

14-A UniServ Newsletter
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Eastsider

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WHERE'S CHUCK?

- Nov.10 - Meeting w/Alpena ESP II SNAP Bargainer re finalization of contract
Coordinating Council Meeting (MEA Office)
- 11 - Alpena ESP II Bargaining Team dinner/meeting
- 12 - **Association/Building Rep Workshop (MEA Office)**
- 16-20 - Chuck on leave (hunting in U.P)
- 19-20 - **Harriet at mandatory ASO meeting in Traverse City – office closed**
NMEA (BJ's – Gaylord)
- 23-25 - Chuck on leave (hunting in U.P.)
- 26-27 - **MEA Offices closed (Thanksgiving Break)**
- 30 - ACC-ESP (C/M) Bargaining (ACC)
- Dec.2-4 - Chuck on leave
- 7 - Mio AuSable ESP Bargaining (Mio)
- 8 - Coordinating Council Meeting (MEA Office)
- 9 - Region 14 Council Meeting (BJ's – Gaylord)



MEA Scholarship:

Reminder: Deadline to apply for the yearly MEA Scholarship is February 12, 2010. Applications can be downloaded from www.mea.org, "grants & awards" or can be picked up at the Alpena UniServ Office.

Bargaining

We still have three contracts not settled.

Alpena EA is dealing with a Board who will not consider an insurance package that provides more coverage for the members and saves the school district \$25,985.44 per month or \$311,825.28 per year. The district is proposing a plan which will save \$18,405.83 per month or \$220,869.96 per year. The only reason given for the rejection is the word MESSA. Yes, the cheaper of the two plans on the table is MESSA Choices II with a \$10/\$20 Rx. The Board is offering a self-funded BC/BS Community Blue PPO-2 with a self-funded drug card. Less insurance and more money. Go figure.

ACC-ESP – C/M – New members. The majority of these folks, all 11 of them, voted to leave Steelworkers and join MEA. They are in the protracted process of bargaining an original contract. I am impressed with their work ethic and follow-through.

Mio AuSable ESP – Have had a bumpy road to date. They made it to the bargaining table once before a decert election broke down the bargaining process. An election was held at the end of September with a majority voting in favor of MEA. They made it back to the table in early October only to find the Board unwilling to move from its original position in the spring. Two meetings since have shown no willingness to move by the Board. The Board is offering a high deductible Choices II wrap from SET/SEG and no raises. This district is a poster child for if we just cut wages and benes we'll be ok. Not so! The only thing that will make or break a district is the amount of students coming in the front door. Take a freeze or give up benes and there will still be layoffs!

This is my world. I certainly hope there is more “fun” being had in your work areas.

Educators Bring Value into the Classroom

Recently, while at the Cadillac Meijer store, I was in the checkout line behind a woman with a basket full of children’s books, notebooks, pencils, and colored markers. The cashier asked if these items were for her grandchildren. The woman responded in a matter-of-fact way, “These are for the students I work with in the classroom.” The cashier asked if she had some kind of line of credit with the schools. The woman replied, “Oh no, this is my investment in our community’s children and our collective future.”



She, like many other paraprofessionals and public school employees, reach into their own wallets and purses on a regular basis for children they work with. This just doesn’t happen in Cadillac. Most school employees spend a good deal of their own money to ensure the programs they work in provide value to their students. A 2008 survey by Edutopia, a foundation, magazine, and Web site dedicated to what works in public education, shows the majority of their readers spend in the low to mid-hundreds of their own money every year for their students.

What I witnessed that day at Meijer is a classroom paraprofessional, an MEA member investing in our children and our future. She is making sure that “Knowledge Has Value” in her classroom.

Thank you to those in public education who make a difference in children’s lives, their communities, and our future.

MSP Travel Advisory Site

The Michigan State Police will have a winter travel advisory available for Michigan travelers this winter. You can obtain road condition information by going to www.michigan.gov/roadconditions or calling 1-800-381-8477.



CHECK OUT THE NORTHERN ZONE WEBSITE – www.northernzonemea.org

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY THANKSGIVING – CHUCK & HARRIET