding four \$300 scholarships again this year!! Two will be given to a child or dependent of a 15-B Support Staff (ESP) Bargaining Unit Member. The other two will be given to a child or dependent of a 15-B Teacher (EA) Bargaining Unit Member. The applications were sent out to High School Guidance Counselors, Coordinating Council Delegates, and Presidents to distribute in January. The application must be postmarked no later than Friday, February 27. The winners will be notified in March and will be invited to attend our Annual OPIE Banquet in April, where we will acknowledge them.

## **NORTHERN ZONE BARGAINING PLAN**

Soon, we will be delegating a part of this newsletter to the Northern Zone Bargaining Plan. Articles from all over the zone will be featured. Stay tuned!!!!



## **DISTRICT FINANCIAL PRESENTATION ON 15-B WEBSITE**

MEA Bargaining teams in three districts have presented "Knowledge Has Value" Financial Presentations to members, school boards, and school administration this year. The McBain EA team and the Marion ESP team presented financial information to their school boards. The Cadillac EA team presented to their membership with school board members and administrators in attendance. All three presentations were well received. You can view these presentations on the 15-B website by going to [www.me15.org](http://www.me15.org). If you are interested in having your districts' financial analysis presented contact your local association's President.

## **EVART TRANSPORTATION STILL UNSETTLED**

The only MEA bargaining unit in the 15-B Coordinating Council with an unsettled contract for 2008-09 is the Evert Transportation employees. The bargaining team's proposal to move to MESSA Choices II with the \$10 prescription card would mean substantial savings for the district with improved health care for the employees yet the district is asking for additional concession. The team has two bargaining sessions scheduled for the end of February.

### **\*\*\*\*\*NEW UNISERV BLOG\*\*\*\*\***

Check out our new UniServ blog at [www.15buniserv.blogspot.com](http://www.15buniserv.blogspot.com). Different information will be posted on a regular basis.



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

Mar 16	Coordinating Council Meeting
Mar 20-21	ESP Statewide Conference (Dearborn-Hyatt)
Mar 27	Bargaining Issues and Trends (BFCL)-Livonia
April 10	Good Friday-MEA office Closed
April 16	OPIE Banquet-Timber Wolf Lake

