

MEA • voice

#NextGenEd

#MEAStrong

#FollowTheJourney



Imagining a Better Future

IT'S BEEN A LONG EIGHT YEARS, IF YOU'RE SOMEONE WHO CARES ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN.

You might think the hostility toward school employees by politicians in Lansing will never end, but take a moment to imagine a day when your state's highest elected leader speaks in support of you, asks your opinion of pending legislation, listens to what you say.

Picture a governor who respects the work you do and wants to help you and your students succeed. Imagine one who understands the challenges you face, and doesn't leave you to solve every societal problem alone.

We mean it. Stop and picture it in your mind. Imagine a scenario which feels like a dream at this moment—to serve as an educator under the leadership of a governor who wants to build up public education instead of tear it down.

Because we have the opportunity to make that vision real.

In the next several months, we can work to elect the leader you've envisioned. We can show up to volunteer, and donate to PAC, and rally our energy around MEA's choice to be Michigan's next governor: Gretchen Whitmer.

Whitmer has been a champion of quality public education for every

student, regardless of their zip code. She shares our values about social justice and the importance of unions in giving workers a voice.

We know Whitmer—a former state Senate leader and county prosecutor—will make an amazing governor. If you don't know much about her, read an introduction of her values and positions on page 15 of this issue of *MEA Voice*.

MEA came to this important recommendation because Whitmer is the best candidate to take back the governor's office, defend Michigan from dangerous anti-education legislation, and ensure that school employees are well-supported so students are well-prepared.

The decision of who or whether to recommend in the gubernatorial race was made by MEA members like you: teachers, education support professionals, higher education faculty and staff, and school retirees from across the state who are part of our State-wide Screening & Recommendation Committee.

After interviewing candidates from



both parties, they voted unanimously for MEA to recommend Whitmer to our members in the governor's race.

In addition, over the past six months MEA has made an unprecedented effort to ensure our members' voices were part of this process, inviting candidates for governor—both Republicans and Democrats—to speak to members in a variety of different venues.

At every step of the way, our members' preference for and feedback about Whitmer was far and away the strongest of all the candidates.

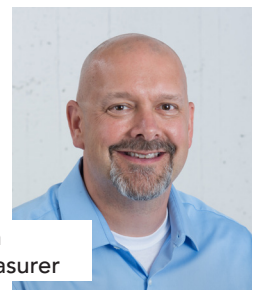
Gretchen Whitmer has our full, unwavering support, and we're proud to be in her corner—just as she's been in ours throughout her career. **V**



Paula J. Herbart
President



Chandra A. Madafferi
Vice President



Brett R. Smith
Secretary-Treasurer

4 Editor's Notebook

Where is the outrage

6 MEA Calendar

ESP Statewide Conference

7 Member Voices

Breastfeeding at School

8 Lobbying Insider

Building Bridges

15 Election 2018

Let's Win with Whitmer

23 Strength in Union

Dziadosz Retiring

24 Issues & Advocacy

Relief from Loan Debt

26 Region Elections

Delegate and Board Candidates

On the Cover: Zack Griffin of Cadillac and Brittney Norman of Pine River are early career educators featured in Part Three of our series: "Start of a Journey."

MEA Voice

Executive Director Gretchen Dziadosz
 Director of Public Affairs Doug Pratt
 Editor Brenda Ortega
 Staff Photographer Miriam Garcia
 Publications Specialist Shantell Crispin

The MEA Voice ISSN 1077-4564 is an official publication of the Michigan Education Association, 1216 Kendale Blvd., East Lansing, MI 48823. Opinions stated in the MEA Voice do not necessarily reflect the official position of the MEA unless so identified. Published by Michigan Education Association, Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48826-2573. Periodicals postage paid at East Lansing and additional mailing offices. Payment of the active membership fee entitles a member to receive the MEA Voice. Of each annual fee whether for active or affiliate membership, \$12.93 is for a year's subscription. Frequency of issue is September, December, February, April and August. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the MEA Voice, Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48826-2573 or via email at webmaster@mea.org. Allow at least three weeks for change of address to take effect. MEA Voice telephone: 517-332-6551 or 800-292-1934. Circulation this issue: 113,208



10 COVER STORY: At the midway point of the school year, two beginning teachers are finding their footing in new roles. Follow Brittney Norman and Zack Griffin through one "day in the life."



16 STRENGTH IN UNION: MEA members are celebrating the unity that resulted in a big win in the 3 percent court case after more than seven years.



20 ISSUES & ADVOCACY: K-3 educators report on implementing the new third grade reading law.



34 MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Life as a playground aide is harder—and sweeter—than you might think.

Editor's Notebook

Recently I told a colleague I was retiring the phrase “front-line” from my work. It’s too overused to affect the reader, I said. Front-line educators. Who stops to think what that means anymore? However, my resolve to ditch the army-in-wartime lingo didn’t last long.

You’ll see that phrase on page 21 of this issue of *MEA Voice*, next to a story about the hard-working K-3 teachers, paraeducators, reading specialists, and instructional coaches who began implementing the state’s new Third Grade Reading law this school year.

They speak out in a story headlined with another military metaphor: “Third Grade Reading: A View From the Trenches.”

It struck me in reporting the story that the American public would not stand for it if U.S. Marines were sent to war without adequate funding and equipment. But we look the other way while educators buy their own classroom supplies to battle ignorance and illiteracy every day.

Regardless of political persuasions, we thank military personnel and veterans for their service to this country. Yet we tolerate partisan politicians who cut the pay, benefits, and retirement security of school employees who shape our next generation for participation and leadership.

The American electorate would act if legislators passed laws dictating means and methods for executing a battle without seeking the advice or heeding the insights of military experts.

Will anyone listen to the chorus of voices from professionals charged with teaching our most precious natural resource—our youngest and most vulnerable children—to read?

Those who operate in the education arena obviously differ in significant ways from soldiers who risk their lives to protect American ideals. But the similarities should not be ignored: Both devote themselves to grinding daily work that collectively strengthens our nation.

School employees deserve better than friendly fire, but that is what we’ve had for 25 years as lawmakers and thought leaders have disparaged educators and pushed damaging “accountability” measures that insinuate societal problems would be fixed if only teachers worked harder.

Now the Michigan Legislature again is using the stick approach to advance third-grade reading instruction. I would call it the carrot-and-stick approach, but lawmakers didn’t include the carrot—they passed new mandates but neglected new resources.

This comes at a time when numerous studies have found Michigan is significantly underfunding public education as a whole. The latest such analysis was issued last month from a coalition of 300 education and business professionals.

And I’ve written before about the poorly designed test that will measure success for third graders and their educators in a column titled, “Truth or Satire: A Look at Michigan’s M-STEP,” which *M-Live* similarly documented in a January article, “Could You Pass 3rd Grade Reading?”

So I’ll say it: We need to support educators by supplying and respecting the front-line experts.

—Brenda Ortega, editor

\$80 million

Amount one for-profit online charter school fraudulently billed the state of Ohio over two years.

ECOT (Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow) was Ohio’s largest cyber school until it abruptly shut down in January under growing pressure from the financial scandal. Before closing, the school boasted the highest dropout rate in the nation.

QUOTABLES

“It’s a tax question, but it’s also a responsibility question. What can we do to leave this place better than we found it?”

Mike DeVault, superintendent of the Macomb Intermediate School District, speaking about a new report from a coalition of education and business leaders calling for a significant increase—and restructuring—of school funding in Michigan. DeVault acknowledges the changes would require more taxes, but he said communities support higher taxes to pay for public schools. Look for the study from the School Finance Research Collaborative at www.FundMiSchools.org.

ICYMI

Benchmarks for denoting “proficiency”—also known as “passing” scores—in Common Core-aligned tests are set way too high, according to a new study released in late January from the National Superintendents Roundtable and the Horace Mann League. The unrealistically high cut scores on

Common Core tests are based on faulty assumptions and would be unattainable for the majority of test-taking children in nearly every nation in the world, the study’s analysis found. Read a more thorough analysis of the report on teacher Steven Singer’s education blog, *Gadfly on the Wall*, at www.tinyurl.com/TooHighBar.

TABLE 1: Nations in which a Majority of Students Can be Expected to Clear the Common Core/NAEP Bars of Proficiency or Career and College Readiness, by Grade and Subject

Grade and Subject	Number of Nations in which Majority of Students Clear the Bar
Grade 4 Reading	0
Grade 8 Mathematics	3
Grade 8 Science	1

Source: “How High the Bar?” by the National Superintendents Roundtable and the Horace Mann League, January 2018



ABOVE AND BEYOND

Last August, MEA member Bob Cindric went on a church mission trip where he found as much as he gave. A 39-year music teacher in Saline Area Schools, Cindric was so moved by the love and perseverance he saw among children living in a South African orphanage that he took on a new cause of helping to open a school at Middleburg Care Village. Right now, the 110 children who live at Care Village due to neglect and abuse are bused out to 18 different schools. Cindric got an immediate OK from Saline Supt. Scot Graden when he asked to donate old, unused school furniture to the cause. The goal is to develop a global connection between Saline and South African students through student exchanges. A team of Saline teachers helping devise curriculum for the K-8 school will be visiting the orphanage over spring break in March. Cindric’s church, Saline Presbyterian, is helping to raise \$4,400 to pay the first year of four teachers’ salaries to get the school opened. “I’m not a philanthropist looking for a cause; the cause found me,” Cindric said. “These children touched my heart.” Read more at www.tinyurl.com/CindricCause.

QUOTABLES

“I won’t be alive to see what the next generation is going to see in 20 years, but I want it to be a world where there is tolerance and acceptance of any culture, any faith.”

MEA member Geronimo Felipe, who works in IT at Michigan State University, on why he attended the 2018 Women’s March in Lansing on Sunday, Jan. 21. A first-generation immigrant from the Philippines, Felipe has lived in Michigan since he was a youngster in the 1950s.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2**Read Across America
Nationwide**

For this 20th year of Read Across America, NEA is focusing on the diversity of authors, the diversity of stories, and the diversity of characters in a book. Celebrate and grow your community of diverse readers. Visit www.NEA.org/ReadAcross for resources and ideas.

March 23-24**ESP Statewide Conference
Somerset Inn, Troy**

Education support professionals will gather to network and get training on topics such as legal issues, ESP certification, privatization, school violence, and member outreach and engagement. The winner of the Leon A. Brunner Award will be honored.

March 24**Student MEA Conference
MEA Headquarters, East Lansing**

University student members from across the state will gather for training sessions that cover the legal, professional and personal issues affecting education and education employees.

April 20-21**Representative Assembly (RA)
Lansing Center, Lansing**

MEA's highest governing body will meet for the Spring Representative Assembly to consider the organization's policy matters for the coming year. Delegates are elected from locals around the state.

Nominations for ESP Caucus Board

Nominations are being accepted for several positions on the MEA ESP Caucus Executive Board. Open positions are as follows beginning September 1, 2018:

PRESIDENT:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

VICE-PRESIDENT:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

SECRETARY:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

AT-LARGE:

3—Positions, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

DIRECTOR BY CLASSIFICATION**HIGHER EDUCATION:**

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

OFFICE PERSONNEL:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

PARAPROFESSIONAL:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

TRANSPORTATION:

1—Position, September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2021

Elections to the ESP Board will take place at the MEA Spring Representative Assembly in Lansing April 20-21, 2018.

Information needed for each candidate includes: name, present occupation, home address, home and work telephone numbers, home email address, school district, name of nominee's local ESP association and written consent of the candidate running for office.

Candidates must be members in good standing of MEA/NEA. In order to receive delegate mailing labels, information must be received no later than February 20, 2018, and should be mailed to: Yvonne Williams, MEA/ESP Department, 1216 Kendale Blvd., PO Box 2573, East Lansing, MI 48826-2573, or it can be sent via email to ywilliams@mea.org.

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the MEA/ESP Caucus meeting on Friday, April 20, 2018, and those names will be added to the ballot. Candidates will be given up to three minutes to address delegates.

A table will be provided outside the ESP Caucus meeting where candidates may place a brief biographical sketch for distribution before the meeting starts.

Questions should be directed to Jim Sparapani, ESP Caucus Elections Chairperson, at 906-779-1984 or via email to jsparapani@att.net.



School Employees Deserve Breastfeeding Rights

By Kary Mack
Kalamazoo Education Association



IT IS A SHAMEFUL IRONY THAT EDUCATORS ARE SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM FEDERAL LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR BREASTFEEDING/PUMPING IN THE WORKPLACE. THOSE ENTRUSTED WITH RAISING UP OUR NATION'S CHILDREN DESERVE THE RIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR OWN BABIES.

My own experience breastfeeding my twin boys changed my life and empowers my advocacy on this issue as a local union leader.

My twins were born on Dec. 24, 2014, at 33 weeks' gestation. Charlie weighed 5 pounds, 8 ounces; and Ricky weighed 4 pounds, 5 ounces. I learned to pump while sitting in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), watching my tiny babies in their isolettes when they were still too small to get a good latch. It would be months before I finally felt like their mother.

Having two babies was exhausting and overwhelming. When we took them home, I felt I could never be enough for either baby, since my attention and energy were constantly divided. As they grew and their breastfeeding improved, I experienced the joy of being able to nurse them both. In those moments I felt like everything was perfect. I gave both of my boys my undivided attention, while holding them close and providing what only I could provide for them.

When I returned to teaching, the school where I worked was supportive of my breastfeeding efforts. I used a private room to pump during my

plan time. I was relieved in the afternoon to pump again. And my husband was allowed to bring the babies to nurse during my "off" time.

Breastfeeding was essential for me. Research shows it's best for babies, but it also pulled me through postpartum depression. After a Cesarean-section and three weeks in the NICU, breastfeeding created the bond that I needed to finally truly feel like a mother. I don't want to think about how much harder things would've been if I had not been able to nurse my babies.

Now I am working at a different school. Because of how essential breastfeeding was for me, I've become an advocate for nursing mothers throughout my district. I am heartbroken at what some of my colleagues have endured. Many new moms are pressured into giving up on breastfeeding because the demands of their jobs are simply too high.

As I researched laws and policies, I learned that changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act in 2010—which required employers to provide time and space for new mothers to pump—do not apply to teachers.

This is an obvious injustice that we must fight as a union.

We must work to negotiate into our contracts specific policies that protect nursing mothers. The Michigan Breastfeeding Network (www.mibreastfeeding.org) recommends women have at least thirty minutes of uninterrupted time to pump. They need access to a room (other than a bathroom or their car) that locks from the inside—ideally with a sink and a refrigerator to clean pump parts and store expressed milk. Comfortable seating is important, and some sort of sound barrier should be created to further protect the mother's privacy.

Sadly in this case, as with too many other matters, the law is not on our side. This is why we are stronger together. It is essential that we stand with our members to protect nursing mothers' rights. No mother should have to stand on her own to beg for the right to pump. We must reach out to administrators and new mothers before an issue arises. We must bargain protections and address every issue that threatens to jeopardize a mother's right to breastfeed her child. We are teachers, we are mothers, we are union members. **V**

Kary Mack teaches 6-8 Spanish at Hillside Middle School in Kalamazoo.

Building Bridges in a Term-Limited World

By Christina Canfield and David Michelson
MEA Lobbyists

UNLESS YOUR HEAD IS BURIED IN THE SAND, YOU KNOW POLITICS IS A DIVISIVE ARENA. WE ALL TALK ABOUT WANTING THINGS TO CHANGE AND WISHING POLITICIANS WOULD WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

We are old enough to remember what the legislative process was like before voters decided to impose term limits that allow state senators to serve no more than two terms and representatives no more than three. It was better before.



Legislators knew each other. They knew each other's spouses, kids, parents, grandparents. They were friends across the aisle. Because they knew they would be working together for years, they tended to treat each other with respect. That is less true now. Six years is not enough time to create those kinds of relationships.

Before term limits, legislators could think independently because they developed expertise on issues. Now most legislators vote as told by leadership because they don't know the subject matter. In one day, they can vote on a range of issues—education, transportation, tax reform and more. They do not know all the

issues, and they were not around for the last “reform.”

After the 2016 election brought in more than 40 new state House members, MEA decided to do something about the breakdown of communication and relationships. We joined with four organizations, including the Small Business Association of Michigan and Business Leaders for Michigan, groups you rarely see in the same room with MEA. Together we hosted a conference for newly elected legislators called *Building Bridges*.

We brought together newly elected legislators (before they took office) and put together an agenda. We had former legislators talk about the benefits of working together. We had the leaders of both parties talk about their commitment to working together. And we gave them time to meet and get to know each other, hoping to jump-start a bipartisan working relationship.

While there is no way to measure its effectiveness, everyone who attended the event said it was worthwhile. From a lobbying perspective, it gave us a chance to meet the legislators in a more relaxed atmosphere. We also met other lobbyists and have “built bridges” on unlikely issues.

Partnerships strengthen us. We would build a bridge to Anywhere to fortify public education. **V**

Special Note from Christina Canfield:

Speaking of building bridges, I am retiring soon and want you to meet my replacement, Andy Neumann. He brings experience as a three-term state legislator from Alpena and as a lobbyist. A former firefighter and paramedic, Andy also taught in a vocational education program at Alpena High School as an MEA member and served as state fire marshal for four years.



Andy Neumann

He worked as an MEA UniServ director in northern Michigan and has coordinated MEA's issue organizing and political campaigns. He will strongly represent MEA at the Capitol. I will be working with him to guarantee a smooth transition.

It has been my pleasure to be one of the voices of our members at the Capitol, along with Dr. David Michelson. We may not always get our way, but I can promise it's not because lawmakers haven't heard what our members would say if they could be there. It's an honor speaking loud and clear on behalf of public school employees and public education.

I've held a variety of positions at MEA, and always felt grateful that I went to a job every day to work for a cause I believe in. Keep up the amazing work you do every day. **#Unionstrong**

Free MESSA program provides heart health help

ARE YOU AT RISK OF A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE, OR DO YOU HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE? MESSA'S CARDIOVASCULAR CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH FREE PERSONALIZED SUPPORT FROM A CERTIFIED NURSE EDUCATOR.

You probably know that cardiovascular disease can be reduced by healthier lifestyle choices, such as diet and exercise, as well as getting regular check-ups from your doctor. But for many people, making those lifestyle choices is easier said than done. That's where MESSA's cardiovascular nurse educators come in.

MESSA's nurse educators can work directly with you to help develop a personal heart health action plan, including strategies you can use to make better lifestyle choices. You'll learn how to identify and track your key health risk numbers, including blood pressure, blood sugar, and

good and bad cholesterol, with an eye toward risk reduction.

And if you've already suffered a heart attack or stroke, our nurse educators will show you how to access specific MESSA benefits, such as cardiac rehabilitation, that can dramatically reduce your risk of suffering another attack.

"After suffering a heart attack, many people are afraid—they don't know what they can do," said Cathy Scott-Lynch, a registered nurse and MESSA cardiovascular nurse educator. "They're afraid to ride a bike, jog, swim or participate in other fitness activities. Our program can

help members manage their health and transition from a cardiovascular event to a state of wellness."

MESSA can also help if you're dealing with high blood pressure. Our team can provide you with personalized assistance, materials and resources to help you manage your blood pressure and improve your heart health.

In addition to healthy lifestyle measures, some people may need prescription medicines to control blood pressure. Our nurse educators can help you partner with your physician to develop an effective blood pressure management strategy.

MESSA members and their dependents are eligible to participate in MESSA's Cardiovascular Case Management Program. To get started, call 800.336.0022, prompt 3. **V**



START OF A JOURNEY

Stories by Brenda Ortega
MEA Voice Editor

We've reached **Part Three** of our year-long series following the ups and downs of two early career educators through one school year.

Near the mid-way point of the year, Brittney Norman and Zack Griffin have found their footing after experiencing exhaustion at the end of the first quarter. This story follows Griffin and Norman through one "day in the life."

Both young teachers volunteered to participate in an MEA-NEA pilot project, **MiNewEd**, providing additional supports to beginning educators in three northern Michigan regions.

Brittney Norman: 'I'm Zonked, But It's Good'

Just a few minutes before the start of the school day one cold Monday morning, Brittney Norman stood in the hallway outside of her fifth-grade classroom to encourage stragglers still stuffing coats and hats into lockers.

A boy excitedly approached Norman to tell her about the thrilling finish to his weekend basketball game: "There was only two seconds left on the clock, and I was guarding number 12, and he was about to take the shot—"

Norman raised her hand to congratulate the boy as he finished the story: "—so I tackled him!"

They smacked a high-five, and Norman clasped the student's hand for a moment as surprise registered on her face. "Whoa!" she said. "You know it's not football season anymore, right?"

"I know; I didn't mean to!" he said, before rushing into the classroom to share the same tale with his friends—complete with dramatic re-enactment of the events.

Scenes like that would replay throughout this day in the life of Brittney Norman, who's a third-year teacher reliving her rookie experience after moving to Pine River Area Schools from Cadillac last fall.

It was January, and Norman admitted she was feeling more calm and confident than a few months earlier when pressure and overwork had worn her down. A little shy of midway through the year, she had established relationships—so important to her—and found a rhythm.

"I'm feeling pretty comfortable," she said. "There's good days and bad days, but I'm trying not to spend my

energy stressing out about things. I talked about it with a friend of mine, and it's a choice I made. This weekend did I take my work crate home? Yes. Did I get it all done? No."

Mornings begin with breakfast in the classroom, a grant-funded program for the high-need, rural district. Students grabbed fruit, milk, and breakfast bars on the way in. Norman kept overhead lights off, so the room was bathed in a soft glow from lamps she supplied.

Announcements came over the PA. Bad jokes were told. Norman visited and bantered with kids. After 15 minutes, the students headed to physical education and Norman started her prep hour.

Time flew. Schools had been closed on Friday because of cold, and Norman was adjusting her plans.



Third-year teacher Brittney Norman, who's reliving her rookie experience after changing districts last fall, talks with a fifth-grade student in her "home" class about the book she finished reading.

Watching her simultaneously brew coffee, revise lessons, and choose manipulatives for a hands-on experience was like appreciating a jazz musician improvising from a favorite tune.

Like every talented practitioner, Norman can accomplish much in a short time, often completing two tasks at once, while noticing what's happening around her, and responding. Another fifth-grade teacher popped in, and Norman worked as they decided on a fundraiser for the next week.

Minutes later, a quick trip to the office involved stops to console and redirect a crying student wandering the hallway, make small talk with a secretary about the weather and the weekend, and consult with a colleague over the important points to cover in a Venn diagram on fractions.

Soon passing time meant more hugs and joking and high-fives with students scattering to class—plus some all-important interaction with

adults gathered near an intersection of two hallways.

"Happy birthday—79, right?" Norman shouted at a veteran colleague headed to his room, laughing heartily at his reply: "Well," he said, "I'm one year closer to retirement or death, whichever comes first!"

Amid the hustle and bustle, Norman spotted two girls eating food out of their lockers. "Girls! Lunch time is not until 12—go to class!"

Once students settled back into the classroom by 9:10, Norman's day was non-stop. But she began with taking stock—pausing from the rush with a daily check-in ritual she calls "morning meeting," when two or three students share some thoughts or experiences.

"Who's going first?" she asked. "Cooper, are you being a leader today?"

Cooper talked about going to Ohio. Two others discussed the new Domino's Pizza restaurant in town.

The conversation was interrupted by a phone call for a student to go to the office, which Norman dispensed with quickly.

She ended with a "precept" from the book, *Wonder*, by R.J. Palacio: "'The two most important days of your life are the day you were born and the day you find out why.' Turn and discuss with a neighbor."

The meat of the day was a math lesson about multiplying fractions, involving the Venn diagram she discussed with a teacher friend earlier, meant to drill home the idea that denominators do not have to be alike when multiplying—a change from the rule in adding and subtracting fractions.

Norman filled out the graphic organizer on the board as students brainstormed similarities and differences between adding and subtracting fractions vs. multiplying them. It was a high-energy act, and she was sweating because the heat was too high.

She has no thermostat to adjust it.

After the mini-lesson, most students watched a short video on Chromebooks before starting on a two-sided worksheet. Norman worked with a small group of struggling kids who were able to see what is one-half of one-fourth when a “candy bar” was cut up and shared among friends.

Norman says she’s grateful her district has carved out time for her to attend a Math Recovery training at the Intermediate School District which will take her out of the classroom seven times this year. The course has been invaluable in helping her understand student confusion, she said.

“If I don’t meet them where they’re at and try to get them over those issues, I just get misconceptions built on misconceptions,” she said. “For example, it’s really hard for them to understand that when you multiply fractions, they actually get smaller.”

Norman teaches math to all of the fifth graders at Pine River Middle School. The three grade-level teachers rotate students for some subjects and also keep their “home” group for reading. She rounded out her morning with reading and vocabulary lessons lasting more than an hour.

It was a credit to her constant interaction with students—giving

high-fives and teacher looks and one-on-one instruction—that they were sincerely engaged in reading about corn production.

No one missed a beat when one boy asked to leave because his tooth was falling out. In fact, Norman kept classes rolling through many distractions, from office calls, to a teacher coming in to pull students out, to broken Chromebooks and requests for locker or bathroom passes.

The toughest challenge came when electric drilling began on the opposite side of her classroom wall. The loud whine got students laughing and wiggling and talking to their neighbors. “It’s just a new sink in the girls’ bathroom; keep working!” And they did.

Right before lunch was her most difficult class. Same lesson with the Venn diagram and small group instruction. But the noise level was higher, and some kids were off-task. Four kids have only recently been identified as needing special education services, she said.

Later in the staff breakroom, lunch conversation turned to squirrely behavior and how to address it. Staff members compared notes on kids. Side conversations broke out as teachers debated whether to stop rotating fifth graders. Others discussed their

personal lives.

Time for lunch ran out fast. Conversations paused mid-sentence as people rushed back to class. But the fifth grade teachers picked up where they left off following one more after-noon rotation of kids—they met up on the playground to supervise recess, a daily afternoon duty.

“No wonder he comes in cold and soaking wet every day,” Norman said before calling out to the student rolling in a snow bank without snow-pants on.

Another boy, normally chatty and sociable, stood off by himself. Norman wandered over, put her arm around his shoulder, and they talked. “He told me his dog died last night,” she informed the other teachers when she returned.

Needless to say, Norman brewed a cup of coffee before heading out to recess. She had one more class when she came back in. It went well, thanks to her skill in simultaneously reading a book aloud with a small group and watching one off-task boy to send him non-verbal cues.

The bell rang. More hugs. Laughter. Noise. Lockers slamming. Norman finally had time to rush off and use the restroom. “It was a good day,” she said later. “I’m zonked, but it’s good.”

Zack Griffin: ‘I’m Never Bored’

The coffee maker was working overtime in the office attached to Zack Griffin’s sixth-grade classroom at Mackinaw Trail Middle School in Cadillac. On the heels of a long 14-hour day on Monday, the first-year

science teacher arrived at 5:45 a.m. on Tuesday to set up for a lab.

School started at 7:40, and he was hosting a 7 a.m. meeting of the staff’s new Grief Crisis Team, so he needed to be ready for class before then.

The time crunch meant this varsity football coach was too tired to watch the college football national championship game the night before.

“I got up at four this morning, and it was coffee, lots of coffee, and more



First-year teacher Zack Griffin questions sixth graders' assumptions during a lab about the distribution of water on Earth. Griffin adjusts his teaching to fit different personalities of his science classes.

coffee," he said, clutching a stainless steel container of more coffee to his chest as he greeted students with jokes and high-fives in the doorway of his classroom before the start of first hour.

Frank Sinatra crooned "Luck be a Lady Tonight" over speakers inside. Students entered, talking to friends, taking a seat to read directions projected on the white board: "Pencil, bathroom, expos. If you do not have these things, or don't do them and ask, you will be marked tardy."

Underneath the reminders were riddles for them to puzzle over, including this one: "A man was driving a black car. His lights were off. The moon shown no light. A cat was in the middle of the road. How did he know to stop?"

After the bell rang, one student raised her hand to solve it. "It was daytime."

When Griffin began giving directions for the lab, he paced back and forth, his voice remaining steady in

tone until dropping like a rock at the end of each sentence—in the style of an Army commander talking to recruits. He mixed good-character reminders with lab instructions.

"You will be respectful. You need to know it's OK if we don't get everything we want. It's part of having a good attitude."

They would work in groups to test guesses about where the world's water exists. Each team was given a graduated cylinder and pipette (like a mini eyedropper) plus one liter of water to divide among one 1,000 ml container and five 300 ml cups—all with measuring marks on the side.

They had to label the containers as ice, groundwater, lakes, swamps, rivers, and ocean—then decide how much water to put in each one. The sixth graders had earlier begun a unit of study on the hydrosphere—the interactions of water in the Earth's system.

As the students debated amounts and poured water into glass beakers,

Griffin circulated to ask questions and challenge thinking. "Why do you think there's so much groundwater? Is there more groundwater than there is in lakes? What about ice? Where is there ice in the world?"

His queries sparked doubt and further discussion. Water was traded from one beaker to another. Most every group picked the "ocean" container to be the biggest, and their fill lines ranged from 400 to 800 milliliters. Other sources of water had 50-300 ml each.

"It's great to see them working with graduated cylinders," he said, surveying the scene with satisfaction. "We hadn't done any of that before."

Students drew a picture on one side of a worksheet to represent their guesses.

Finally, it was the moment of truth. Griffin worked through the answers for the smaller water sources in milliliters—rivers (.1); lakes (.1); swamps (.2); groundwater (9); ice (20.6)—be-

fore finishing with the amount students should have had in the ocean container: 970 ml.

Students gasped. Their mouths dropped open and stayed there.

"Immediately we have to look at how much water we have to drink—it's only 9 milliliters out of 1,000," he told the class. "Is that a big percentage?"

He did the math. "So .9 percent of the Earth's water is drinkable. Is that an issue?"

One surprised boy raised his hand. "More and more if we run out, we'll have to find a way to make the ocean water drinkable, and only some of us would be close to it," said Achilles Luther. "It's a very dark thought."

Griffin directed the class to write down the correct answers and reallocate the water in the beakers now that they understood why they were given pipettes to use. Ten drops from the dropper represented .1 ml. But suddenly Griffin glanced at the clock.

"8:26! Holy smokes. Here's what I need you to do. Stop what you're doing, and look at me. I need your eyes... Ellie, put down your pencil..."

The class was told to clean up and get back to their seats. It was time to draw a bar graph on the back side of their worksheet to represent the breakdown of water sources. Griffin told the students to remember to label both axes in the graph, but many didn't know what to do.

Time was short, and Griffin still had morning announcements to do. He circulated briefly to help groups of students at their table clusters. Others strained to look on and adjust their drawings. Announcements were given. Soon the bell rang, and the

scramble to get to second hour began.

Griffin dashed in the boys' restroom next door, and returned to find a student pulling wrinkled papers and other detritus out of her locker on to the hallway floor. "What the heck are you looking for?" Griffin asked the girl with amusement.

"I want to change into my shoes, because my boots are uncomfortable!" she shouted.

Griffin chuckled. "A bunch of characters is what they are. I'm never surprised, and I'm never bored."

He teaches three sections of the same science class before lunch, and one after eating, so not much opportunity exists to refine his lessons from one to the next. But he's reached the point of the year when he knows each class has a distinct personality, so he naturally adjusts.

Every time he teaches a lesson, Griffin also sees where the points of confusion are, he says. "Usually by about fourth hour, I've got it down," he joked.

Hour after hour, he delivered the same lab instructions. Sometimes he emphasized the behavioral expectations more strongly. Other times, he tried to build enthusiasm and engagement: "Their minds were blown by this lab last hour," he told one class. "They said, 'You are full of baloney, Mr. Griffin,' and I said, 'Nope, it's science.'"

Every class seemed interested in the work, and all were shocked by the true answers. His toughest class (right before lunch) was louder than others, but engaged in the task. When Griffin listed the water amounts, they shouted out loud—even while wiggling and dancing in place.

"What?" "Lakes aren't even a whole number?" "No way!" "How is this true?"

Griffin altered his explanations as the day went on, finding ways to show students how to turn parts of 1,000 ml into a percentage and demonstrating how to draw and label a bar graph. Next time he would use 100 ml total water to make percentages easier to figure, he said.

One beaker was broken—by an overactive group led by a girl who hadn't taken her ADHD medication, he said. He caught one student copying answers from an earlier hour before even starting the lab. Overall, though, "This is the best day we've had in a while."

Lunch was early (10:45 a.m.) and a blur. It lasted 25 minutes, but Griffin didn't sit and eat the whole time. He stopped in the faculty break room, swapped stories and laughs with colleagues, and was back on the move—popping in the office, greeting students in the hall, pulling pencils out of locker jams—on his way back to his room.

Griffin had prep hour after the final science class, and he finished the day with a career exploration class. By 2:30 p.m., he had already put in a nearly nine-hour day, and it wasn't over. He had tutoring duty after school.

But he's blessed to work with a great staff and administrators in a job he loves, he says. "Sometimes after a 14-hour day, I'm so exhausted I just sort of want to cry for no reason, but even then every day is fun. I tell people I don't go to work. I go to school, and it's a good time." ▼

View more photos of Norman's and Griffin's full school days at www.tinyurl.com/JourneyPt3

Let's Win with Whitmer



DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE GRETCHEN WHITMER UNDERSTANDS THAT EDUCATORS NEED TO HAVE A VOICE IN POLICY DECISIONS. SHE RESPECTS SCHOOL EMPLOYEES BECAUSE SHE KNOWS THEY ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF MICHIGAN'S PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM—THE GREATEST ECONOMIC ENGINE OF OUR STATE.

Whitmer proudly notes she is the product of public education in Michigan, the daughter and granddaughter of public school teachers, and her children attend East Lansing Public Schools. She is a former prosecuting attorney and state senator.

"I know the sacrifices that Michigan educators make—the teachers, the bus drivers, the paraprofessionals, nurses, counselors, aides, people who work in the office, and everyone who makes our schools work," Whitmer said. "They choose to go into this profession, because it's a calling."

MEA's Statewide Screening & Recommendation Committee voted unanimously to recommend Whitmer for governor to our members. Made up of MEA members from across the state, the committee interviewed candidates from both parties before making its decision.

Throughout her political career, Whitmer has steadfastly supported educators and defended public education. As Senate Democratic Leader:

- She took on leaders from both parties when they tried to take

money out of the School Aid Fund that was meant for educating our kids.

- She introduced the groundbreaking Michigan 2020 plan, which would have given every Michigan high school graduate the opportunity to attend college debt-free.
- She fought against Republican attempts to destroy unions and take away the voice of educators in their working environments—which are our students' learning environments.
- And, from her initial vote against the bill that took money from our paychecks to her advocacy for our legal case ever since, she's been with us every step of the way regarding our recent victory in the 3 percent case.

"Leaders in Lansing have undermined local control; they've undervalued education through budget cuts; and they have underappreciated the educators and support staff in our schools," Whitmer said. "I think our kids deserve better, and I know

our economy demands better."

She is committed to expanding early childhood education, starting with those in underserved communities. She would invest in wraparound services in schools—including health, nutrition, and counseling services—to help children be ready to learn.

Her dual priorities of investing in higher education to make college affordable again, and creating opportunities through skilled trades, apprenticeships, and job skills training, will position the state to be an economic leader.

Whitmer believes oversight and accountability must be put in place to rein in for-profit charter schools that have broken our education system.

"I'll take on tough fights, arm in arm with people from our schools across the state, and drive a real public education agenda in Michigan," Whitmer said. "Now is the time to start investing in our children again."

Watch in coming weeks for opportunities to meet Whitmer in person and to provide input to her education campaign platform. And don't forget to contribute to MEA-PAC to ensure that Whitmer and other friends of public education have the resources to win in November. Go to www.MEAVotes.org to give online. **V**

WE WON! Members Celebrate



In recent years, MEA members have protested multiple times against Gov. Rick Snyder's appeals in the 3 percent court case.

LENNY DANTINNE HAD A STRONG REACTION WHEN HE GOT AN MEA EMAIL ANNOUNCING OUR BIG WIN IN THE 3 PERCENT CASE JUST BEFORE THE HOLIDAY BREAK IN DECEMBER—AND IT WASN'T ONLY ABOUT THE MONEY HIS TWO-TEACHER HOUSEHOLD WOULD BE RECEIVING BACK.

"I felt completely vindicated, because we had been battling Governor Snyder on something that was ours from the very beginning," the Millington educator said.

That day—Dec. 21—as word spread across his school that the Michigan Supreme Court had ruled to return the 3 percent to school employees, "There was such a sense of relief that justice had been served," said Dantinne, an 11-year teaching veteran and president of his local.

That elated sense of justice might have been deeper for custodians, paraeducators, cafeteria workers—support staff who make hourly wages and may have felt the loss of income even more keenly than teachers, said Marty Petrich, a bus driver for the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District.

"If you're making 25 or 30,000 dollars a year and living check to check, that 3 percent adds up pretty quick," said Petrich, a local president who is driving a bus for special needs students after retiring from a career in the U.S. Coast Guard. "This was a big deal for support staff."

When Jayme Lipscomb got the email from MEA, she had one reaction common among school employees across the state: "It's about time."

For seven years, MEA, AFT Michigan, and AFSCME fought for the return of more than \$550 million seized from the paychecks of about 275,000 Michigan school employees between July 2010 and September 2012. The state unilaterally took the money to pay for retirees' health care, even though current employees were not guaranteed to receive the benefit.

Lipscomb, a longtime Saginaw math teacher, said the speed of the Supreme Court's 6-0 ruling in the case underscores what a shame it was for Gov. Rick Snyder to spend nearly \$400,000 to pursue his last appeal after losing in three earlier rulings.

"That taxpayer money he wasted could have gone toward education," Lipscomb said.

She believes the refusal to accept lower court rulings and drop the appeals reflected an ongoing desire by Snyder and other Republican leaders to "break the union and demoralize teachers in order to dismantle public education in Michigan."

It's why the single mother of two chose to stay in the union after Republicans rammed the so-called "right to work" bill through the Legislature in 2012. The daughter of a teacher, Lipscomb remembers walking picket lines with her father in the 1960s and 70s.

"If we stay together and work together as a union, it's not just about benefits for teachers, it's about what

te MEA's 3% Victory

By Brenda Ortega
MEA Voice Editor



L-R: August 2016, July 2016, November 2017

we're going to be able to give the kids," she said.

Michelle Frost similarly hopes the 3 percent win will bring the less visible work of MEA into the forefront for many members. The 22-year elementary school teacher is a building rep and bargaining team member at her school in Saginaw Township.

"I'm telling people this is the type of stuff the union does; you may not see it on a day-to-day basis, but we're there behind the scenes working, and that united front is so important."

United we stand—and win—and divided we fall, agrees John Lusk, an English and journalism professor and past president of his local at St. Clair Community College. Good litigation is expensive—too costly for an individual to sustain for seven years, he said.

"We were patient, we were focused, we were unified," Lusk said. "This was a much-needed victory and morale boost."

Getting back earnings of hundreds

or thousands dollars will be welcome relief to higher education employees who have experienced falling salaries and wages over the past several years, along with increased health care costs, just like their K-12 counterparts, Lusk said.

He planned to spend his refund on repairs to keep his car running. Others listed plans for the money that included college tuition for themselves or their children, home repairs and appliances, retirement savings, and long-deferred vacations.

Crystal Willit, a secretary at Monroe County Intermediate School District and president of her support staff association, hoped to receive her refund in time to plan a spring break vacation for the first time ever—"somewhere warm so I can put my toes in the sand," she said.

Derrick and Tami Oxley, both educators in Hillsdale County, expected to use the returned wages to pay bills. Both are working on master's degrees, so tuition adds a lot to their family's

expenses. But their three young children had different ideas.

Their oldest, a 10-year-old son, had been following the case—asking how the state could take their money without permission. "It's been interesting trying to explain it to him, how the justice system works," Tami said. "Now our kids are like, 'We can go on a vacation!'"

As a retired teacher living on a fixed income since 2013, Sharon Fielder said she would put the money in savings—and the rainy day fund would be a constant reminder of the strength in numbers that MEA represents.

"The right thing happened in this case, and it wasn't because state officials realized they took our money illegally and decided it was the right thing to give it back," Fielder said. "MEA fought long and hard to prove multiple times the state had no right to take our money."

"I am proud to have been an MEA member and proud to be MEA-Retired." ▼

The Long and Windin

May 2010

PA 75 becomes law, requiring school districts to withhold 3% of employees' wages to fund retiree health care.

July 2010

Trial court orders the 3% levy from wages to be held in an interest-bearing account until a ruling is issued.

August 2012

Michigan Court of Appeals holds PA 75 unconstitutional for impairment of contracts and other violations.

November 2012

Trial court dismisses MEA and AFT's lawsuit against newly enacted PA 300, and the unions appeal the ruling.

May 2014

Supreme Court agrees to hear unions' appeal of January ruling on PA 300.

July 2015

Supreme Court orders Appeals Court to reconsider its earlier ruling on PA 75 in light of new PA 300 ruling.

JULY 2016

MEA members rally outside Snyder's office. Snyder appeals with outside attorneys at taxpayer expense.



March 2017

MEA's lead plaintiff in the case, Deborah McMillan, dies from complications following knee surgery.

September 2017

Chuck McMillan accepts MEA's Distinguished Service Award on behalf of his wife, Deborah, who died in March.

December 2017

Supreme Court issues a 6-0 ruling that PA 75 was unconstitutional and orders refunds to school employees.

Long Road to 3% Victory



June 2010

MEA, AFT Michigan and AFSCME file suit challenging PA 75 on several constitutional grounds.

April 2011

Trial court rules that PA 75 is unconstitutional on several grounds, and the state appeals the decision.

September 2012

State appeals to the Michigan Supreme Court, and legislators pass PA 300 to replace PA 75.

January 2014

Appeals Court affirms PA 300 as constitutional since school employees could elect whether or not to pay 3%.

April 2015

PA 300 is found constitutional by the Supreme Court in a decision that does not address PA 75.

JUNE 2016

Court of Appeals issues second decision finding PA 75 unconstitutional.

MEA delivers 33,000 petition signatures to Gov. Rick Snyder, urging him not to appeal.

August 2016

Thousands of MEA members call on Snyder to drop the appeal in a statewide day of protest.

June 2017

Supreme Court agrees to hear Snyder's appeal, nearly one year after it was filed.

NOVEMBER 2017

On the eve of oral arguments, MEA members hold Flashlight Vigils across the state to shine a light on those affected.

January 2018

MEA lawyers continue fighting in Circuit Court for correct and timely refunds of stolen wages, with interest.



Third Grade Reading: A View from the Trenches

By Brenda Ortega
MEA Voice Editor



Webberville
Elementary School
teacher Aaron Mayes
reads with a student.

WHEN IT COMES TO MICHIGAN'S NEW THIRD GRADE READING LAW, WHICH SET DOWN INSTRUCTIONAL AND REPORTING MANDATES FOR K-3 SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS TO LAUNCH BEGINNING LAST FALL, LAWMAKERS AND EDUCATORS HAVE SOME AREAS OF CONSENSUS.

Parent involvement in their children's education is good. A team approach among educators is helpful. Training teachers in best practices is beneficial. And most importantly: Teaching children to read by the end of third grade is important.

After that, the conversation becomes a little more complex.

Elementary school teachers, literacy coaches, and interventionists from around the state say they always are striving to improve and learn new strategies for helping struggling or reluctant readers as required by the reading measure signed into law by Gov. Rick Snyder in October 2016.

But many worry about the law's unfunded mandates, inadequate support for districts and teachers,

and over-abundance of testing and paperwork.

"There's a lot of demands but not a lot of resources," said Aaron Mayes, a third-grade teacher in Webberville, a small district of about 600 students east of Lansing. "They talk about all of this education and training in the law, but that takes time and money that isn't coming."

In some ways, the law simply codifies what educators do as a matter of course, they say. They've always assessed children's reading abilities and delivered instruction and interventions to meet them wherever they're at and move them forward.

But now every K-3 child must be assessed three times a year using a state-approved benchmark test. Be-

low-grade-level readers must be given an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP) with a "read at home" component—all of which parents must review and sign.

"The law hasn't made what we're doing more focused, but it's more formal—because everything has to be written down," said Jeff Condon, a reading specialist in Adrian Public Schools. "Teachers already had those individual goals for students, but now it's on a piece of paper."

Teachers say they work hard to help each child learn and grow to his potential, but the law's ultimate goal is to ensure every third grader achieves a "proficient" score on the M-STEP standardized assessment beginning in 2019 and beyond.

Beginning in 2019-20, third graders who score one year or more behind grade level in M-STEP reading could be targeted for retention. That means this year's first graders have their work cut out: Last spring, fewer than half of Michigan third graders hit the "proficient" mark.

The controversial idea of automatic third-grade retention for below-grade readers was softened to allow for exemptions, but students who advance to fourth grade through one of the loopholes will have to spend a greater portion of their day in literacy activities—calling into question what changes will happen to fourth-grade classrooms in two years.

Teachers across the state report seeing anywhere from one-third to two-thirds of their K-3 students needing IRIPs based on results from benchmark tests such as the NWEA. Districts determine their own defi-

inition of reading “deficiency” that requires an IRIP.

Some districts have set the bar at the 60th percentile on NWEA, some at the 50th. Others use a different test the state has approved. Once the screening test flags readers labeled as deficient, a diagnostic assessment is used to determine in what areas they need additional help.

The gold standard for testing a student’s reading ability is a Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)—also known as a running record—a valuable but time-consuming one-on-one method that educators have used for years.

Adrian teachers and reading specialists are using DRAs for diagnosing students’ reading issues, but that has meant by the time testing is done, IRIPs are written, and parents are notified, it’s not long before the next testing round begins and new IRIPs must be issued to parents.

“You’re talking about a month to a month-and-a-half where the plan is in place before we’re assessing again, and now the benchmarks change,” said Cindy Marcum, who has been a reading specialist in Adrian for 17 years. “The students are expected to show growth from fall to winter.”

Educators are universally concerned about the amount of testing and paperwork required by the law. Even K-3 students receiving special education services—who already have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)—must get an IRIP signed by a parent three times per year.

“It’s constant assessing; it’s constant keeping track of interventions and the frequency of interventions,” said Allyson McBride-Culver, a reading specialist in Traverse City Schools.

Carrie Johns, also a Traverse City reading specialist, agrees: “The frustrating piece is now teachers are not only working hard to make sure they’re reaching every student—whether high, medium, or low—and

challenging every student where they are, which is no easy feat, but now they have to document everything they were already doing.”

The record-keeping demands of the law take away from time to learn, plan, and collaborate, which constitute the real engine of change and growth for educators, many say. That worries Adrian’s Jeff Condon, who points out there are only so many hours in the day.

“Just completing the process takes so long that I don’t know if this is going to change the instruction for kids,” Condon said. “If teachers are filling out IRIP forms, that’s less time for planning and less extra stuff they’re able to do.”

As standardized test scores have taken on outsized importance in Michigan—affecting school ratings and teacher evaluations—most districts already beefed up literacy instruction with Tier 1, 2, and 3 instruction that includes intensive daily small group and one-on-one interventions.

“I just don’t see a big difference between what we’re already doing and what the state is expecting will make a change,” said Holly Rives, a 20-year elementary teaching veteran in Forest Area Community Schools.

Many teachers fear that labeling kids as young as five years old “deficient,” then focusing instruction exclusively on “components” of reading, risks draining joy from classrooms. They say they’re fighting to retain student choice and time for pleasure reading as part of the day.

“Adults take time to read something to enjoy it,” said Traverse City’s Carrie Johns, “and if we don’t make time for that in our classrooms, we will create a generation of non-readers.”

The law requires districts to use “evidence-based” instruction in five areas: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Some say the move has accelerated district shifts toward “scripted” curricula which allow for less teacher-driven instruction based on educators’ expertise and awareness of

MEA Bringing Educators into Policy Conversation

The expert voices of educators were not included in the drafting of the state’s new Third Grade Reading law, but MEA Lobbyist David Michelson wants to use their real-world expertise to improve it.

Now that the law is being implemented, Michelson is organizing several MEA focus groups to gather the insights of members who know from front-line experience what is working and what is not. Michelson’s goal is to deliver specific recommendations for changes to lawmakers this spring.

Focus group meetings will be held in various parts of the state in the next few weeks. Sign up to receive our email newsletter, *Capitol Comments*, at www.mea.org/signup to stay up-to-date on this and other MEA legislative initiatives.



Educators in Adrian use a variety of whole-group and individualized instruction to help developing readers learn and grow.

students' needs.

"They've reduced the complex art of teaching reading to five areas, and it's not that clear cut," said Joanie Wiersma, an instructional specialist in Baldwin Community Schools. "It's not as simple as diagnosing a student with a problem and saying 'Here, I can do this to fix it,' because there are so many variables."

What can help is job-embedded training from well-qualified reading coaches—such as Wiersma—who observe, model, and guide classroom teachers in their practice, experts say.

Baldwin is a high-poverty rural district, but administrators reworked the district's budget to provide an in-house full-time coach to assist teachers and build "collective capacity," Wiersma said: "Teachers every day are doing what they can to the best of their abilities, so giving them

more tools is what it boils down to in our district."

Instructional coaching provides depth to professional learning, but it's time-intensive and requires a different skill set than classroom teaching, said Tracy Horodyski, a former Michigan Teacher of the Year who is an instructional coach in Kenowa Hills near Grand Rapids.

"This role requires a skill set that I have been learning about for a handful of years, and I still feel like I have a lot to learn," Horodyski said. "It's capacity building. It's not me going in and telling people what to do; it's helping people see how to maximize their efforts."

The law requires districts to provide literacy coaches, but lack of funding from the state has made it difficult to meet the mandate. The new law included \$25 million in funding—or

about \$57 per K-3 child in the state.

And while educators applaud any effort to get parents more involved in supporting literacy at home, they lament the law's focus on compliance and "accountability" rather than support for a public education system that is asked to address all of society's ills.

Students come to school having suffered trauma. Some live in poverty or without a stable home. Others struggle with learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, or behavioral disorders. Some teachers experience a seven-grade spectrum of reading levels in one classroom.

"I wish we lived in a perfect world where kids were just coming to school to be educated, but we don't—we have kids with so many other needs," said Webberville's Aaron Mays. "It's overwhelming, because there's so much to do and so little time." **V**

After Long MEA Career, Dziadosz Looks Forward

MEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GRETCHEN DZIADOSZ MAY BE RETIRING LATER THIS MONTH, BUT SHE PREFERS TO LOOK AHEAD TO THE UNION'S FUTURE—AND AFTER 38 YEARS WORKING IN A VARIETY OF MEA POSITIONS, PERHAPS NO ONE IS BETTER POSITIONED TO GIVE A READ-OUT ON THE CRYSTAL BALL.

Appointed to the union's top staff post in 2012, Dziadosz has steered the MEA ship through stormy seas. But she sees a course to chart for brighter days ahead.

After several years of pay cuts and step freezes, we're seeing contracts with 2 and 3 percent increases and steps restored, she said. To maintain momentum, the previously cut position of Statewide Bargaining Consultant has been restored by repurposing a vacancy after a retirement.

"We have to be creative and energized at local bargaining tables, and we should be bargaining over professional issues to improve our members' work lives and our students' futures."

Advocacy will still be important through grievances and legal action—our recent victory in the 3 percent case is an example—but activism will take on a bigger role at the local level as educators demand a voice, influencing administrators, school boards, and communities in the process.

"When our members do this, we're all reminded of the strength and power of working together, in unity, fighting for what's right," Dziadosz said.

She points out the relationship between MEA and AFT Michigan has never been stronger, particularly in the area of lobbying, and the Legislature is perhaps the most important arena where school employees from across the state join forces to target issues.

"Our staff lobbyists—and the many members who've helped them with contacts, calls, emails, letters, and

volunteer teams of lobbyists—together have stopped more bad things from happening that I can count," she said.

Now in an election year, political action will be crucial, Dziadosz added. "Donating to MEA-PAC, volunteering for campaigns, voting for candidates who support public education—we all have a role to play in building our collective strength to bring positive change to the system."

It's all about organizing, Dziadosz believes. Unifying people to effect change lies at the root of our history and the core of our everyday work as a union. "Our members are more respected and powerful than they realize. I hope they don't ever forget that."

Dziadosz joined MEA in 1979, serving as a field representative, UniServ director, statewide bargaining consultant, and zone director, among other roles. She holds a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University, and master's and doctorate degrees from University of Wisconsin.

The daughter of teachers, she says she did not have the talent or temperament to be a K-12 educator. After a brief stint teaching at UW-Madison, she took a job at MEA organizing support staff. Eventually she found a passion for bargaining, because it helped educators and students.

"It's rewarding for employees to have an equal footing with management and sit down for a strong give-and-take about what's in everybody's best interests," she said.

The future will be in building a



Gretchen Dziadosz

culture of change—showing members they are the union and encouraging their involvement because "at the end of the day, it's all about empowerment." **V**

Shoudy Named New Exec

MEA General Counsel Mike Shoudy has been named the union's new executive director. Prior to joining MEA in 2014, Shoudy spent 14 years as an attorney and shareholder at the White Schneider law firm, where he represented MEA and its members in a variety of legal matters. Learn more about Shoudy at www.mea.org.

MEA Training Tackles Members' Student Debt

KATE STEELE IS AN ADRIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY TEACHER WITH A MASTER'S DEGREE, BUT SHE RANG UP A LOT OF STUDENT LOAN DEBT TO GET THERE—AND LIKE MANY EDUCATORS, SHE HAS STRUGGLED TO MAKE HUGE MONTHLY PAYMENTS ON A TEACHER'S SALARY.

With \$104,000 in loan debt, Steele was shelling out \$534.53 a month for seven years—that's nearly \$45,000—and she still owed \$101,000 at the end of that time. Steele was a young single mother and first-generation college student when she began pursuing a degree 22 years ago.

"I thought, 'How am I going to send my child to college? I'm never going to get out of debt,'" she said. "It was really bleak."

Then she heard about the Public

Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

Since then, Steele has been able to cut her monthly payment nearly in half—to \$287.63—and she looks forward to the remaining debt total being forgiven seven years from now. She estimates a balance of more than \$63,000 will disappear then, not including interest.

Now MEA is helping more members accomplish what Steele has done.

A new training cadre is traveling

the state to make members aware of the PSLF program (among other, smaller forgiveness opportunities), which promises to erase student loan debt for school employees who work in public schools for 10 years while making qualifying payments.

"We're getting really good member turnout at these meetings, and people are highly engaged because this affects their lives and families," said Kevin Marvin, an MEA UniServ director who is a trainer in the cadre.

Lesson number one that training participants learn: Don't wait until you hit the 10-year mark to begin applying for the program. The reason is two-fold, Marvin said.

"The first thing we do is show members how to move into a smaller payment with an income-driven repayment plan," he said. "We want people to get into the lowest payment not only to save them money in the short-term, but also so there's more left on the table to have forgiven after 10 years."

The second reason to start the application process sooner rather than later involves the fine print of the program's rules. "Qualifying payments" and "eligibility requirements" can trip up some public school employees who think they're on track for forgiveness.

"It's such a specific area of knowledge that people come to these training sessions knowing nothing, having made past decisions that either help or hinder their ability to get forgiveness," Marvin said. "We talk about pitfalls, so people don't have to wait another 10 years to qualify."

The MEA trainers also want to steer members away from predatory

Drowning in Debt?

If you're an employee of a public school, college, or university who is drowning in student loan debt and struggling with monthly payments—talk with your local UniServ director to see about scheduling MEA's new Loan Forgiveness training in your area!





Kate Steele, a technology teacher in Adrian, has found some relief from burdensome student loan debt by learning more about federal loan forgiveness programs and income-driven repayment plans. She expects to be debt free in seven years.

companies that offer to help people navigate the PSLF process for huge fees. Some of these businesses advertise that they will complete the application process at a cost of \$1,500 or more.

Even worse, Marvin said he heard from a member in one training who paid money and gave her Social Security number to a fake company that disappeared and never processed her paperwork.

"It's sad and scary—I've heard these stories from too many members," Marvin said.

Kate Steele of Adrian fell into one of the traps Marvin warns about. For technical reasons, her first seven years of loan payments did not qualify for

the program. That meant she had to address issues and start over with a new clock. She's now three years in toward the 10-year forgiveness.

But Steele narrowly avoided another common pitfall after hearing an advertisement on the radio for loan forgiveness help. When she called for information, the salesperson wanted her to pay \$500 to sign up and \$50 a month for the next 10 years to guide her through the process.

"I almost signed up; it was so enticing, but it would have cost me \$6,500 for something that it seemed like I could do for myself," said Steele, who learned so much through research that she started doing trainings locally before MEA offered sessions

statewide.

Armed with information, anyone can handle the PSLF application on their own, according to Marvin. In fact, the MEA training shows participants how to handle the process themselves, including yearly resubmissions of paperwork.

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program initially passed Congress in 2007, so the first recipients began to pass the 10-year mark last October, Marvin said. Any members interested in learning more can contact their local UniServ field office to schedule a session with the cadre.

"Honestly, doing this training has been one of the most rewarding things I've been involved in," Marvin said. ▽

Region election information

*Required region election procedures
comply with relevant federal laws.*

ELIGIBLE VOTERS

Voter eligibility listings will be created from information received by the MEA Membership Department from local associations by Dec. 31, 2017

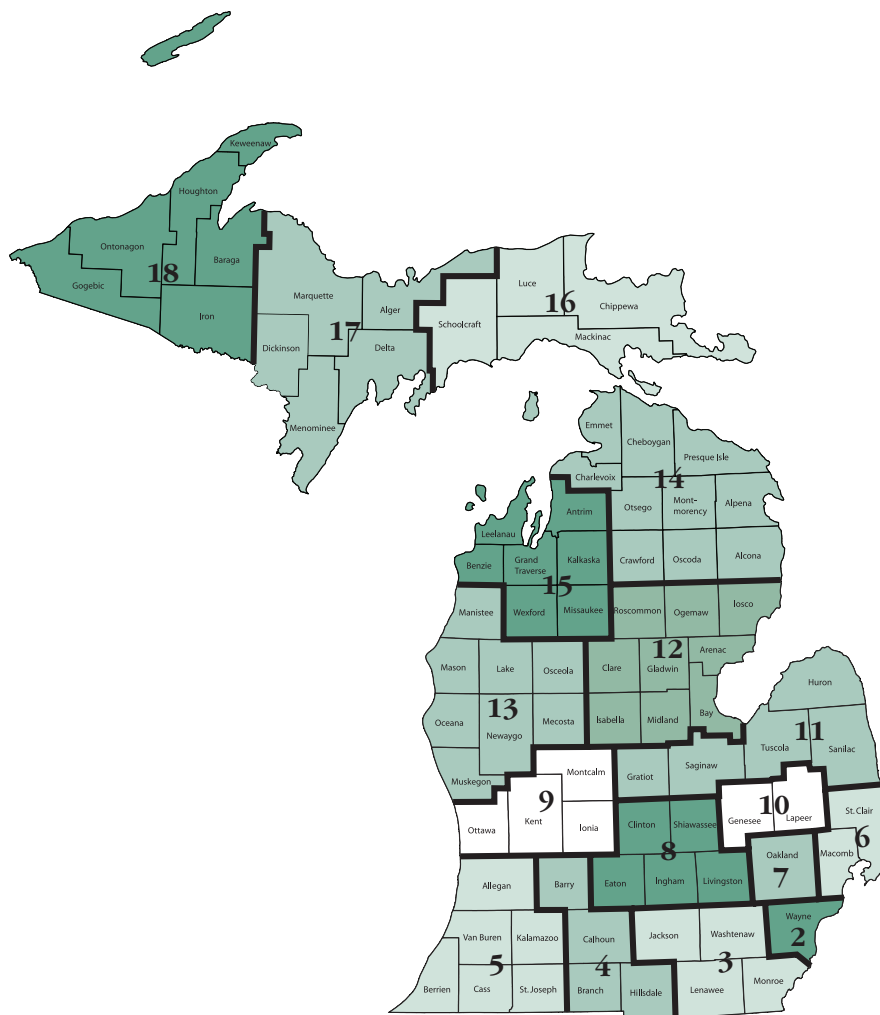
LOCALS USING PAPER BALLOTS FOR THE REGION ELECTION

1. The region at-large election shall be conducted on March 6, 7, and 8, 2018.
2. If your unit is not scheduled to work during the above days, the election shall be conducted on March 13, 14 and 15, 2018.
3. If inclement weather or another emergency interrupts the election listed above, it shall be on the next consecutive workday(s), but no later than March 24.

ABSENTEE BALLOTING

The region at-large election is an on-site election. However, eligible voters unable to vote on site during the election period may notify their local association president of their need to vote by absentee ballot. The request must be in writing, include the specific reason necessitating an absentee ballot, and be received no later than Feb. 21 by the local association president. Eligible voters requesting an absentee ballot and complying with the above requirements shall be mailed an absentee ballot by the local association election committee. An absentee ballot must be returned by U.S. Mail and received by the local association no later than the last day of the election. Late absentee ballots shall be unopened and set aside as void ballots.

Get involved by voting for your MEA Board members and your Michigan and National delegates.



ELECTRONIC VOTING

Members of regions 2-18 participate in MEA's Online Region Elections. Use your home computer, library computer or school computer (if allowed).

The polls for online elections will open at 8 a.m. Monday, March 5 and close at 3:59 p.m. Monday, March 12 at www.mymeaa.org/onlinevoting.

Members access the website using the last four digits of their Social Security number. If you have problems, call for help at 517-337-5440 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. After hours, leave a message and someone will get back with you as soon as possible.

There will be a continuous ballot for ESP members, who will begin

with the Statewide Region 50 Ballot and continue on with their region's ballot.

Positions elected by acclamation at the December Region meeting will be noted on the ballot.

Online election rules and an explanation of the process will be forwarded to local presidents and region election chairs the last week of January 2018. This information will include the procedure for members who do not wish to use the online process to request a paper ballot. The request for paper ballots from individuals or locals must be submitted by 4 p.m. on Feb. 16 to Mike Ostertag in the MEA Executive Office. ▼

CANDIDATES IN THE MARCH REGION ELECTIONS

Key:

Elected by acclamation—denoted with “#”

No nominations received—denoted with “NNR”

Minority 3-1(g) position—denoted with (*)

Region 2

Position 1-MEA Board of
Director/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, 2 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Mark Hoffman, Trenton
E; Doug Coates, Livonia E;
Heather Colombo, Plymouth-Canton E
#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Don Harris, Wayne-Westland E

Position 2-MEA Board of Directors/NEA
RA Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Dawn Pierz, Wyandotte E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Lauren Altenbernt, Van Buren E

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18, same seat as above; Lauren
Altenbernt, Van Buren E

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Robin Owens, Van Buren CMPT
3 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 5-EA NEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Lauren Altenbernt, Van Buren E

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)
3 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Jennifer Lamb, Livonia E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; Dave
Daly, Old Redford Academy/ITS E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; Debbie
Bence, Plymouth-Canton Cafeteria Assn.

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; Debbie Bence,
Plymouth-Canton Cafeteria Assn.

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

4 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

3 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Tov Pauling,
tov0727@gmail.com

Region 3

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Ann
Harris, Hillsdale E; Amy Gish, Jackson City E

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Percy Brown, Ann Arbor P

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#2 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Jim Brousseau, Milan E; Santino
Gaitan, Jackson ISD CFMOT

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Ann Marie Borders, Ann Arbor E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Jared Throneberry, Manchester E

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Linda Foster, Whitmore Lake FP

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; James
(Sid) Halley, Hillsdale CFMOPT

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

5 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Jared Throneberry, Manchester E

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; James
(Sid) Halley, Hillsdale CFMOPT

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: D'Andra Clark,
dandra.clark23@gmail.com

Region 4

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Joe Ratti, Battle Creek E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Kelly Karns, Marshall E

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Julie Tourjie, Calhoun ISD P

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Rachel Foreman, Harper Creek E

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Allan Sherwood, Marshall E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Don Hicks, Bronson E

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Don Hicks, Bronson E

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
John Sullivan, Marshall CFMOP

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18, same seat as above; John
Sullivan, Marshall CFMOP

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

REGION ELECTIONS

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above: NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20: NNR

Elections Chair: Not Available

Region 5

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Kim Largen, Mattawan E; Amanda
Miller, Kalamazoo City E

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Eursla Moore Doyle, Kalamazoo City
OP; Elizabeth McDermott, Kalamazoo
City E; Ryan Piecyk, Lawrence E

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#3 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Miranda Rooy, Kalamazoo City E;
Christine Payne, Kalamazoo City E;
Elizabeth McDermott, Kalamazoo City E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Mary Cooper, New Buffalo E

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin
9/1/18; Caryn Blackburn, Martin E;
Damon Blackburn, Martin E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Roy Freeman, Dowagiac Union CMT

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

2 positions*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

4 positions, immed. thru 3/31/19; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/19; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

3 positions, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/19; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/19; NNR

Elections Chair: Mary Cooper,
mcooper@mynea.org

Region 6

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
John Duffy, Center Line E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin
9/1/18; Kris Kyllonen, Port Huron E;
Jonathon Fielbrandt, Warren E

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Karen Abella, Warren E

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same
seat as above; Paula Herbart, Fraser E

Position 5-EA NEA RA At-Large
Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Chris Kriss, Fitzgerald E

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Paula Herbart, Fraser E

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Lynn Butterworth, Port Huron O

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; Jacob
Reno, Lakeview-St Clair Shores P

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, immed. thru
8/31/20; Colleen Burke, Capac E;
Heather Belesky, Memphis E

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

#1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Mary Campbell, Mt. Clemens E

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Deirdre Blake, Port Huron O

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Lynn Butterworth, Port Huron O

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; Jacob
Reno, Lakeview-St Clair Shores P

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

#1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Linda Conley, Port Huron P

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Rayna Palmer, Port Huron O

Elections Chair: Heather Schulz,
hschulz28@gmail.com

Region 7

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Tom Brenner, Novi E; Doug Hill,
Rochester E; Lisa Welch, South Lyon
E; Deb Shoultz, Bloomfield Hills OP;
Daryl Szymanski, Walled Lake E

Position 2-MEA Board of Directors/NEA
RA Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; Maurice
Telesford, Ferndale E; Valerie Bates, Pontiac
E; Robert Gaines III, Farmington OP

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; Maurice Telesford,
Ferndale E; Valerie Bates, Pontiac E;
Robert Gaines III, Farmington OP

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

3 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Bertha Arribas, Royal Oak E; Jennifer
Dooley, Pontiac E; Angel Bell, Pontiac E

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Michael Graves, Southfield MP

4 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Angel Bell, Pontiac E

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Chandra Madafferri, Novi E; Doug Hill,
Rochester E; Deb Shoultz, Bloomfield
Hills OP; Angel Bell, Pontiac E;
Robert Gaines III, Farmington OP

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19;
Michael Graves, Southfield MP

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

4 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Sherry Carpenter, Clarkston T;
Michael Graves, Southfield MP

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

4 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Thomas Silak,
northvilleea@gmail.com

Region 8

Position 1-MEA Board of Directors/
NEA RA Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Dawn Levey, Ovid-Elsie E; Patricia Purol,
LCC E; Marty Leftwich, Howell E

Position 2-MEA Board of Directors/NEA
RA Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Eve Menefee, LCC E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#2 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; Melissa Kamai-Arumbula, LCC E; Deb Rasmussen, Lansing P

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; Alfonso Salais, Lansing E

3 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

3 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

3 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; Jeffry Wilson, LCC Part Time O

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

5 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

4 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

4 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

4 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Elizabeth Hubert, Eaton Rapids CFMOP

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;

Robin Buysse, Eaton Rapids CFMOP

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

3 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

2 positions*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; Jeffry Wilson, LCC Part-Time O

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

5 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Lance Little, llittle@mea.org

Region 9

Position 1-MEA Board of Directors/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, 2 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Mary Bouwense, Grand Rapids E

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; Julie Brill, Kentwood E; Reed Bretz, Kenowa Hills E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

5 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; Candy Vela, Grand Rapids E; Theresa Dudley; Grand Rapids O; Paul Heemstra, Grand Rapids P; Stephanie Ferrell, Kentwood CFMPT; Dawn Sobleskey, Godwin Heights E;

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; Abram Brosseit, Jenison E

Position 5-EA NEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Jennifer Jones, Grand Rapids E

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

5 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; Cara Williams-Gardner, Grand Rapids E; Pamela Seales, Grand Rapids E; Richard Jackson, Kelloggsville E; Abram Brosseit, Jenison E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

5 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

5 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 4/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

5 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

5 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

5 positions, immed. thru 3/31/18; NNR

5 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 4/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/18; NNR

2 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 4/1/18, same seats as above; NNR

Elections Chair: Michelle Munoz, mickeyteach@gmail.com

Region 10

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; Brett Smith, Linden E

#1 position*, 1 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; Brett Smith, Linden E

Position 5-EA NEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; Felicia Naimark, Flint E; Katherine Lisk, Flint E

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; Felicia Naimark, Flint E; Katherine Lisk, Flint E

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA At-Large Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; Brett Smith, Linden E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position* 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Karen Christian, kcchristian@mea.org

Region 11

Position 1-MEA Board of Directors/NEA RA Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Jenifer Almassy, Reese E

REGION ELECTIONS

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Alexis Pinkston, Saginaw City E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19;
Ryan Schian, Vassar E

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Jason Ostrander, Ithaca E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#2 positions, immed. thru
3/31/20; Andy Heinrich, Vassar E;
Danielle Laming, Cass City E

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#3 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Jane Reif, Cass City E; Jenifer Almassy,
Reese E; Toni Scribner, Vassar E

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Jason Ostrander, Ithaca E

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same
seat as above; Danielle Laming, Cass City E

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Tracy Brightman, Vassar E

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

#2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; Amy
Krug, Reese E; Andy Heinrich, Vassar E

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Ann Auernhamer, Vassar E

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Jason Ostrander,
jostrander@mymea.org

Region 12

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18; Rick Meeth, Bay City E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Donald Tilley, Bay City E; Kathleen
Chantaca-Kubczak, SVSU CM

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; Tammie
Lewis, Harrison E; Lisa Robbins, Coleman E

Position 7-EA/ESP NEA RA
At-Large Delegate

#2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18;
John Pakledinaz, Farwell E; Jenny
(VanDuinen) Oster, Houghton Lake E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Curt Schaiberger, Houghton Lake
E; Julie Christensen, Beal City E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 4/1/18;
Julie Christensen, Beal City E; Curt
Schaiberger, Houghton Lake E

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;
Rhonda Sturgeon, Meridian CFMPT;
Carol Mason, Harrison CFMOPT

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Teresa Mackie, Farwell OP

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Jenny (VanDuinen)
Oster, jjvandui@svsu.edu

Region 13

Position 1-MEA Board of
Directors/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19;
James Webber, Muskegon City
OP; Tyler Frank, Montague E

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Cheryl Lake, Orchard View E;
Macy Taranko, Whitehall E

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Sue Federico, Reeths-Puffer OP

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Tricia Crater, Newaygo E

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; Kathy Six, Fruitport E

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-
Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Britney Christensen, Whitehall E

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large
Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/19; NNR

3 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;
Kendel Trim, Mason Co Eastern E

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; NNR

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Jason Gripton, Holton E

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same
seat as above; Jason Gripton, Holton E

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19;
Andrea Atwood, White Cloud E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin
9/1/18; Karla Hilliard, Manistee P;
Sheila Kaminski, Manistee P

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/18; Deanna
(Dee) Pierson, Muskegon City OP

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18,
same seat as above; Deanna (Dee)
Pierson, Muskegon City OP

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18;
Barb Webber, Muskegon City OP

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins
9/1/18, same seat as above; Barb
Webber, Muskegon City OP

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Laura Savela, Manistee P; Karla
Wheeler, Oakridge CFMT; Barb
Flahive, Muskegon ISD P

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;
Karen Sundbeck, Manistee P

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

3 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

3 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,
same seats as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20;
Sue Federico, Reeths-Puffer OP

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Jim Webber,
jwebber@mea.org

Region 14

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

2 positions*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#3 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; Amanda Thiel, Mio-Ausable E; Rick Sedgwick, Alcona E; Tim McFalda, Mio-Ausable E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20;

Mary Fairbanks, Rogers City CFMPT;

Jeff Engler, Petoskey CMO

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/18; NNR

2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18,

same seats as above; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

3 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

2 positions, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Region 14 MAHE EA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Region 14 MAHE EA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Not Available

Region 15

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Antoinette Schippers, Pine River E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#3 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;

Tawni Deike, Forest Area E; Steve Rubinas,

Manton E; Cassie Chappel, Buckley E

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20;

Sharon Wheeler, Pine River CFOPT

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; Dana

Monks, Buckley E; Kathryn Murphy, Leland E

#1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/18;

Hope Parrish, Mesick E

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18, same seat as above; Craig Jones, Mesick E

Elections Chair: Harvey Miller,
hmiller@netonecom.net

Region 16

Position 1-MEA Board of Directors/NEA RA Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

David Houghton, Sault Ste. Marie

E; Becky Newell, DeTour E

Position 4-MEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Randall Griffis, Tahquamenon E

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;

Jon Olsen, St. Ignace E

Elections Chair: Al Beamish,
abeamish@mymea.org

Region 17

Position 1-MEA Board of Directors/NEA RA Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/19;

Robert Hanchek, N. Central CFMOPT

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Terrie Rugg, Breitung Twp CFMOPT

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#2 positions, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18;

Lisa Talon, Carney-Nadeau E; Theresa

Hruska, Dickinson-Iron ISD E

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Lily Anderson, Dickinson-Iron ISD E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20;

Michelle Herman, Iron Mountain E

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 10-ESP MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;

Kathy Enright, Negaunee OPT

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Region 17 MAHE Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Nanci Love, Bay De Noc CC E

Region 17 MAHE Cluster Alternate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 4/1/18;

Ronald Pearson, Bay De Noc CC E

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 4/1/18; NNR

Elections Chair: Lisa Carubini,
lcarrubini@gmail.com

Region 18

Position 3-MEA RA At-Large Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Gail Maki-Dalbec, Bessemer City E

Position 6-EA NEA RA At-Large Alternate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

#1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20;

Gail Maki-Dalbec, Bessemer City E

Position 8-EA MEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18;

Mary Markham, Chassell Twp E

#1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20;

Tim Nelson, Ontonagon E

Position 9-EA MEA RA Cluster Alternate

#2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20;

Gail Maki-Dalbec, Bessemer City E;

Eric Ghiggia, West Iron County E

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 11-ESP MEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 12-EA NEA RA Cluster Delegate

1 position*, immed. thru 8/31/19; NNR

1 position, immed. thru 8/31/20; NNR

Position 13-EA NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

1 position*, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Position 14-ESP NEA RA Cluster Delegate

#1 position, 3 yr. term begins

9/1/18; Stephen Elenich, Copper

Country ISD CFMOPT

Position 15-ESP NEA RA Cluster Alternate

2 positions, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Region 18 MAHE Cluster Alternate

1 position, immed. thru 3/31/20; NNR

Elections Chair: Steve Elenich,

selenich@copperisd.org

Region 50

Region 50-ESP NEA RA At-Large Delegate

1 position, 3 yr. term begins 9/1/18; Sue

Federico, Reg. 13; Deb Rasmussen, Reg.

8; Rich Wines, Reg. 3; Eursla Moore-Doyle,

Reg. 5; Michael Graves, Reg. 7; Theresa

Dudley, Reg. 9; Bob Hanchek, Reg. 17;

Michele Davis, Reg. 17; Barry Mazurek,

Reg. 15; Paula McConnell, Reg. 6; Eva

Pritchard, Reg. 9; Jennifer Shelito, Reg. 11;

Raymond Carr, Reg. 3; Elizabeth Doyle,

Reg. 5; Odis Haynes, Reg. 5; Deb Shultz,

Reg. 7; Deanna (Dee) Pierson, Reg. 13;

Steve Sanchez, Reg. 7; Becky Lesh, Reg. 7

Region 50-ESP NEA RA At-Large

Delegate-Representing Minority 3-1(g)

3 positions*, 3 yr. terms begin 9/1/18; Sue

Federico, Reg. 13; Deb Rasmussen, Reg.

8; Rich Wines, Reg. 3; Eursla Moore-Doyle,

Reg. 5; Michael Graves, Reg. 7; Theresa

Dudley, Reg. 9; Bob Hanchek, Reg. 17;

Michele Davis, Reg. 17; Barry Mazurek,

Reg. 15; Antonella Piccirilli, Reg. 6; Tish Yaros,

Reg. 12; Kathleen Chantaca-Kubczak, Reg.

12; John Sullivan, Reg. 4; Raymond Carr,

Region 3; Lisa Watkins, Reg. 3; Elizabeth

Doyle, Reg. 5; Odis Haynes, Reg. 5; Mary

Banks, Reg. 5; Deanna (Dee) Pierson,

Reg. 13; Steve Sanchez, Reg. 7; Robert

Gaines III, Reg. 7; Becky Lesh, Reg. 7

New MESSA options put more money in your paycheck

We at MESSA are committed to doing everything we can to ease the financial burden placed on our members by the state's "hard-cap" law. In the past 18 months, we've introduced numerous new plan options designed to reduce the amount that comes out of our members' paychecks for health care.

New options include coinsurance, mandatory mail-order prescriptions and high-deductible, lower-premium plans.

We're doing this without sacrificing two of MESSA's cornerstones: access to a wide network of doctors and excellent member service. MESSA still provides the greatest choice of doctors around and access to the best medical providers, and our member service specialists and field representatives provide one-on-one support to answer any questions you might have—big or small.

Learn more about MESSA's new money-savings options by calling your MESSA field representative at 800.292.4910. **V**



Ross Wilson
MESSA Executive Director



Calling Artist-Members

MEA members in good standing can submit artwork beginning in late February for an annual art exhibition and sale that results in some pieces being purchased for display at MEA headquarters or regional offices.

For more information and an entry form, go to www.mea.org/Art.

Entries to the 54th Annual MEA/

Michigan Art Education Association (MAEA) Art Acquisitions Purchase Exhibition will be accepted from Feb. 19–March 3, 2018. Works will be accepted from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m.–noon on Saturday, March 3.

A juror will determine whether each artwork entry is accepted or rejected

into the exhibit. Awards are as follows: 1) Juror's award; 2) MEA purchase awards; 3) MAEA purchase award; 4) Best of Show; 5) Honorable Mention.

The exhibit opens at MEA headquarters in East Lansing on March 5 and continues through April 18, 2018. **V**

CLASSIFIEDS

Our ad policy, rates and schedule can be found online at www.mea.org/voice. The classifieds deadline for the April 2018 issue is March 16.

TOURS

Visit the Homesites of Laura Ingalls Wilder. 2018 brochure available. Phone 810-633-9973. Email lhsitetours@email.com. Visit our website www.lhsitetours.homestead.com

WELLNESS

Help with anxiety, depression, teaching stress, and relationship issues. Robert Goode, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist. Office in Eastside Ann Arbor. Visit www.goodepsych.com. MESSA, Community Blue, BCBS, Aetna, Medicare. 734-223-4202.

Let us help you buy or refinance a home



As a member of the National Education Association, you have access to special benefits through the **NEA Home Financing Program®**, with financing provided by Wells Fargo. You can take advantage of our valuable programs, tools, and a wide-range of home financing options available to help you reach your goals.

Receive an award from Wells Fargo!

Eligible NEA members and their spouse (or domestic partner), parents, and children who purchase or refinance a home through the **NEA Home Financing Program** will receive a **My Mortgage GiftSM** award after closing — \$500 for buying a home, or \$300 for refinancing your home — for use at participating retailers.^{1,2}

Contact us today by calling the NEA Home Financing Program at 1-800-541-2105 or visit us online at www.neamb.com/hf



NEA, NEA Member Benefits and the NEA Member Benefits logo are registered service marks of NEA Member Benefits Corporation. 1. The NEA Home Financing Program has been developed for NEA members and their families. Parents, spouse or domestic partner, and children are eligible family members.

2. Eligible individuals can receive the Wells Fargo **My Mortgage GiftSM** award approximately 6 weeks after closing on a new purchase or refinance loan secured by an eligible first mortgage or deed of trust with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage ("New Loan"), subject to qualification, approval and closing, when identifying themselves as eligible. The **My Mortgage GiftSM** award is not available with The Relocation Mortgage Program® or to any Wells Fargo team member. Only one **My Mortgage GiftSM** award is permitted per eligible New Loan. This award cannot be combined with any other award, discount or rebate, except for **yourFirst MortgageSM**. This award is void where prohibited, transferable, and subject to change or cancellation with no prior notice. Awards may constitute taxable income. Federal, state and local taxes, and any use of the award not otherwise specified in the Terms and Conditions (available at wellsfargo.com/mmgterms and provided at receipt of award) are the sole responsibility of the **My Mortgage GiftSM** recipient. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage has a services agreement with NEA's Member Benefit Corporation in which NEA's Member Benefit Corporation receives a financial benefit for providing agreed upon services. You are encouraged to shop around to ensure you are receiving the services and loan terms that fit your home financing needs. Information is accurate as of date of printing and is subject to change without notice. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is a division of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. © 2015 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. NMLSR ID 399801. #108185 REV 8/17



Recess Aides have a tough job that's often thankless. But **Mitzi Thornton** knows nearly every kid at Linden Elementary School—and she gets rewarded in hugs.

A recess aide does more than watch the playground, right?

Oh, yes. You have to keep an eye out for fights or bloody noses. Name calling. The kids fall; they break bones. Or if they're having a crisis at home, they sit off by themselves. They cry. You have to see if they're having emotion that's not normal for them to know what's going on.

What's it like when a child breaks a bone during recess?

This year we had a kid playing on this curly pole that they scoot down with their feet, and he slipped and fell off. When he landed, from his shoulder to his elbow was straight, but from his elbow to his hand was like an A. So I got him to stay calm. I didn't try to move his arm; I just kept talking to him. I told him it was going to be okay, we'll get him fixed, and he'll be all right.

How do you handle a child who's sad?

We have a buddy bench. If you don't have anybody to play with, you sit on the buddy bench, and someone will come play. Or if there's someone sitting there, I'll go see why and help them find someone. Or we have kids who have lost siblings or parents. If they get sad, or missing that person, I take them in the office and we get colored paper and make a little book. I tell them to make a picture or write something they want to tell that person they're missing. And it helps.

But somehow you have to walk the line between caring and discipline. How do you do that?

I play with the kids. We build snow forts. I'll go down the slides with them. I'll swing with them. I chase them. They chase me. We draw on the sidewalk with chalk. But the kids know when the tone of my voice changes, it's time to straighten up and listen.

Why is recess important?

They need to burn off their energy so they can concentrate in the classroom. It helps them calm down to

get running, be silly, and de-stress. They can yell. They can scream. They can run. We let them play dodgeball, soccer, football, hopscotch. We have a Mileage Club that we do. They walk so many miles and then they get prizes and stuff for it.

What kind of training do you have or want to do your job?

We have CPR and first aid training, but some kids have issues we don't know about. Emotional issues, or sensory issues. Sometimes we don't know how to treat it when they have a meltdown.

How do you respond?

We had a student with emotional issues, and he was having a meltdown, and I didn't know what to do. I said, "Are you hot lunch or cold lunch?" And he said he was cold lunch. I said, "Oh, what'd Mom pack for you?" So he started telling me about his lunch, and then he started getting wound up again. I said, "Do you have a cat or a dog at home?" And he said he had a dog, so we started talking about the dog and he settled down more. Then I looked at my watch and I said, "Well, I don't know about you, but I'm hungry. Let's go in." Finally, he got up and came in.

What do you love best about your job?

I like going outside and playing with the kids, but I love when they give me hugs. I don't have the stigma that a teacher has. Kids will say, "Why don't we have to call you Mrs. Thornton?" I just let them call me by my first name. I even have a couple of kids that call me Mom. **V**



SHOW YOUR MEA UNION PRIDE!

Introducing the new official credit cards of the MEA. By carrying either the MEA Platinum or Platinum Plus Visa Credit Card, you show your union pride.

Platinum Plus Visa



as low as
1% Cash Back | **12.9%** APR

Unlimited 1% cash back on all purchases. Redeem your cash back at any time, for any amount!¹

Platinum Visa



as low as
8.9% APR

The perfect card if you carry a balance from month to month. The Platinum Visa has a rate **almost 8% lower than the national average for traditional credit cards.**²

plus, **0%** APR on balance transfers for the first six months. After six months, your balance transfer rate reverts to your standard rate, between 8.9% APR and 17.9% APR.³

Apply For Your MEA Visa Today!

meavisa.org • 517-333-2424 • 800-678-4968



Cards provided by:
MSU MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Building Dreams Together

¹ Members will earn 1% cash back on all purchases. Cash back is not earned on tax payments, any unauthorized charges or transactions, cash advances, convenience checks, balance transfers, or fees of any kind. Account must be in good standing to redeem cash back. Returns result in the loss of cash back equal to the amount returned. Negative cash back will be given if returns or credits exceed purchases. Visit meavisa.org/cashback for full terms and conditions. National average of 16.15% APR taken from an article posted on creditcards.com on 12/6/17. ² APR is Annual Percentage Rate. 12.9% APR is lowest rate offered for Platinum Plus Visa Credit Card. 8.9% APR is lowest rate offered for Platinum Visa Credit Card. Rate offered is based on member's credit score. ³ Annual Percentage Rate (APR) of 0% is valid for the first 6 months from the date the Visa Credit Card account is opened and applies only to balance transfers from another financial institution's credit card. After 6 months, rate will revert to your standard rate, between 8.9% and 17.9%. Accounts 60 days late revert to the penalty rate of 17.9%. Introductory APR does not apply to purchases, cash advances, or delinquent loans. Federally insured by NCUA.



It's good to have options.

MESSA has launched several new plan options designed to reduce the amount of money that comes out of your paycheck for health insurance—while keeping the largest doctor network in Michigan and the legendary member service MESSA is known for.

No matter your bargaining unit's circumstances, there's likely a MESSA health plan that will work for you.

If you'd like to talk to someone about ways to reduce your health care costs, call your MESSA field representative at 800.292.4910. He or she can provide specific details for your group.



Good health. Good business. Great schools.
