

Magnifier

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October 16, 2008

THE MOST IMPORTANT ELECTION OF YOUR CAREER

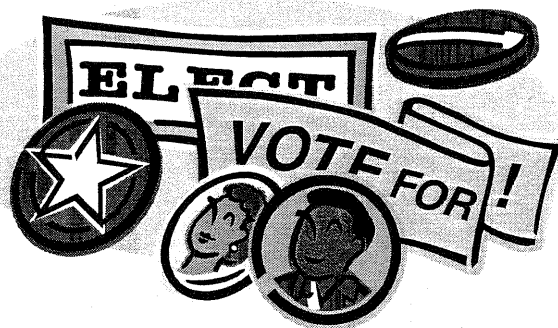
How many times have you heard that? Well, you're going to hear it a lot this year because it may well be true. The 2008 National and State Elections may well be the most important in your career as an educator. Well, if we've learned anything in recent years, it's that elections definitely matter. They matter a lot. Whether it is collective bargaining, school funding or insurance reforms at the state level or "No Child Left Behind" at the federal level, it's clear that who gets into office does have an impact on the future of public education.

It is not an exaggeration to say this fall's elections could be a major turning point for our nation and our state. At the federal level, we can elect a President in Barack Obama who truly supports our great public schools and programs that help children. With the potential for strong pro-education majorities in both houses of Congress, we could see major changes in our nation's policies in the years to come. Similarly, at the state level, control of the Wisconsin Assembly is up for grabs. If the elections break our way, we will have pro-education majorities in both houses of the Legislature to join Governor Jim Doyle in supporting children and great schools.

At the state level, pro-public education candidates want to give our schools the funds they need to succeed. Anti-education legislators, meanwhile, continue to attack your rights to collectively bargain over health care coverage and subcontracting. And they back less than inflationary per-pupil increases for the revenue caps, which are driving some school districts to the brink of extinction as they struggle to pay for things like dramatically rising transportation costs.

So let's keep reminding ourselves: elections definitely matter and we all need to back candidates who support children and public education. Let's keep reminding

ourselves: Elections *REALLY DO* matter, and we all need to back candidates who support children and public education.



WEAC Convention, October 30-31, 2008, Alliant Center—Madison

The WEAC Convention has been set for Thursday and Friday, October 30-31, 2008 at the Alliant Center in Madison. For more details, visit the WEAC website at www.weac.org; look for "Events" in the upper left hand corner of the page, and then click on "2008 WEAC Convention." Pre-registration is recommended to avoid long lines at the convention.

The Convention Keynote Speaker is Dr. Adolph Brown, III. Dr. Brown is a world-renowned professional motivational speaker, keynote speaker, and seminar leader.

Continuing this year is a special incentive for new members. Members who are in their first three years in the profession who attend both days of the Convention will receive a \$50 stipend from WEAC. Attendance forms will be available each day at the WEAC Membership Booth. Please note that this stipend is for first time attendees of the WEAC Convention (1-3 years in the profession). You can only earn this stipend one time.

Fall elections to shape the health care debate

The issue of health care is on the minds of voters. Nationwide rising health care costs are straining family budgets and 45 million Americans do not have health insurance. In Wisconsin, educators have given up salary increases at the bargaining table to maintain their health care and many education support professionals are without health insurance. In our schools, educators know how hard it is for children to learn when they have a tooth ache or are sick and their families lack health insurance or are underinsured.

On November 4, who you elect to be the next president of the United States will frame the national debate on how to best address our broken health care system. You will have a choice between presidential candidates with starkly contrasting views on health care affordability and accessibility.

Senator Barack Obama has a plan to cover every American. If you already have health insurance, the only thing that will change under his plan is the amount you spend on premiums. That will be less. If you don't have health insurance, you will have it after the plan becomes law. No one will be turned away because of a pre-existing condition or illness. (see <http://www.barackobama.com>)

By contrast, Senator John McCain has proposed a new tax on people who receive health insurance from their employers, which would cause many school employees to pay more in taxes each year. (see *The Boston Globe*, 4/3/08; *The Wall Street Journal*, 10/11/07)

Obama voted in favor of reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which funds BadgerCare Plus to expand health care coverage to all the state's children and many uninsured adults. (see H.R. 976, Senate Roll Call Vote 307, 8/2/07) McCain voted against SCHIP's reauthorization. (see H.R. 976, Senate Roll Call Vote 307, 8/2/07)

Similarly, the health care issue is likely to play a major role in state legislative races. Voters will want to know where the candidates stand on health care reform. In addition, voters in up to 13 municipalities and six counties will have an opportunity to answer the advisory referendum question of whether the 2009 Legislature should, by December 31, 2009, guarantee affordable health care coverage substantially similar to that provided to legislators.

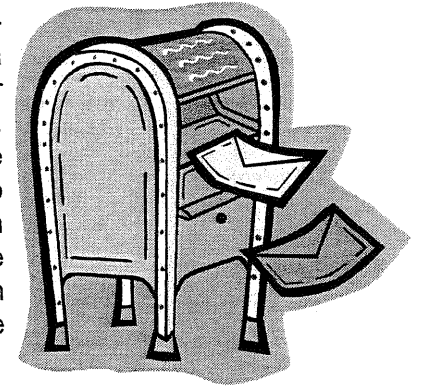
So when you step into the voting booth on November 4, your vote will help decide the future of health care reform in our country and our state.

How to Apply for an Absentee Ballot

If you are not already registered, you will need to register to vote before an absentee ballot can be sent to you.

Request by Mail

On the <http://elections.state.wi.us> website download the form "Application For Absentee Ballot" (EB-121). Complete the form and mail it to your municipal clerk's office. The application must be received by the clerk no later than 5:00 PM on the Thursday before the election in order for an absentee ballot to be mailed to you.



In-Person at your Municipal Clerk's Office

This can be done up until 5:00 PM on the day before the election. If you apply for an absentee ballot in your municipal clerk's office, you must vote immediately, seal your ballot in the proper envelope, and return it to a member of the clerk's staff. No ballots may be taken from the clerk's office.

Deadline for Returning Ballot

The completed ballot must be received by the municipal clerk no later than the day of the election so that it can be delivered to the polling location by 8 PM. For the correct address please refer to the "Listing of Local Municipal Clerks".

This is an 11.29 communication with WEAC members, Federal Statute CFR 100.8 (b) (4)

What's In Your Car?

With hunting season here once again, just a reminder: please don't leave firearms in cars while at school. In most cases it is illegal to have a gun or dangerous weapon, including bow and arrow, in your motor vehicle while in a school zone. If you are a hunter, you may want to review the state statutes on this topic: www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/stat0948.pdf.

TEACHER 'PAY PENALTY' WORSENS

Salary growth for teachers lags far behind the salary growth in similar professions, according to a new study, *The Teaching Penalty: Teacher Pay Losing Ground*. The study found that public school teachers are paid about 15 percent less a week than people in similar professions with similar educations, like accountants, registered nurses and computer programmers. In Wisconsin, where teacher salaries have fallen below the national average, the gap is even larger, 24 percent. Even when health insurance and pensions are added in, nationwide, teachers still make 12 percent less.

Political Action Committee Dues Rebates

A part of your UniServ dues are used to make contributions to the political campaigns of candidates your leaders endorse as education-friendly. The amount of PAC dues is \$5 for full-time dues paying members and \$2.50 for those paying part-time dues. Any member who wishes a refund of that portion of dues used for political purposes must request a refund in writing to their PAC by October 30. Fair share members do not need to request a refund. An automatic refund will be issued to all fair share persons as soon as that person's fair share status has been certified.

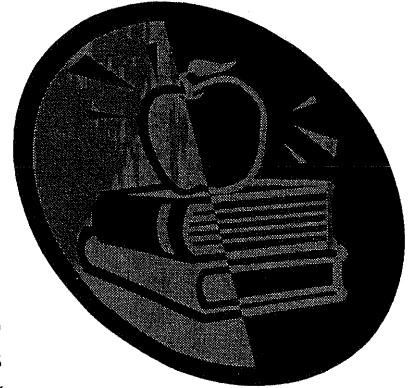
For a refund of your PAC dues write to: UNEPAC, 1136 North Military Avenue, Green Bay, WI 54303. Telephone requests will not be honored, nor will multiple requests on the same letter. Each request must be a separate letter with your name, address, and local association. All requests must be postmarked by October 30. A request is valid only for the year of that request. Rebates are normally issued in late February or early March.

American Education Week 2008 November 16–22

Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility

NEA's 87th annual American Education Week (AEW) spotlights the importance of providing every child in America with a quality public education from kindergarten through college, and the need for everyone to do his or her part in making public schools great.

Our annual tagline, Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility, reflects the Association's calling upon America to provide students with quality



public schools so that they can grow, prosper, and achieve in the 21st century.

- ◆ Monday, November 17: Open House Day. From national commemorations to local community events such as AEW house parties, millions of Americans will celebrate public education nationwide.
- ◆ Tuesday, November 18: Parents Day. Schools will invite parents into the classroom for a hands-on experience of what the day is like for their child.
- ◆ Wednesday, November 19: Education Support Professionals Day. Individuals who provide invaluable services to schools are recognized for their outstanding work.
- ◆ Thursday, November 20: Educator for a Day. Community leaders will be invited to serve as educators to get a glimpse at a day in the life of a school employee.
- ◆ Friday, November 21: Substitute Educators Day. This day honors the educators who are called upon to replace regularly employed teachers.

UniServ Activity Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>	
October	20	5:00 p.m.	UNE Legislative Work Night	George Webb's, Peshtigo
October	21	6:00 p.m.	Bay Area Negotiators	UniServ Office
October	21	5:30 p.m.	UNE Legislative Work Night	Amico's, Shawano
October	22	5:30 p.m.	M & O Meeting	Holiday Inn, Kelly Lake
October	22	5:00 p.m.	UNE Legislative Work Night	UniServ Office
October	30-31		WEAC Convention	Madison
November	10	5:30 p.m.	Bayland/UNE IPD Committee	UniServ Office
November	12	5:30 p.m.	Building Corporation Meeting	UniServ Office
November	12	6:00 p.m.	UNE Board Meeting	UniServ Office
November	13-14		Professional Staff Meeting	Madison

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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.