

February 2008



**Kettle Moraine  
UniServ Council**

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Volume 25 No. 6

February 11, 2008  
**KMUC Board Meeting**  
6:00 p.m.  
KMUC Office

February 13, 2008  
**CBC/President's  
Meeting**  
6:00 p.m.  
KMUC Office

February 18, 2008  
**Cultural Diversity Class**  
5:30—8:00 p.m.  
KMUC Office

February 22—24, 2008  
**Winter Conference**  
Radisson Paper Valley  
Appleton

February 25, 2008  
**Exec. Com. Meeting**  
4:30 p.m.  
KMUC Office

March 1, 2008  
**Professional  
Development  
Team Training**  
8:00—4:00  
KMUC Office

March 4, 2008  
**Cultural Diversity Class**  
5:30—8:00 p.m.  
KMUC Office

March 10, 2008  
**KMUC Legislative  
Dinner**  
5:30  
Millhome Supper Club



**NEW LOOK KMUC LEGISLATIVE DINNER  
Mark Your Calendar for March 10!**

This year's KMUC Legislative Dinner will take on an entirely new look. Instead of listening while our legislators talk to us, we will ask our legislators to listen while our members and their superintendents talk to them. This new format is designed to allow stories to be told about school funding and its impact on our members and the students they serve. The tentative agenda for this event, held at the Millhome Supper Club in Kiel is as follows:

- 5:30—6:00 Social
- 6:00—6:45 Dinner
- 6:45—6:55 "School Funding in Manitowoc" —  
Superintendent Mark Swanson, MEA  
President Bob Feller and MEP President Bonnie  
Tennie
- 6:55—7:05 "School Funding in Plymouth" — Superintendent  
Clark Reinke and PEA President Noel Peterson
- 7:05—7:15 "School Funding in Two Rivers" —  
Superintendent Randy Fredrikson and TREA  
President Wes Glenna (tentative)
- 7:15—7:45 Legislators join the presenters on stage for  
questions from the podium and audience.

We are hopeful that this important event will draw a very large turnout as we ask our legislators to respond to the real life issues our members face everyday. Don't miss this opportunity!

As always, the goal is to see 10% of our membership at the annual KMUC Legislative Dinner. So bring a friend. Bring a colleague. Bring a spouse. Whoever you bring, plan on attending the annual dinner on March 10 at the Millhome Supper Club. Ask your Association President about tickets, or call the KMUC office for additional details.

## There is A LOT at Stake in Wisconsin Supreme Court Election

The presidential race seems to be on everyone's minds these days. That's not surprising, given all the media coverage. We in Wisconsin will have our chance to weigh in on that contest when we hold our presidential preference primary on February 19.

As we track the ups and downs of the presidential contenders and prepare for our primary, we can't forget another very interesting election here in the state next year — the statewide election for Wisconsin Supreme Court. The primary, if needed to narrow the field down to two finalists, will take place February 19. The general election is on April 1.

Why is this election so important to our great schools and the people who work in them? Consider some of the cases decided by the Supreme Court in recent years:

- ◆ In Vincent v. Voight, the court, while ruling the existing school funding system was constitutional, also found that students have a fundamental right to a sound basic education.
- ◆ In the Dodgeland Education Association v. Dodgeland School District, the court allowed a school district to unilaterally wipe out teacher prep time while imposing a QEO.
- ◆ An in Wisconsin Professional Police Association, Inc. v. Lightbourn, the court ruled that Act 11, which increased retirement benefits for school employees and others, was constitutional. This even led to an increased salary under the QEO for some WEAC members.

Each member of the seven-person court can have a major impact on how the court decides in cases like those listed above. It is vitally important that we do everything to elect justices who share our belief that great school benefit everyone.

**Consider Voting Absentee:** If you don't think you can make it to the polls on Election Day for any reason, you can vote absentee. Just go to the state Elections Board Web site ([elections.state.wi.us](http://elections.state.wi.us)) and click on "How Does an Elector Request an Absentee Ballot?" in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) area. Print out the Application for Absentee Ballot (EB-121), complete it, and send it to your municipal clerk.

## Want to be a delegate to a national convention?

The battle to nominate the presidential candidates is in full swing, and so is the campaign by the NEA and WEAC to elect as many members as possible as delegates to the party conventions. The Democratic National Convention is August 25—28 in Denver, while the Republican National Convention is September 1—4 in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Serving as a delegate to a national convention is a great way to be part of history and promote an agenda that says great schools benefit everyone. WEAC encourages members to think seriously about this opportunity and let us know if you have any questions.

Leading WEAC's campaign to elect members as delegates is WEAC Vice President Guy Costello. Please feel free to contact him at [costellog@weac.org](mailto:costellog@weac.org) or 1-800-362-8034, Ext. 336.

The delegate selection process for the Democratic National Convention includes two tiers — county caucuses on Sunday, April 6 and congressional district caucuses on Sunday, May 4. The process is very open and allows delegate candidates to be successful by organizing people to come to the caucuses to support them.

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WEAC will host a Delegate Selection Training conference call for members wishing to be delegates to the Democratic convention on **Thursday, February 21**. Please contact Guy Costello if you would like to be on the call.

The NEA's PAC Council has concluded that any of the Democratic candidates merit the support of our members. The Democratic candidates still in the race are New York Senator Hillary Clinton; former North Carolina Senator John Edwards; Ohio Congressman Dennis Kucinich; and Illinois Senator Barack Obama.

Visit the OnWEAC Members Only Presidential Primary Resource Page at [weacm.org](http://weacm.org) to read candidates' responses to the NEA's 2008 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire. A different question and the responses are posted each week.

Delegates to the Republican convention are selected through a very specific process that places a premium on being a strong supporter of the party and the winning candidate. Guy Costello can also provide you with information on the GOP process.

All members serving as delegates to either national convention are eligible to receive financial assistance for attending an NEA meeting prior to each convention.

This is an 11.29 communication with WEAC members.

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## **Layoff vs. Non-renewal or Dismissal**

As school districts begin planning for the 2008-2009 school year, there will most likely be discussions of budget cuts, retirements, layoffs, and program reductions. KMUC members should be aware of the difference between a "layoff" vs. "non-renewal" or "dismissal."

Layoffs are typically driven by economic or program issues: lack of funds, loss of student enrollment, changes in curriculum, to name a few. Your Master Agreement may specify the reasons for "Layoff," or contain general language that allows the school board to determine when a layoff is necessary.

A "layoff" is NOT a non-renewal or dismissal. When a staff member is laid off, they retain an employment relationship with the District. This relationship is defined by the Master Agreement between your school district and your local association.

When a teacher is non-renewed, or a staff member is dismissed, all employment relationships are severed at the end of the individual's contract. Non-renewals are generally performance issues.

### **Neither non-renewals nor dismissal should be used as a substitute for layoff.**

As an association member, you should check your Master Agreement for layoff notification deadlines and the required procedures for layoff in your school district. When teachers are involved, if there is no deadline for notification of layoff listed in the Master Agreement, then the statutory deadline for notification of non-renewals, effective the last day of February, becomes the deadline for notification of layoff.

When you are in doubt about terminology or rules governing your employment, contact your local association building representative, local officer, or the KMUC office for more information.

**Professional Development Team Training**  
**Saturday, March 1, 2008**  
**KMUC Office**

The Kettle Moraine UniServ Council is offering the venue for training for Professional Development Plan team members on Saturday, March 1. The training for team members is sanctioned and arranged for through the Department of Public Instruction and facilitated by a DPI approved trainer.

The training now takes only one day and will be held at the KMUC office. The training begins with registration at 7:30 and training from 8:00—4:00. The training is limited to 40 people and there is no cost. You may register by going online at [www.weac.org/kmuc](http://www.weac.org/kmuc) or you can call Sarah at the office at 920-565-2913.

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**Be Careful with Your E-mails**

As the use of e-mail becomes more and more a core part of doing our jobs as teachers and support staff, it is important that we remember a few things about using the district e-mail system. Any e-mail messages that pass through the district's e-mail server are considered property of the district. Because of this, the district administrators have every right to examine any and all e-mail messages that you send or receive using your district e-mail account.

Secondly, any e-mail messages that pass through the district's server are subject to the Open Records Laws that govern public institutions. Any citizen of your community can request copies of your e-mail messages. If such a request is made, the district must comply. Recently, several school districts in Wisconsin have had to turn over months and even years of e-mail records.

As you would expect, there are exceptions to the Open Records Law. For example, messages containing information that is considered confidential in nature (specifically, student information or employee personnel records) can be held back. Otherwise, copies of all e-mail messages will be released when a request is made to the district.

If you have an agreement with your district that allows the union to use school computers and e-mail accounts, be careful with your message. You may want to limit e-mail communication to brief notices such as the date and time of meetings. If an issue needs to be discussed, do not include details in your e-mail message, but ask the recipient to call you.

Remember, anything you would not want to become public needs to be protected. In these days of instant communication, the concept of privacy is easy to forget. Reprinted from WCEA Reporting, Volume 34, No.13.

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**KMUC-Retired News**

On March 2, a group of KMUC Retired members will be going to the Milwaukee Rep Theater to see the play Grafton City Blues.

May 15th: 5:00—6:30 p.m. KMUC Retired Annual meeting and dinner at the Altona in New Holstein. At 6:30, our guest speaker for the evening is Tom Krief of Appleton. Tom heads up a group of retired teachers from the Fox Valley area who have formed a travel club. Tom has great tips and ideas for cruises as well as both foreign and domestic traveling.