



15-B INSIDER



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MICHIGAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2011



MEAs A+ Agenda calls for action, accountability, achievement

MEA is working proactively in Lansing to advance a bold reform agenda that can improve public school and help Michigan students compete in the 21st century economy.

“MEAs A+ Agenda’ contains commonsense reforms that will help make Michigan a leader in public education through real, balanced solutions to the issues facing our state,” said MEA President Iris K. Salters.

The A+ Agenda was introduced on the eve of Gov. Rick Snyder’s first State of the State address. Developed with input from MEA members, leaders, and staff, the plan received immediate statewide media attention. Snyder received the plan during a meeting Jan. 18, a day before his address.

“Michigan’s school employees are ready and willing to work with Gov. Snyder and the new Legislature to tackle real problems and ensure that public education fulfills its mission to prepare students for the jobs Michigan needs.”

MEAs A+ Agenda addresses five areas in need of attention by lawmakers in Lansing:

- Realign Michigan’s PreK-12 system to support students in achieving the goal our state values most: graduating high school ready to succeed in college or other post-secondary opportunities.
- Increase accountability for EVERYONE in public education – teachers, administrators, support staff, parents, et al – for the overall educational success of Michigan’s students.
- Increase efficiency for ALL school districts to get the greatest return on investment for students, communities, and the economy.
- Ensure good stewardship of taxpayer dollars by increasing school district financial stability and accountability.
- Fix Michigan’s antiquated tax structure that has led to Michigan’s decade-long budget crisis.

Specific reforms highlighted include:

- Reducing the need for remedial coursework by college students;
- Expanding access to early childhood education and parent training programs;
- Streamlining the process for dismissing tenured teachers (while ensuring fair, impartial standards based on locally controlled evaluation systems);
- Improving training and evaluation for all education employees;

- Requiring employers to allow parents to attend parent-teacher conferences;
- Clarifying systems for consolidating school districts or administrative/support services;
- Mandating independent, high-quality cost benefit analyses before and after any consolidation or outsourcing of services to ensure savings are achieved;
- Increasing financial stability for schools;
- Spending more than 85 percent of school revenue on “direct student support;” and
- Reviewing tax incentive programs to ensure they create jobs – and eliminate those that don’t.

MEA Director of Public Affairs Doug Pratt said legislation on many of these topics is already under development. “We look forward to sitting down with lawmakers interested in these areas to find common ground and see these concepts put into law.”

“We need to get Michigan working again, and the only way that’s going to happen is if we have a trained, educated and skilled workforce,” Salters said. “We must prioritize education reform, because it is the key to success for our students and for our state as we work to create the best-educated workforce possible.” The full text of MEA’s A+ Agenda is available online at www.mea.org/press.

OPIE REMINDER

Our banquet will be held on **Thursday, April 14th** 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. The price is \$16.00 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 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 25th. The winners will be notified in March and will be invited to attend our Annual OPIE Banquet in April, where we will acknowledge them.

BARGAINING UPDATE

Currently bargaining is: Cadillac EA, Evert EA, Evert ESP

* MARK YOUR CALENDAR*



March 7	Region 15 Meeting	T.C. MEA office
March 10	Presidents Council	MEA office
March 18-19	ESP Statewide Conference	Lansing
March 21	Coordinating Council Meeting	MEA office
March 25	BFCL Bargaining Bootcamp	Livonia

