



15-B INSIDER



15-B Coordinating Council

MEA 15-B UniServ Office

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MEA members step up for students & employees in Benton Harbor

When Republican lawmakers pushed through more than \$1 billion in cuts to public education earlier this year, bad financial situations in school districts across the state were made even worse. A prime example of this is in Benton Harbor, where cuts have caused an unsustainable lack of basic school supplies across the district.

Since the state has failed to step up and fix the problem, MEA members took it upon themselves to do so.

On November 17, a truck-load of supplies and more

than \$13,000 in financial contributions—collected from MEA members across the state—were delivered to help students and school employees of Benton Harbor.

Across Benton Harbor, MEA received reports from members who are working in classrooms without any paper, pencils, and other basic essentials. Textbook shortages are common. Technology is in disrepair.

Some schools don't even have copiers to reproduce worksheets.

"We're proud to take a stand and help our union brothers and sisters in Benton Harbor in their efforts to educate this community's students," said MEA Secretary-Treasurer Rick Trainor.

"And we're proud to continue holding Lansing politicians accountable for the damage that's being done to public education by their reckless budget cuts.



Mark Your Calendar



Dec 7-8

MEA office closed due to staff meeting

Dec-23-Jan 2nd

Christmas break—MEA office closed

Jan 16th

MEA closed MLK Jr day

Feb 2-3

Bargaining Conf.—Detroit

RETIREMENTS SEMINARS

If you missed our seminar MPSERS has some coming up:

December 12th, 5:30 p.m.
Kent ISD in Grand Rapids

March 27th, 5:30 p.m.
NorthWestern Michigan

To Attend any of these seminars go to www.michigan.gov/orsschools and click on Preretirement Seminars or call 800-381-5111

If you have access to a computer you may also go to the website and review tutorials and webinars that have the same information as the seminars.



2012 Bargaining & Public Affairs Conference

The annual Bargaining Conference will be at the Cobo Center in Detroit on February 2 & 3.

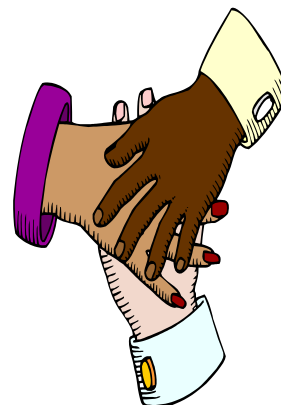
There will be various topics to choose from to help Leaders and Bargaining team members learn new techniques and to gain knowledge to help them in the negotiations process and member communications.

Senator Debbie Stabenow will be one of the keynote speakers this year.

Some sessions qualify for State Board of Education Continuing Education Unit credits and some qualify for Michigan ESP Center of Professional Learning (MECPL) credit!

Pre-registration deadline is **Tuesday, December 20th**.

Contact the MEA office for further details.



Why the Emergency Manager Law Should be Repealed

Public Act 4, the Local Government and School District Fiscal Accountability Act, fundamentally threatens democracy and our local rights because it is a power grab by politicians. It must be struck down or repealed for the sake of Michigan Democracy.

The statute allows the governor to declare a local government or school district in financial distress and appoint an Emergency Manager to take control.

The Emergency Manager is an unelected bureaucrat that is unaccountable to local taxpayers and has unchecked, unprecedented power.

Under this law, they can:

- seize and sell assets owned by the city
- add to local debt, by putting property tax hikes on the ballot
- outsource to private and out of state companies
- lay off thousands of public employees
- change or terminate the contract of the city or school district employees

-suspend contracts and collective bargaining

-eliminate collective bargaining rights for up to 5 years

-fire elected officials, and

-dissolve or merge whole cities, counties, and school districts

If you have not yet signed a petition against this bill, please do so!!!!

**HELP FIGHT
BACK!!!!**

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