

15-B INSIDER

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MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2009

KNOWLEDGE HAS VALUE

This year we have ten units bargaining—four EA's and six ESP's. All bargaining teams should be attending the Bargaining Conference scheduled for February 5-7 or have attended the Manistee training in November.



We cannot afford going to the table without knowledge of the Board's financial picture, political leanings, and face-to-face recognition. Anything less than this puts the bargaining team at a distinct disadvantage. Without knowing how the Board has been spending our money negates our ability to look at past and predict future spending trends. All this is possible with a financial analysis. If you have not heard of this analysis, ask your bargaining team if they have done one. If not, why not. Sitting on our heels with a wait and see attitude will get us nowhere. It is only through aggressive proactive preparation we can take back the bargaining table.

We produce a great product and should be proud of it! Several of our schools have received recognition as outstanding schools. This does not happen because those school employees sat on their heels! They became proactive and made things turn around. The same will be done at the table—but everyone must be on board.

"RIGHT TO WORK"

Out-of-state forces are pushing to put a so-called "Right to Work" initiative on Michigan's 2010 ballot. We must educate our members and the public about this dangerous idea that has nothing to do with anyone's right to have a job—it has everything to do with requiring everyone to pay their fair share and allowing unions to continue representing and protecting working Americans. Come learn about the "Right to Work FOR LESS" education effort and what you can do to keep this deceptive scheme from becoming law in Michigan. A presentation will be given on January 29th, 6:00 p.m. at the Cadillac High School Auditorium.

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 will be sent out to High School Guidance Counselors, Coordinating Council Delegates, and Presidents to distribute. 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.

UPCOMING RETIREMENT WORKSHOP

The upcoming **Retirement Workshop** will be held on **Thursday, February 19, 2009**, 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:

*How do I let go of work?
Can I make it financially?
How does it feel to be retired?
Is there anything I should have done differently?
How well does the retirement insurance work? Etc.....*

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. **RSVP** needed by **Thursday Feb. 12th**. Call 1-800-300-1162 or e-mail tgrames@mea.org.



OPIE HAS BEGUN!

OPIE packets were distributed to each association at the Coordinating Council meeting on January 20th - and the process begins!!! You will soon be given an opportunity to nominate someone in your association who deserves special recognition for going "above and beyond" – and often without any expectation of notice or appreciation. What a privilege – both to have the opportunity to nominate someone and/or possibly be nominated yourself! We encourage each association to take part in this annual event. It is a wonderful opportunity to come together as an educational community with members, their friends and families, superintendents, school boards and administrators. Keep in mind that all nomination packets **must be returned** to the 15-B UniServ office **on or before the February 17th Coordinating Council meeting!**

Our banquet will be held on **Thursday, April 16th** at Timber Wolf Lake on M-66 in Lake City. Those of you who have attended in the past know what a beautiful, rustic setting this is and how great the food is – and the Chocolate Fountain is returning again this year! Reservation forms are available through your local association or the MEA website at 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!

UNSETTLED CONTRACTS 08-09

Evart Transportation
Manton ESP (salary only)
Manton EA (salary only)
Mesick ESP

* MARK YOUR CALENDAR*



Feb 5-7
Feb 12
Feb 17
Feb 18
Feb. 19

Bargaining Conference-Detroit
President's Council Meeting-MEA office
Coordinating Council Meeting (OPIE Packets due back)
Lobby Day-Lansing
Retirement Workshop-Lake Superior Room Wexford-Miss CTC

HAPPY NEW YEAR