

Council #10



CUDAHY • FRANKLIN • GREENDALE • GREENFIELD • OAK CREEK • ST. FRANCIS • SOUTH MILWAUKEE

Don't Miss the Spring Elections!

Why should you care about the general elections taking place on **Tuesday, April 6?**

The reason you should care and make a real effort to vote is that winners of the school board elections this spring will have significant power over our compensation, our working conditions and the quality of education we can provide. Some candidates will be narrowly focused on cutting taxes even at the expense of quality education. Others will be committed first and foremost to the highest quality staff and the best possible schools.

Unfortunately, the April 6 election will be taking place during Spring Break in many of our districts. If you may be out of town or could forget to vote on that day, there are two great options to make sure your vote is cast.

First, you can easily order an absentee ballot. To vote absentee, you must be registered to vote at your current address. You should print the application for an absentee ballot off the Wisconsin Elections Board Web site at <http://elections.state.wi.us>. Click on *FAQ's*, *Absentee Voting*, "*How Does an Elector Request an Absentee Ballot.*" You will need to mail this form to your municipal clerk. All mail requests for absentee ballots must be received no later than the Thursday before the election (April 1), but to be on the safe side you should request the ballot, complete it, and send it in well before the election.

Second, if you prefer to simply go down to your municipal clerk's office and vote in person, you may do this by going to your municipal clerk's office at the addresses listed here: <http://elections.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=10506&locid=47>. This takes very little time and if you need to register or re-register, you can do this at the same time.

What Does the Fund 10 Balance Really Mean?

At the bargaining table and in our schools, district administrators are telling our members that budgets are tight, cuts are coming and we should expect little in compensation increases for now and the foreseeable future.

When our local leaders point out that the district has a large and growing reserve of money called the Fund 10 Balance, the district often states that this money cannot be used to stave off cuts or provide for cost of living increases. Why? Because the Fund 10 Balance is not really a reserve of money but a kind of checking account for paying ongoing bills.

A simple visit to the DPI website convinces us that this claim is not accurate. Visit the website <http://dpi.wi.gov/sfs/fundbal.html> to find the DPI's description of the Fund 10 Balance as "a financial resource available to finance expenditures of a following fiscal period." At the end of the fiscal year, a certain total amount of revenue was received and expenditures made, and then the books are closed. It is the difference between these two trends that creates the balance.

The real financial picture for each district will be different and we recommend against reaching any conclusions without a careful look at each budget. However, most of our districts have multi-million dollar reserves that are between 20 and 30 percent of the overall budget. Given that many districts in this state operate successfully with less than 10 percent in reserve, we do have to question why these reserves are large and growing, especially if our district is asking us to make sacrifices at the bargaining table.

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Council #10 Website
www.weac.org/council10

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Council #10 Emerging
Voices, Kohler, WI,
March 26-28

WEAC Representative
Assembly (RA), April 23-
25, Green Bay

Southeast Legislative
Dinner, May 6, Location
and Time TBD

Great
Schools



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Act Now To Help Save Education Jobs

It is well established that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the so called “stimulus package”, saved hundreds of thousands of jobs in schools this year and next. However, these critical funds from the federal government will mostly be spent by the end of the next school year. According to an analysis by the NEA research department, the state of Wisconsin is likely to be short over **\$300 million** in education funding for 2011. Such a shortfall would likely mean thousands of layoffs in school districts throughout Wisconsin.

In December, with President Obama’s support, the House of Representatives passed the NEA-supported Jobs for Main Street Act, including significant investments in education to help save and create jobs that help students achieve, run our schools, and strengthen the middle class. According to the NEA, this bill would likely save or create nearly **4,000 jobs** for school employees in Wisconsin alone.

Now, it is the Senate’s turn. NEA is urging the Senate to support a jobs package that provides, at a minimum, the critical education investments included in the House-passed bill. Quick action is necessary. Governors and state legislatures across the country have already begun to grapple with how to address budget shortfalls for the next fiscal year, as most are well underway in their FY2011 budget planning process. If left unaddressed, budget shortfalls will have a devastating impact on schools, students, and educators.

Investment in public education is the best investment for the nation’s economy, in the short run and long run. The education dollars provided in the Jobs for Main Street Act will save or create hundreds of thousands of educator jobs, and will provide a critical infusion of funds into struggling communities.

Take action today by visiting the NEA’s Legislative Action Center at <http://www.nea.org/home/LegislativeActionCenter.html>. Urge the Senate to pass a jobs package that includes, at a minimum, the investments in education provided in the House-passed bill.

Check Out the WEAC Education Support Professional (ESP) Blog

The WEAC Education Support Professional (ESP) blog is a place where everyone—ESP or not—can stay informed and stay connected. WEAC ESP members can use this space to write about whom they are and what they are thinking, and to find out more about what is new in the ESP world. Here, you can also find resources such as the WEAC ESP Handbook, learn more about the WEAC ESP Certificate and professional development, and stay connected with other ESP local activities. This blog is housed on the www.weac.org ESP landing page.

What’s in Your School District Budget?

In anticipation of budget difficulties – some real, some exaggerated – district administrations in our area have been telling our members that budget cuts are imminent. In response, our teacher and support staff locals in South Milwaukee and Franklin decided to put together their own list of suggestions for district budget savings. Working together, these locals asked building reps throughout their districts to collect their members’ best ideas and then collated them.

In South Milwaukee, a long list of potential savings was identified and the leaders of the effort met with school board members to discuss them. Their goal was to point out logical ways to save that would not cut staff and would minimize the effect on programs that matter to our kids. The conversation was well received and a positive moment in the relationship between the board and its union employees. For more information on how to get such an effort started in your district, contact our UniServ office.

THIS PUBLICATION IS AN 11.29 COMMUNICATION WITH WEAC MEMBERS