

Bay Lakes United Educators

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www.WEAC.org/BLUE

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November's Election Changed Everything!

Pundits and political activists tend to focus on the results of the November election as wins and losses for Republicans and Democrats. However, it's not about political parties, it's about the values of those in office and the actions they plan to take that matter to us.

In November, very conservative, anti-union, anti-public education candidates for governor, assembly, and state senate were elected. This WILL HAVE a direct impact on your working conditions and your family's financial future. Based on campaign promises and past legislation proposed, your Association is anticipating just some of the following:

♦ **Changing the WRS investment board.** The governor is able to appoint individuals to the WRS investment board. This board manages your retirement savings. Governor-elect Walker has promised to have the WRS invest in more Wisconsin start-up companies. While this sounds very pro-Wisconsin, our state has one of the best funded and managed public employee pensions, due in large part to the conservative nature of the current investment board. Our members' retirement savings should not be used as a piggy bank for risky business.

♦ **Changing the make-up of the WERC.** The governor is able to appoint individuals to serve 6-year terms as the Commissioners of the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission. These people render decisions on your pay, benefits, and working conditions by ruling on interest arbitrations, prohibited practice complaints, declaratory rulings, and unit clarifications. A Commissioner has been appointed by Governor Doyle to fill one interim term, but has not yet been confirmed. Another Commissioner's term is due to expire in March 2011. The ideology of the people who serve as Commissioners have a direct influence on the bargaining and maintenance of your local's collective bargaining agreements.

While the above may seem like a "done deal" based on the fact that the Governor has a right to appoint, the legislature still has the power to deny confirmation so effective communication with legislators can still have an impact. **Your legislators could also have an impact on**

the following bills that could be proposed in the next two years:

♦ **Mandatory pension contributions by employees.** Most Bay Lakes United Educators local contracts have bargained that the Districts pay the employee's share of WRS (your pension). This equals as much as 6% of your salary. Should this idea become law, a teacher who makes \$45,000 would have his/her take home pay reduced by \$2,700; an ESP member's \$25,000 take home pay would be reduced by \$1500.

♦ **Changing the WRS benefit to a defined contribution rather than a defined benefit plan.** Currently retiree members enjoy a defined benefit plan that continues as long as they live. In a defined contribution plan, your retirement benefit would be based on how much was contributed (the employer/employee's share) and how much that money appreciated over time. This could dramatically change our members' ability to retire.

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Call To Action

By Dean DeBroux, BLUE President

For the last several years, we have been beating the drum that it is essential to our well-being and the well-being of our students to elect pro public education candidates. Well, now we will find out if

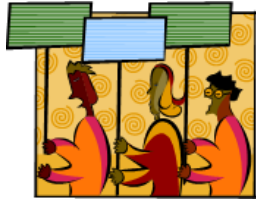


our fears were based in truth or fiction. With the election of Scott Walker and the Republican control of both the Senate and the Assembly, they feel they can do anything they want to do. The list of bad, stupid and wrong-headed ideas they have is long. We can sit around and dwell on the negative all day, but that doesn't get us anywhere. This will be the moment of truth for you and your organization. The question is,

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(Call to Action continued from page 1)

will you get active and support your organization? Will you be willing to attend rallies? Will you support local efforts to screen candidates? Will you contact your legislators when asked to do so? Will you attend local union meetings? Will you vote? If not, then there is nothing we can do but let the wind of right wing conservatism take us where it will. Times have changed and we must adapt to the new political environment. The truth is, we simply cannot function the same way we have in the past. We need to get politically active and soon. The journey will be long and arduous. The fight will be bitter and bloody, but we have fought the difficult fight before, and we can do it again. There will be pain along the way. Hopefully, this will awaken the sleeping giant to its once dominating stature. We will be asking you to answer the call. Will you stand up and Fight, Fight, Fight?



(November's Election Changed Everything! Continued from page 1)

♦ **Making health insurance a permissive or prohibited subject of bargaining.** Currently most locals, who are unhampered by restrictive contract language, are able to bargain with the District the employee's portion of the premium, prescription drug co-pays, insurance providers, deductibles, and what is covered by the plan. These changes are bargained typically as a quid pro quo for salary or other benefits. A change in state law would give the employer all rights to determine your health insurance benefits. One of Governor-elect Walker's proposals would be to force all public employees into the state health insurance plan.

♦ **Making all public employees pay 30% of their health insurance premium.** Currently the amount of premium share is a bargained item and members in our UniServ pay from 0% to 17% of the total health insurance premium. Should a 30% premium share become law, this bargaining chip would be gone and you can expect take home pay to be reduced accordingly.

♦ **Reinstate the QEO and make it apply to all public employees.** Previously, the Qualified Economic Offer (QEO) applied only to teacher bargains and while it restricted increases in salary, if a voluntary agreement could not be reached, unions were still able to maintain health benefits. This might not be the case in a new QEO law and this time, we could expect ESP bargains to also be negatively affected by the law. If a QEO-like statute is not enacted, the legislature could still alter the interest arbitration criteria, having the same effect - - making bargaining even more of an uneven playing field for educators.

Howard-Suamico Staff Hosts Community Employment Resource Night

By Keith Schroeder, Bay Port High School

Our staff offered a "Community Employment Resource Night" Thursday, September 23rd. We gathered together businesses and agencies and our staff volunteers to provide a service for our community.

The staff in our district believes that we are "everybody's school district." Our community, district, neighborhoods, students, businesses are all intricately woven and interdependent on each other. This melting pot requires cooperation where we partner together and work side-by-side as we create a better future.

We've seen the toll that the current economic conditions have taken on our families and businesses. We felt that we needed to do all we could to support them. Our "Community Employment Resource Night" is what we came up with. We envisioned it as a "one stop shop" for everything job related. We started the night with a presentation on "How to Leverage the Power of the Web as the Ultimate Employment Resource." Attendees could network with the agencies and businesses present and could get one-on-one assistance with resumes, cover letters, or utilizing the web resources presented.

The night was an overwhelmingly positive experience both for those in attendance and also for the staff who had volunteered their time. "We made a difference, and that's what we set out to do." We had about 50 community members, 15 businesses/agencies, and 9 staff members present for the event. A web resource page for the event can be found here:

<http://communityresource.pbworks.com/>

Here is a link to one of the news station coverage of the event: http://www.fox11online.com/dpp/news/local/green_bay/school-district-helps-jobseekers.



Welcome Sue Clauss!

After working as a temp in our office for three months, Sue joined the BLUE staff on December 1 as a

secretary, replacing the retired Shirley Forrest. She is a great addition to our office. Be sure to welcome her when you stop in or call!

Ban on Texting While Driving in Effect December 1st

Wisconsin motorists are banned from sending text messages from behind the wheel **beginning December 1, 2010**. The law, which was signed by Gov. Doyle in May, made Wisconsin the 25th state to pass similar legislation.

In all, 30 states currently ban texting for all drivers—11 of which have been signed into law in 2010 alone. The recent crackdown on distracted driving—which has enlisted the efforts of influential people including Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and Oprah Winfrey—has focused on educating drivers about the dangers of texting behind the wheel.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in 2008 about 6,000 U.S. drivers died and an estimated half-million were injured in car accidents that involved distracted driving.

The Dangers

Text messaging has skyrocketed. Phone users in the U.S. sent 9.8 billion text messages a month in December 2005, compared to 157.2 billion in December 2009—a fifteen-fold increase, according to the cell phone industry's trade group, CTIA.

A 2009 study by the University of Utah, which had college students using a driving simulator, found that there was a six-fold increase of crashes when participants were texting while driving.

Another study by the Virginia Tech University's Transportation Institute found that within a 6-second interval, drivers who were texting had their eyes averted

from the road a total of 4.6 seconds. "This equates to a driver traveling the length of a football field at 55 mph without looking at the roadway," according to the report.

Not Just a Teen Issue

Numbers released in 2009 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reveal that drivers under age 20 are the worst offenders, but texting while driving is a growing trend among all ages.

A study released in June by The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life project found that adults are equally as likely as teens to text while driving. Of all U.S. adults, including those who don't text, 27% said they have sent text messages from behind the wheel. About the same (26%) of driving teens said they had done so.

However, nearly half (47%) of adults who use the text messaging function on their cell phones said they have read or sent messages while driving, compared to 34% of texting teens.

How to Avoid Texting While Driving

It can be very tempting to at least look at your phone if you've received a text. Here are some tips you and your kids can practice to avoid the temptation of reading or sending texts while driving:

- **Turn your phone off or on vibrate.** Simply hearing the alarm that you have a new message can tempt many to look at their phones right away. Keep it off or on vibrate to avoid this temptation.
- **Out of sight, out of reach.** Make sure your phone is unreachable. Put it in your glove compartment, in your purse, or in the back seat.
- **If you have a hands-free headset, use the text-to-speech function on your phone.** Many cell phones offer settings or allow users to install data that synthesizes and reads texts messages out loud in computerized speech. (See inset on opposite page for examples.) And, if you're in the market for a new car, you might want to check out vehicles that will read texts to you. Ford, for example, has equipped much of their lineup with a function that will read texts off of your cell phone.

- **Consider a smart-phone app.** There are apps that will read e-mails and texts aloud and even send automatic responses saying you're unavailable.

– adapted from Your\$ Magazine,
WEA Trust Member
Benefits, Fall, 2010



Visit Us on the Web

www.weac.org/blue

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- [Local Associations in the BLUE UniServ](#)
(includes contact information for local leaders)
- [Members Only](#)
(find local contracts and member benefits)

Look for valuable information about:

- Health Care Reform
- School Funding Reform



Exploring the Past: Archaeology in the Upper Mississippi River Valley

Walking beside 1,000-year-old burial mounds, flaking raw stone into tools, learning how potsherds tell us about human behavior, and understanding how humans adapt to complex, ever-changing environments—our 2011 NEH Summer Institute has all this and more.

The Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse will offer a three-week NEH Summer Institute on July 11–29, 2011. This learning experience for K-12 teachers explores how Native Americans and Euro-Americans have adapted to the Upper Mississippi River Valley over the past 13,500 years, and how archaeology leads to an understanding of how human cultures change and adapt through time.

The Institute will feature a one-day excavation experience, field trips to archaeological sites, hands-on laboratory and workshop activities, demonstrations, and classroom activities. Individual projects will help participants tailor the content to their own teaching areas. Participants receive a \$2,700 stipend to help offset their expenses. Application and other information on the Institute is available online at <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/neh.htm>. Deadline for applications is March 1, 2011.

Do You Want To Become A UniServ Director?

The Wisconsin Education Association Council is currently seeking applicants for a staff internship. The WEAC Program provides for a one year, full-time internship (approximately July 1 to July 1). Interns are selected from applicants who are interested in an opportunity to become professional staff. Women and minorities are strongly encouraged to apply. The intern selected will work directly with a group of mentors, including UniServ staff and WEAC program staff. The intern program is designed to be an on-the-job learning experience. Internships are full-time positions with duties scheduled during the week and on weekends.

Application Deadline is January 4, 2011

Interns are not allowed to hold any appointed or elected office at any level of the Association (local, UniServ, state or national). For an application, contact **Mark Simons, UniServ Program Manager**, at 800-354-7816, or simonsm@weac.org.

Eligibility (Desired Qualifications)

- BA Degree preferred
- Strong desire for future employment in prof. staff work
- Subscribe to the philosophy of WEAC and the UEP
- Experience in (or willingness to learn) negotiations, grievance processing, political action, organizing, public relations, writing and public speaking
- Knowledge of educational issues
- Strong communication skills
- Demonstrated leadership in local, state, and/or national organizations
- Willingness to travel

Salary & Benefits

- (1) The compensation and benefits provided shall be directly related to the intern's current compensation and benefit level.
- (2) The intern will be provided with a) travel and accident insurance; b) Workers' Compensation; c) Social Security; and d) Unemployment Insurance. While on assignment, travel expenses (food, lodging, mileage, etc.) are paid in accordance with the policies and agreements established for WEAC staff.



Register NOW for Regional WEAC Winter Conferences

February 25-26, 2011—Middleton: Madison Marriott West
March 4-5, 2011—Wausau: Friday night at Howard Johnson,
Saturday at Westwood Conference Center

For detailed information and to register go online to:

www.weac.org/winterconference

or contact Gayle Isermann at IsermannG@weac.org or 800-362-8034, ext 340,
or Paul Anjeski at AnjeskiP@weac.org or 800-362-8034, ext. 291.

PDP CORNER

If you are an initial educator or a teacher who is obtaining a new license or renewing a license through the Professional Development Plan process (PI-34), you need to be aware of the workshops available to you at the BLUE UniServ Office. For minimal fees, our members can learn about the process, and obtain the necessary review and signatures needed in one easy stop. Mark your calendars!

Register NOW for May 7 Workshops and Sessions!

PDP Writing Workshop for Initial Educators Saturday, May 7, 2011

We offer two FREE sessions at the BLUE office: AM: 8:30 a.m. registration; workshop 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and PM: 12:30 p.m. registration; workshop 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. (PM workshop will only be offered if needed.)

PDP Goal Approval Session Saturday, May 7, 2011

If you need your PDP Goals approved, reviewers will be available at the BLUE office to review and approve your goals for a flat fee of \$25.00.

PDP Verification Session Saturday, May 7, 2011

If you are moving from Initial Educator to Professional Educator status and need to have your PDP plan verified, time slots are available from 8 a.m. for a flat fee of \$50.00.

To register, please contact the office at 496-2440 or 1-800-472-5582, or email at Blue@weac.org (Deadline for registration is two weeks prior to the event.)

Winter Workshops & Sessions a Great Success!

By Amy Berkovitz, BLUE Board Member

On Saturday, December 4, the Instruction and Professional Development (IPD) committee hosted a one-day event aimed at helping teachers whose license falls under PI-34. It was a busy day in the BLUE building with almost every room being used. Committee members Kay Johnson and Diane Slivka presented a 3-hour PDP writing workshop to 16 beginning teachers. The teachers received an overview of the PDP process and timelines, as well as an introduction to the QEI website, which they can use to write their plans.

From 8am until 2pm, the conference rooms and offices were used for goal approvals and plan verifications. Once a new teacher has their goals written, they need to be approved by a peer, an administrator, and an official from an institute of higher learning. After meeting those goals and compiling artifacts to prove it, they need their plan verified by a similar team to move from initial educator to professional educator. The IPD committee sought to streamline the process by developing teams of reviewers, including one from each area. Each person was able to present their goals or plan to the three reviewers at the same time, rather than having to talk to the three people individually. Both teachers and reviewers alike commented on how nice it was to be done all in one meeting. Most attendees were able to get their plan or goals approved and be on their way with the paperwork for DPI in hand within half an hour. Several attendees agreed it was "quick and painless."

The next PDP workshop will be held on Saturday, May 7 and will follow the same format, with opportunities for writing, goal approval, and plan verification. Thanks to everyone who helped and everyone who attended!



IPD Committee members Stacie Schabow and Amy Berkovitz register Blair Wisnicky from Kewaunee School District for the PDP verification session.



Diane Slivka and Kay Johnson leading the PDP Writing Workshop.



An initial educator has her plan reviewed by certified reviewers.

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UniServ Activity Calendar

Monday, Dec. 13	6:30 pm	Door / Kewaunee CBC	Various ITV Sites
Thurs. & Fri. Dec. 23 & 24, Mon., Dec. 27, Thurs. & Fri. Dec. 30 & 31		Holidays	BLUE office closed
Wed., Jan. 5	5:30 pm	M & O CBC	Kelly Lake
Wed., Jan. 5	5:30 pm	Small Olympian CBC	Hearthstone, Hilbert
Monday, Jan. 10	6:30 pm	Door / Kewaunee CBC	Various ITV Sites
Tues., Jan. 18	5:30 pm	Bay Negotiators	BLUE office
Wed. Jan. 12	5:00 pm	BLUE Board Meeting & Holiday Dinner	St. Brendan's, Green Bay