

The Word

NOVEMBER
2009



“Race to the Top”

4.35 billion federal dollars, “Race to the Top” funding, will become available to states on a grant basis. The guidelines for this grant money were announced on July 24th, by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

One of those guidelines specifies as follows: “States that explicitly prohibit linking data on achievement or student growth to principal and teacher evaluations will be ineligible for reform dollars until they change their laws.” Wisconsin, which prohibited using student test results on the 4th, 8th and 10th grade WKCE to evaluate teachers, was one such state.

On Thursday last week the Senate Education Committee voted 6-1 to approve Senate Bill 372, making a technical change to ensure Wisconsin is eligible for “Race to the Top” dollars.

Were we sold out? Actually, no. In fact, the bipartisan vote followed rejection of amendments supported by Senate Republicans to strip the bill of the collective bargaining component and “to allow student standardized test scores to be used as one factor in teacher discipline, suspension, or nonrenewal of contract.

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WAWMEA	
Highly Qualified Teachers	
Who Care About Kids!	

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WEAC President, Mary Bell said, "Under this legislation, a school board could use the student results on the WKCE for teacher evaluations, provided the board has developed a teacher evaluation plan that includes a description of the evaluation process, multiple criteria in addition to exam results, the rationale for using exam results to evaluate teachers, and an explanation of how the board intends to use the evaluations to improve student achievement."

WEAC worked to make sure that teachers will have input in using test scores. Said President Bell, "In addition, this legislation ensures that teachers are at the table in discussions surrounding the use of student data on these standardized tests by making the teacher evaluation plan a mandatory subject of collective bargaining. The proposal acknowledges that just as a single test does not represent the sum total of a student's abilities, a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom cannot be judged solely on their students' test scores."

Of course, being eligible does not mean Wisconsin will be one of the lucky winners in the "Race to the Top" funds, but at least our leadership has helped to put Wisconsin in line to compete.



Be An Agent for Change! Run for a WAWMEA Leadership Position!



This is a great time to be a union advocate. It has become apparent that traditional interests around wages, salaries and benefits must stretch towards issues that deal with the quality of education which include but are not limited to:

- Getting class sizes to levels that are manageable and productive.
- Meeting the needs of a diverse population.
- Writing curriculum that is vigorous and meets the needs of students.
- Offering a balanced curriculum that addresses ALL aspects of the WHOLE child.

- Providing services to our student population that go beyond the classroom walls.
- Providing PDP (USEFULL) and Professional Development Resources for all our members.

We must continue to fight for the things we have fought for in the past. More of us need to be directly involved. The West Allis – West Milwaukee Education Association will open nominations in January. Have you thought about running for office? Our leadership has always included people who are committed to great public schools, devoted to the best interests of teachers and clearly possess a vision for education in our community, state and country. The best way to learn about the West Allis-West Milwaukee Education Association, West Suburban Council, Wisconsin Education Association Council and the National Education Association is to get involved. Nominate yourself!

Between January 6th and January 27th the Elections Committee will be taking nominations for: President, Vice President, Treasurer, two Association Directors, one Director of West Suburban, fifteen Delegates to the Representative Assembly of West Suburban Council, thirteen Delegates to the WEAC Representative Assembly, and four Delegates to the the NEA Representative Assembly.

The election will take place in each of our schools March 8th – 12th, 2010. The ballot count will take place at FL Wright Intermediate School.



American Education Week November 15-21, 2009

The National Education Association's 88th annual American Education Week (AEW) will be celebrated during the week of November 15-21, 2009. The AEW tagline, "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility," emphasizes the shared responsibility for public education. All of us—parents, students, teachers, education support professionals, elected officials, business and community leaders, and others—are responsible for ensuring the basic right of every student to attend a great public school.



Deadline Change to Declare Candidacy as State Delegate to NEA Representative Assembly

Due to a constitutional amendment passed by the 2009 WEAC Representative Assembly, the timeline on this election has changed. The 2010 NEA Convention will be held July 1-6, 2010 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The 2011 NEA Convention will be held June 30-July 5, 2011 in Chicago, Illinois. Members of the WEAC will elect delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly for a two-year term in February, 2010. Members planning to seek election as state delegates are required to file their declaration of candidacy in the office of the WEAC Executive Director, postmarked no later than December 1, 2009. Funding for state elected delegates is provided by the WEAC.

Email at School

While at school, you open your mailbox to see a relative has sent you an e-mail—and it's not nice. You type a response and then move the cursor over "Send." STOP! That might not be in your best interest, as a current court case questions whether any e-mail sent from school can be released to the public, regardless of the personal content.

While Jina L. Jonen, WEAC Legal Counsel, with written support from the State Attorney General,

insists that personal e-mails are not public records under the law, the Circuit Court did not agree.

The case is now in the Appeals Court, awaiting decision. This case could hugely impact how district personnel communicate electronically. The argument is that anything sent from a school computer is public record. Jonen counters that personal e-mail is



not public record if it's not related to official school business. "The case tells us that teachers have to be aware," says Jonen. "They have to understand that emails they send could become public record." She adds: "Basically, don't email something you don't want other people to read."

Best E-mail Defenses

E-mail use at school boils down to four Ps: be professional, respect privacy, know your policy and realize the e-mails you send may become public record. To protect yourself and maintain a professional image when e-mailing at school:

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Treat e-mail as professional correspondence, complete with proper grammar, punctuation and voice. Also, think before sending. Determine whether the information to be shared would be better suited for a phone call or in-person conversation. Information that is confidential, complicated or emotional can be difficult or inappropriate to convey in written word. Tone, sarcasm and humor can be misinterpreted by the recipient.

2. Remember the student privacy act: you should only communicate about Susie to Susie's parents. Are you part of a student's IEP team? Talk with your principal about the best way to handle electronic communication in this situation to protect confidentiality.

3. Read and know your district's computer and e-mail use policy. If you don't understand it, ask your Association for clarification. Need a policy? Go to: <http://www.wawm.k12.wi.us/District%20Information/Technology/acceptableuse.htm>

4. Limit who you give your school e-mail address to and restrict how much you use it for personal business. Districts have a duty to maintain records such as e-mails for up to seven years—and they can potentially become public record. "The best thing to do is consider the four Ps before you make the decision to hit 'send,'" says Jonen.

MEMBERSHIP

Angela Bina

The updating of current teachers in the district is still going on. Please continue to keep me informed of name changes, address changes, etc. so that I can keep things as accurate as possible.

A "teachers only" distribution list has been created and one test message has been sent out. However, Human Resources has strongly suggested that we come up with guidelines as to how to use this system and what to do if someone abuses it. I would like the assistance of the Executive Board to create these guidelines before I publish any more "Did You Know" messages.

The Communication Model WA-WM USE IT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

(attempting to solve problems at the building level)

Several years ago WAWMEA and the West Allis - West Milwaukee School District developed a model for working through member issues. Please try to follow this model. Your Association has scheduled two Labor Management meetings per month this year, until YOUR concerns are worked through. Your Association has requested a "refresher" session on the Communication Model, for District Administrators as well as Association Building Representatives. We are still working to make this happen. Hopefully this will occur in the

very near future. These are the steps we'd like our membership to take to try to first resolve issues at a Building level.

1. Building Level Problem Identification.
2. Communication with building Administrator and Individual or Representative of Group to resolve problem.
3. Communication between Individual or Group Representative and Head Building Representative to resolve problem.
4. Communication between individual or Group Representative, Head Building Representative and Administrator to resolve problem.
5. Head Building Representative contacts PR&R Chairs:
Secondary
Jim Kurowsky,
Intermediate
Heather Swenson,
Elementary
Michelle Daavettila
6. PR&R Chair, Head Building Representative, Individual or Group Representative and Administrator meet to attempt resolution.
7. Issue goes to Labor Management for discussion and resolution. Issue must have been discussed between Administrator and Head Building Representative in an attempt towards resolution.
8. If no satisfactory resolution occurs, a grievance may be filed.

Read your contract! If you have questions or concerns ask your Building Representative for HELP!



PRESENTS:

GOAL WRITING WORKSHOP



If you are a **second-year Initial Educator**, your approved professional development goal is due to DPI by December 31, 2009.

November 21st is a work day where you can obtain assistance with writing your goal from experienced PDP writers and reviewers.

Attendees need to bring their wireless laptop and their QEI password. If unable to bring a wireless laptop, you may bring a hard copy of Step II, sections A through E.

Saturday, November 21st

9:30 a.m.

13805 West Burleigh Road

Register at WeaverL@wi.rr.com to reserve a seat and get your pre-workshop instructions.

All USEFULL workshops are open to and free for members of Council #10, Lakewood UniServ Council, North Shore United Educators, TriWauk UniServ Council and West Suburban Council.



GOAL REVIEW / APPROVAL SESSION



If you have completed Steps I and II A-E and your professional goal is ready for review, register for one of these sessions. USE-FULL will provide PDP Teams who can review your professional goal for possible approval.

****So that PDP teams have sufficient time to review each Initial Educator's Professional Goal, seats for these sessions will be strictly limited. Register early!**

****Initial Educators who are unable to reserve a seat at one of the Review Sessions will be placed on a Wait List and will be referred to the Quality Educator Interactive website to submit their goal to reviewers online.**

**Saturday, November 21st
Noon**

OR

**Thursday, December 3rd
5:00 p.m.**

**13805 West Burleigh Road
Brookfield**

Register at WeaverL@wi.rr.com to reserve a seat.

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