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2023-2024

MEA/NEA Goals and Objectives

(Adopted by the 2023 Representative Assembly)

Preamble

MEA/NEA goals are established by Representative Assembly delegates to determine the Association's priorities in program and budget development. As a dynamic, progressive state Association, the MEA/NEA programs are interdependent, reciprocal and complementary. No single goal can be achieved in isolation from related goals. To achieve MEA/NEA goals in all key areas requires balanced, coordinated actions by all MEA/NEA components elected leaders, staff and members.

MEA's highest priorities shall be to advance the education profession and the welfare of its members by continuing:

- To seek favorable fiscal reform for financing public education to ensure quality programs;
- To develop student learners in a dynamic educational setting;
- To improve education and the profession;
- To provide bargaining representation and contract maintenance;
- To protect the legal rights of its members and locals;
- To improve working conditions for all school employees.

A. Professional and economic rights

To promote the professional and economic interest of Michigan members.

1. *Collective bargaining*

To assure that all public employees enjoy the right to engage in good faith collective bargaining, fair treatment and due process as provided by law and to pursue legislation to remove restrictions on the right to strike and allow for third-party resolutions of impasse, including binding arbitration, where the employee groups request such assistance. To secure legislation that requires local school districts to consolidate for the purpose of collective bargaining when the majority of members in their respective locals petition for such action.

2. *Salaries*

To increase entry-level salaries and ensure career earnings comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities.

3. *Unified bargaining*

To implement state, area and local bargaining; to expand unified bargaining programs; to develop appropriate pilot programs with objectives, strategies, structures and evaluation. The state, area and local will work cooperatively toward achieving the bargaining goals and objectives as established by the Representative Assembly.

4. *Agency shop*

To negotiate agency shop clauses in all contracts.

B. Government affairs

To provide for optimal funding of public education and increased effectiveness of members' influence on Michigan education through political action.

1. *Funding of public education*

To provide an adequate and stable tax base as a source of revenue for public education which shall guarantee a quality education for every student.

To provide an adequate revenue base to increase the state's financial support for pre-K through higher education.

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To continue to seek enactment of legislation that meet specifications as adopted by the Representative Assembly and/or Board of Directors. To provide leadership, representation and coordination of appropriations for all levels of education: pre-K-12 through higher education.

2. *Federal support*

To supplement NEA's efforts to secure funding for public education from public tax sources to equal at least one-third (1/3) federal support for the public schools.

3. *Retirement*

To continue to seek funding for the Michigan retirement system to provide improved benefits. To maintain a coalition of the major educational personnel groups, active and retired, for the purpose of improving the retirement system. To provide a system of preretirement education for current MEA members planning their retirement. To involve current retirees in MEA's political action program.

4. *Support friends of education/coalitions*

To seek out, support, elect and monitor individuals who support MEA/NEA goals and objectives. To form political coalitions with other organizations, including organized labor, who support MEA/NEA goals and objectives.

5. *Local political action*

To provide local associations with consultation and training in developing comprehensive political action.

6. *Statewide ballot issues*

To monitor the political development of statewide ballot issues and to take appropriate actions of support or opposition when necessary to meet MEA/NEA goals and objectives.

7. *Teacher licensure*

To ensure that implementation of State Department of Education policy provides legal status for the profession and establishes professional jurisdiction over licensing and the right to practice, eliminates the use of emergency permits and other substandard certificates, improves the universities' standards for entry of candidates into preparation for the teaching profession and clarifies the role and qualifications of paraprofessional aides.

C. Improving the profession

To achieve for Michigan members a leadership position in enhancing the profession's autonomy.

1. *Strengthen local affiliates*

To continue to strengthen the network of effective local affiliates, leaders and members by providing comprehensive, general, administrative, consultative training and representative services; regular and comprehensive communications on the MEA/NEA; and training in organizational and leadership skills, especially for Minority Person, 3-1(g) and women school employees.

2. *Membership enrollment*

To enroll all current and retired educational personnel.

3. *Certified teachers*

To continue to assure that every classroom is staffed with a certified teacher who is included in the teachers' bargaining unit.

4. *Staffing*

To ensure that greater emphasis be placed on securing and maintaining the most capable education support professionals. To provide salaries and benefits for education support professionals that are competitive with those for similar positions in private industry and business. (April 2015)

5. *Staff development*

To achieve effective influence in the preservice and in-service education of all school professionals. To negotiate such staff professional development opportunities for all school personnel.

To aggressively pursue and maintain control over the design and implementation of teacher centers and teacher preparation programs. To seek seats on all governing boards of teacher-training institutions.

To maintain and expand programs for members in the fields of school curriculum, instructional techniques, instructional technology, and research based learning and teaching theories.

6. Professional Collaboration

To maintain and expand active collaborative relationships with state and national policy groups, preparation institutions, research institutions, and nongovernmental entities that are actively involved in shaping our profession.

D. Improving education through site-based decisionmaking

To achieve for Michigan members a leadership position in improving classroom instruction and educational services and in advancing civil and human rights.

1. Site-based decisionmaking

To implement site-based decisionmaking within contractual parameters in all schools.

2. Curriculum improvement

To provide professional consultation, training and clearinghouse services regarding improvement of school curriculum, teacher and appropriate support staff participation in educational decisionmaking at all levels of instruction, teacher preparation activities in the improvement of school curriculum, and teacher and appropriate support staff participation in decisionmaking.

3. Academic freedom

To guarantee academic freedom for all members and to vigorously oppose any attempts at censorship of published books and/or other materials in educational institutions.

4. Accreditation

To obtain teacher majorities on the governance bodies of all accrediting agencies for all levels of public education.

5. Nondiscrimination

To continue to identify and resolve racism and sexism in the schools by working with state and local boards of education and boards of trustees and regents in the development of nondiscriminatory hiring practices. To cooperate in a national concerted effort to influence publishing companies prior to the printing of textbooks and other instructional materials by providing consultation and clearinghouse services to assist members: a) in identifying and resolving institutional racism in the schools; b) regarding useful research and curricula designs for minority group children, including adequate distribution of multi-ethnic texts and materials to all children; and c) regarding racism and sexism in education, including text materials, curricula, athletics, career education, compensatory education, special education, bilingual education, migrant education and member behavior.

6. Testing

To monitor the impact of high-stakes testing on school curriculum and to work toward objectively using group standardized tests.

To gain the authority for waivers from MEAP testing.