



15-B INSIDER



Frank Mongene
UniServ Director
fmongene@mea.org

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

Tabby Grames
UniServ Field Assistant
tgrames@mea.org



MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2009

EDUCATORS BRING VALUE INTO THE CLASSROOM



Recently, while at the Cadillac Meijer store, I was in the checkout line behind a woman with a basket full of children's books, notebooks, pencils, and colored markers. The cashier asked if these items were for her grandchildren. The woman responded in a matter-of-fact way, "These are for the students I work with in the classroom." The cashier asked if she had some kind of line of credit with the schools. The woman replied, "Oh no, this is my investment in our community's children and our collective future."

She, like many other paraprofessionals and public school employees, reach into their own wallets and purses on a regular basis for children they work with. This just doesn't happen in Cadillac. Most school employees spend a good deal of their own money to ensure the programs they work in provide value to their students. A 2008 survey by Edutopia, a foundation, magazine, and Web site dedicated to what works in public education, shows the majority of their readers spend in the low to mid-hundreds of their own money every year for their students.

What I witnessed that day at Meijer is a classroom paraprofessional, an MEA member investing in our children and our future. She is making sure that "Knowledge Has Value" in her classroom.

Thank you to those in public education who make a difference in children's lives, their communities, and our future.

Robert Kwiatkoski
UniServ Director 14C

2010 BARGAINING, POLITICAL ACTION & PR CONFERENCE

To preserve our public schools and the middle class dream that originates from them, we must fight back. At the 2010 MEA Bargaining, Political Action and Public Relations Conference, you'll get the tools you need to fight - and win - this battle on three critical fronts. The conference will be held Feb 4-6 at the Cobo Center in Detroit.

Pre-registration deadline is **Monday, December 14th**. Contact the MEA office for an application or visit www.mea.org/bpapr.

Rally, Rhetoric, Reality...
BUDGET CHAOS CONTINUES IN LANSING

Lawmakers have less than two weeks to figure out how to restore millions of dollars in school budget cuts. Approximately 1,500 parents and other education advocates attended a rally at the Capitol to urge the Legislature to find short – and long-term solutions to the crisis even as Governor Jennifer Granholm and Senator Majority Leader Mike Bishop, R-Rochester, traded barbs through the press. Meanwhile, school boards across the state continue to consider and vote on layoffs and programs cuts that will hurt students.

The House passed House Bill 4860, which calls for using federal stimulus funds this school year instead of next. While the measure would help schools lessen some of the budget cuts this year, it is only a first step, as it doesn't provide the necessary long-term solution to the funding crisis.

"It's going to take the people of the state of Michigan to apply pressure to get them to do their job," said Tom White, chair of "SOS: Save our Students, Schools and State," the group that helped organize the rally.

Contact your state senators and state representatives today. Visit www.mea.org and click on *Legislative and Political Information* and click on *Contact Your Legislators*.

UNSETTLED CONTRACTS 09-10

Evert ESP
Marion EA
Marion ESP
Pine River EA
Pine River ESP
WMISD



*** MARK YOUR CALENDAR ***

Nov 26-27
Dec 7
Dec 21
Dec 24-Jan 1

Thanksgiving Holiday-Office Closed
Region 15 Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
Coordinating Council Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
MEA Office Closed-Christmas Holiday

Cadillac MEA office
Cadillac MEA office

