

Council #10



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Milestone in Push for Adequate School Funding

It's that time of year. School boards throughout the state are in various stages of figuring out their budgets for next year. After 15 years of capped school funding, the choices are grim. A vast majority of school districts are verging on financial crisis and budget cuts are already affecting the quality of education our members can provide.

But, on February 3, groups representing parents, teachers and educational professionals, school boards, administrators and business leaders, introduced a comprehensive reform plan to change the way we fund public schools in Wisconsin. The School Finance Network (SFN) plan boldly takes on school funding concerns by aligning revenues with actual student cost. Specifically, the SFN plan:

- Recognizes that all kids are different and the one-size-fits-all funding model doesn't work.
- Allows schools to keep pace with real world costs, such as utilities and transportation.
- Helps schools restore important course offerings that were cut due to budget shortfalls.
- Builds on the current system to assure that no district loses money and every district gains from the plan.
- Reduces local property tax burdens by increasing the state's commitment to fully fund public education.

Why bring forward a school funding solution now – in the midst of an economic downturn? The answer is simple: Investments in education are proven to benefit the economy. Besides that, this plan is the result of more than two years of thorough research and study by the nine member groups that comprise the School Finance Network.

There are many funding options for state leaders to improve our school funding system, including closing corporate tax loopholes, updating our badly out of date tax code to reflect the modern economy, and adopting strategies for increasing federal support.

To learn more and help out with the effort, please go online today to the SFN Web site at www.sfnwisconsin.org.

Read Across America Bookmarks

Council #10 currently has enough *Read Across America* Cat in the Hat bookmarks for Council #10 school districts. These materials can be used on March 2nd to celebrate Dr. Suess' birthday. If you have not yet requested your bookmarks, contact Shorty in the union office at (262) 789-6000, or otts@weac.org.

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Council #10 Website
www.weac.org/council10

MAKE CONNECTIONS

SE Regional Bargaining
Seminar, Bowlero in Brookfield,
Thursday, March 26, 5:00 p.m.

Pre Representative Assembly
meeting, Brookfield UniServ
offices, Monday, March 30,
6:00 p.m.

WEAC Representative
Assembly, April 24-26,
LaCrosse, Wisconsin

Great
Schools



weac.org

Need Legal Advice?

NEA has for many years provided members full legal protection in employment-related matters. But in today's complex world, simply having legal help for employment-related matters isn't enough. At one time or another, each of us needs legal counsel on personal matters that are important to us and our families.

That's why NEA created the Attorney Referral Program. NEA and WEAC have identified attorneys throughout the state who have agreed to handle certain personal legal matters at a substantially reduced rate.

During any membership year (from September 1 to August 31), eligible members are entitled to two free 30-minute consultation sessions with any of these Association-approved attorneys. During the two free sessions, you may discuss any legal matter except income tax preparation. In addition to free consultations, members may have specific legal work performed in five core areas at a 30% reduction of participating attorneys' normal fees. The five core areas are wills and estates, real estate, domestic relations, consumer protection and traffic violations. In addition, participating attorneys may provide supplemental services at a discounted rate.

NEA is committed to making sure that qualified and competent attorneys participate in the NEA Attorney Referral Program. Before any attorneys can become part of the program, they must be approved by both the NEA and WEAC. Also, they must agree to provide service to members - times outside the normal working day. Participating attorneys must agree to discuss fees before they render services. They must be willing to accept payment of their fees by installment payment plan or by credit card.

How can you take advantage of this valuable service for NEA members? Contact a participating attorney and identify yourself as a NEA member who is taking advantage of the NEA Attorney Referral Program. A list of participating attorneys can be found on the WEAC website at www.weac.org.

Market turmoil complicates retirement planning Careful planning is more critical than ever

For those of you who are considering retirement, recent market turmoil has complicated the planning process and added considerable uncertainty. Careful preparation can help ensure that you remain financially secure. Wisconsin public school employees and members of WEAC-Retired are eligible to receive a Retirement Income Analysis offered by WEA Trust Member Benefits. This fee-based service can provide you with:

- Knowledge of whether you are on track to meet your goals.
- Suggested adjustments to meet your goals.
- Your Wisconsin Retirement System estimate.
- Your Social Security estimate.
- A retirement distribution and cash flow analysis.
- A tax analysis to help you anticipate your future income tax liability.

Call WEA Trust's Retirement Income Consultants at 1-800-279-4030, Ext. 2513 or 6967. Michelle or Rob can help you evaluate whether this service is appropriate for you.

This Member Benefits service is fee-based, with no product sales or commissions attached.