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# Magnifier

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## UNE Continues Merger Talks With Bayland Educators

For almost a year, the United Northeast Educators' (UNE) and Bayland Educators' Boards of Directors have been discussing the pros and cons of merging the two UniSers. The most obvious reason for thinking of a merger is to save money. UNE and Bayland Educators share the Associate staff, the same building, much of the same equipment, and have several joint committees that utilize the time and expertise of two UniServ Directors (one from each UniServ). In the course of the past year, the Boards have looked at budget, constitution and by-laws, dues structures and other processes within both UniSers in an effort to discover efficiencies as well as potential pitfalls.

The Boards have determined that a vote to merge the two UniSers will come to the membership in their respective Representative Assemblies on May 19, 2010.

### What is a UniServ?

Maybe the first question many of our members have is "What is a UniServ?" For some of you reading this article, you may not have any direct contact with your UniServ and wonder what this merger will mean for you and your local.

A UniServ (Unified Services) unit is a group of local associations, in the same geographic region, whose combined membership generally totals between 1,200 and 1,500. A UniServ is created by our members to efficiently provide our locals with a powerful way to work together to accomplish common goals. It is also created to provide our members and their local Associations with professional labor relations staff services. The Gillett Education Association, for example, is affiliated with UNE, and the Southern Door Education Support Personnel is affiliated with UNE.

Each UniServ unit – in financial partnership with WEAC and the NEA – hires staff to assist locals in collective bargaining, member rights, public relations, professional development, political action and other areas. Each UniServ has its own elected governance – a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors meets monthly to direct the business of the organization and to carry out the policies set by the Representative Assembly (RA). Each local Association elects representatives to the RA – 1 delegate for every 25 members. The RA meets in the spring, and has the task of setting the UniServ policies, approving the annual budget, and electing the Board of Directors.

UniSers also elect one representative for every 1,200 members to serve on the WEAC Board of Directors. Five large locals serve as their own UniServ units: Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Kenosha and Green Bay.

### What Will Change?

For most members, nothing is expected to change. Both UniSers anticipate cost savings and more efficient use of staff time. It is expected that Local Associations will keep their current UniServ Director assignments. Dues structures, if changed, are not likely to cost any members additional dues (some may even go down!), and the services locals receive is not projected to change in any way. The structure of a merged UniServ Board may change and that is a topic that is being discussed in a separate joint Board subcommittee.

### Stay Tuned

The Boards of Directors will be distributing further information about the proposed merger in various formats for our members, including regional meetings that you can attend and ask questions about the process.

## Stay Informed and Connected on ESP Issues

**Stay informed and connected with a blog for and about ESP members!** 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 the space to write about who they are and what they are thinking, and to find out more about what is new in the ESP world.

Log in and comment on the blog posts, or suggest a topic to blog about. You can even become a member blogger yourself by contacting WEAC ESP Coordinator Kim Wiemer Noyce [wiemernoycek@weac.org](mailto:wiemernoycek@weac.org).



The blog is housed on the [www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org) ESP landing page. There, 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.

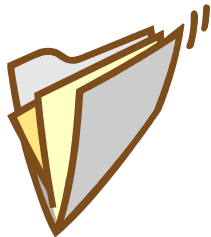
The ESP Blog is a forum where members can share information about opportunities for personal or professional growth, discuss actions that you can take to improve public education or your union, or share a story or quote to help connect us all.

To find the blog, go to [www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org), click on "Education Support Professionals", and follow the Blog link on the upper right portion of the page. If you would like to receive ESP Blog postings directly in your inbox on the day they are posted, go to the Blog and click on the link that says "Subscribe to the ESP Blog by e-mail."

## Keep Your Own "Personnel" File

Recordkeeping is important. **Don't wait for trouble to start before you begin a records file.** Having good records are very important, if you become involved in a grievance over your contract rights, benefits, or in a matter involving discipline or dismissal. To enable the best possible protection and representation, **maintain your own "personnel" file.**

**Your file should contain such documents as:** college transcripts, evaluations, accumulated sick leave and days used, direct deposit (wage) records, records of student disciplinary referrals, Wisconsin Retirement System records, personal leave, documentation of honors and awards, notes on student accidents, notes on confrontations with parents or administrators, copies of all correspondence with supervisor(s) and administrators, and for teachers—individual teacher contracts for each year, licenses, and teaching assignments by year with subject taught. *From MTI Solidarity! 9/21/09*



## Nominate a colleague for the C.L.E.A.N. award.

The national C.L.E.A.N. Award will recognize the contributions that custodians make to public health in their schools, communities, and their profession. The award will be presented to a school custodian that demonstrates outstanding leadership in the field of school cleanliness, and reflects the contributions that education support professionals (ESP) can make to public health. The award program is a joint initiative of the National Education Association (NEA), the NEA Health Information Network (NEA HIN) and the Soap and Detergent Association (SDA). The 2010 National C.L.E.A.N.(Custodial Leaders for Environmental Advocacy Nationwide) Awards application package is now available at [www.neahin.org/cleanaward/](http://www.neahin.org/cleanaward/). The deadline for application/nominations is December 7, 2009.

## Working Above & Beyond? Don't!

More frequently, with today's shrinking school budgets, your UNE UniServ Directors are hearing about support staff members who work before their scheduled start time, beyond their normal quitting time, or are bringing work home.



However, there are two problems with working beyond your scheduled shift. One, it encourages the employer to cut back hours even further. Why shouldn't they, if they can get the same work done while paying less in wages? There are employers that overtly depend on this dedication and sacrifice by our members. Employees working "off the clock" simply alleviates the need to extend shifts, pay for overtime, or add staff, as the work is getting done despite reductions in hours and staff.

The second problem poses a huge risk for the employer. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) demands that employees may not "volunteer" to perform the same type of services for their employer that they are normally paid to perform. This regulation is to prevent employers from coercing employees, either directly or indirectly, into working "off the clock". The FLSA calls for hourly employees to be paid for ALL hours ACTUALLY worked in their regular positions.

Consequently, if an employer doesn't direct it, but merely allows an employee to work beyond their schedule, they are still on the hook for wages, which might even include overtime pay at time and one-half. An employee may demand, through FLSA laws, that they be paid for all hours actually worked. This could include going back several years to determine the full accounting of back pay.

Simply put, Districts hire and pay an employee for a certain amount of time. Give them what they pay for and nothing more. *Adapted from On NTU In Print, 10/27/09.*

# AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

## NOVEMBER 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <b>Open House Day</b> Organize "Open House" activities at your school for neighbors, families, and community leaders.	<b>17</b> <b>Parents Day</b> Invite parents into the school for a first-hand look at their children's school day.	<b>18</b> <b>Education Support Professionals Day</b> Individuals who provide invaluable services to schools are recognized for their outstanding work.	<b>19</b> <b>Educator for a Day</b> Encourage community leaders to serve as "educators for a day" for a hands-on school experience.	<b>20</b> <b>Substitute Educators Day</b> Honor the educators who are called to act as substitutes in the temporary absence of regular classroom teachers.	<b>21</b>

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## Ceremony Celebrates 138 Schools of Recognition

State Superintendent, Tony Evers, has honored 138 schools that earned the Wisconsin Promise Schools of Recognition award at the State Capitol on October 20.



The schools sent a team of district personnel for the day's events.

Each school received a plaque and \$2,000 for use on any school-related activity. Seven schools received a special flag to mark the fifth consecutive year they attained the school of recognition award.

To be eligible for the Wisconsin Promise School of Recognition Award, each school is among those with the highest poverty rates in the state, based on free and reduced-price school lunch data. Additionally, student achievement on statewide reading and mathematics assessments in each school is higher than the state average for schools with similar poverty rates and grade configurations. Each school also made adequate yearly progress for the past two years as defined under federal education laws. Finally, each school received, or is eligible to receive, Title I funding, the federal program that provides aid for a variety of services to school districts and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children who are economically disadvantaged.

The following UNE schools were recognized:

**Crivitz** — Crivitz Elementary (3); Crivitz Middle(4)

**Marinette** — Merryman Elementary

**Shawano** — Lincoln Elementary

**Note:** The number after a school name indicates the consecutive years that school has received the Wisconsin Promise Schools of Recognition Award.

## Interested in Becoming 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. Interns can expect to receive cross-training on a number of programs and within a variety of UniServ units and WEAC.

For more information visit: [http://www.weac.org/About WEAC/job\\_opportunities/jobs.aspx](http://www.weac.org/About_WEAC/job_opportunities/jobs.aspx).

**Applications are due Friday, January 8, 2010.**

## Acknowledging Teachers and Educational Support Professionals

It is extremely important especially in difficult times to take a minute to notice the great things that great teachers are doing both in and out of the classroom to make our public schools what they are. Whether it's awards, advocacy, excellent programming, community outreach, or other, if you know of teachers and support staff who are doing great things for public schools, please log on to our website at [www.weac.org/une](http://www.weac.org/une) and let us know.

## UNE Activity Calendar

Date		Time	Event	Place
Wednesday	November 11	5:30 p.m.	Building Corporation Meeting	UniServ Office
Wednesday	November 11	6:00 p.m.	UNE Board Meeting	UniServ Office
	Nov. 12-13	—	Professional Staff Meeting	Madison
	Nov. 15-20	—	American Education Week	
Monday	November 16	5:30 p.m.	Bayland/UNE IPD Committee	UniServ Office
Wednesday	November 18	5:00 p.m.	Bayland/UNE Joint Budget Committee	UniServ Office
Wednesday	November 18	5:30 p.m.	Bayland/UNE ESP Coordinated Bargaining meeting	UniServ Office
Wednesday	November 18	—	NEA Education Support Professionals Day	
Friday	November 20	1:00 p.m.	UNE/BE Merger Committee—PR subcommittee meeting	UniServ Office
	Nov. 26-27	—	Office Closed for Thanksgiving	
Monday	November 30	5:00 p.m.	Legislative Committee Meeting	UniServ Office
Saturday	December 5	8:00 a.m.	PDP Verification Session & PDP Writing Workshop	UniServ Office
Tuesday	December 8	6:00 p.m.	Bay Area Negotiators meeting	UniServ Office
Wednesday	December 9	6:00 p.m.	UNE Board Meeting	UniServ Office

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### Award honors humanitarian activities

WEAC is accepting nominations for the Richard J. Lewandowski Memorial Award for Humanitarian Activities. The award, sponsored by the WEAC Human Relations Committee, recognizes and encourages the involvement of members and affiliate associations in humanitarian efforts. Those eligible for the award are individual WEAC members, groups of members or WEAC affiliate local associations who have engaged in humanitarian endeavors above and beyond the nominee's job duties. The nomination deadline is February 1, 2010.

### 4th Grade Poster Contest now open

The WEAC Human Relations Committee is now accepting applications for its annual 4th Grade Poster Contest. Entries must be submitted by February 1. The purpose of the poster contest is to promote the celebration of the Native American culture and to address the issue of racism directed at Native Americans. The theme chosen for this year's contest is The Land Holds All Our Stories. This will be an opportunity for your students to express their thoughts and feelings artistically. The contest is open to all 4th grade students in Wisconsin public schools.

For details regarding the Lewandowski Memorial Award and the Poster Contest, please look under the "Educators' Bulletin Board" heading at: <http://www.weac.org>.



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### Mission Statement

*UNE is an organization of public education employees who provide training and services to protect, improve, and enhance members rights and the professional and economic capabilities of its members, hence improving the quality of life of all its members.*