

PEA Newsletter

The Atriums North Ste 1210
4341 S. Westnedge Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 373-3913

Portage Education Association

Did you know...

MEA President
Paula Herbart

MEA Vice-President
Chandra Madafferi

MEA Secretary Treasurer
Brett Smith

Inside this issue:

3% Case Update	1
MEA Recommendations	2
PEA Calendar	2
Free College Assistance	3
MEA Scholarship	4-5
Know Your Contract	6

Funds to Move to Districts Following 3% Court Conference

<https://www.mea.org/funds-to-move-to-districts-monday-following-3-court-conference/>

Michigan school districts and colleges affected by the Supreme Court’s ruling in the 3 percent case are expected to receive a disbursement of money from the state on Monday, Jan. 22, which will eventually be used to refund stolen wages to nearly 275,000 teachers, faculty, and support staff.

That does not mean refunds will be immediately issued to public school employees who had earnings illegally taken from their paychecks. Districts have discretion in how they issue the return of money, following a status conference in the Michigan Court of Claims on Thursday.

In that meeting of attorneys from both sides, Judge Stephen Borrello also confirmed the time period covered by the ruling in the case as July 1, 2010, through September 3, 2012.

MEA has updated its FAQ on the 3% case. Look for new information starting with Question 9.

MEA, AFT-Michigan, and AFSCME fought the 3 percent case for more than seven years, winning a unanimous decision from the state Supreme Court in December. Courts at every level agreed the state acted unconstitutionally in taking 3 percent of school employees’ wages to pay for retiree health care – a benefit they were not guaranteed to receive.

Employees of affected school districts or colleges who have since retired or changed jobs are advised to update their former employers with current contact information and make sure their account is complete and up-to-date at the Michigan Office of Retirement Services (ORS).

In addition, those who wish to receive the latest information from MEA about the case can send their name, address, phone number, and home email address to webmaster@mea.org.

MEA Continues Recommendation of Debbie Stabenow for Senate

EAST LANSING – The Michigan Education Association is pleased to announce our continuing recommendation of Senator Debbie Stabenow for reelection to the United States Senate.

“Sen. Stabenow is a national leader who has never stopped fighting for policies that help our children succeed inside and outside of the classroom,” said MEA President Paula Herbart. “She helped pass critical federal education law that puts the needs of students first. She is committed to ensuring our schools have the funding they need to help our children get a high-quality education that prepares them for a great job.”

Sen. Stabenow has been a champion of K-12 education and supported the Every Student Succeeds Act, which gave parents, teachers and local communities greater say in how their children are educated. She has long opposed school vouchers and opposed the nomination of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, who has a long record of pushing policies that undermine public education in Michigan.

“When it comes to students and educators in Michigan, we know Sen. Stabenow has our back,” said Herbart. “We are happy to support her as she continues to fight for strong schools and a strong economy for our great state.”

Half Days Moving Forward

Friday, March 9th Professional Development

Thursday, March 29th, Professional Hours

Friday, May 4th, Professional Development

Thursday, June 14th, Records

PEA Calendar

The PEA has a Google Calendar that you can add! It contains helpful reminders about half days, PEA meetings, and conferences. To add, click [HERE](#).

MEA Launches Free College Benefit

Tami Tefft wasted no time when she heard about an incredible new MEA benefit that allows members and their families to obtain a free associate degree through an online, accredited public college.

The free college benefit offered by MEA in partnership with Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC) was announced on Monday. Tefft – the transportation secretary at Belding Area Schools – signed up Tuesday.

“I’ve already asked my district for my high school transcripts, so that felt pretty cool,” said the 52-year-old mother of one grown son.

Any MEA member in good standing and their immediate families will be able to obtain an associate degree online from EGCC in one of eight different areas – at zero cost.

The program through EGCC offers recipients a “last-dollar” scholarship that covers the costs of tuition, fees, and books that can’t be paid for through federal financial aid. To be eligible, students must apply for federal financial aid and use any grants or tuition reimbursement toward the EGCC bill.

Tefft said she once dreamed of being a teacher, but when she became a mother at 18 her focus turned to working to help raise her child and put him through college. Her son Paul holds a bachelor’s degree from Michigan State University and a master’s from Kendall College of Art and Design.

Tefft worked as a custodian in Belding for 13 years before taking a secretarial position in 2006. She has worked in various departments but has been turned down for central office jobs for lack of an associate degree, she said.

She’s excited for the opportunity to better herself, although she hasn’t decided which program of study she will pursue.

“Now I just have to apply for FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), which shouldn’t be too hard because I’ve done it before with my son,” she said. “This time I’ll be doing it for me.”

Families of MEA members eligible to receive the benefit are children (or step-children), grandchildren (or step-grandchildren), spouses, domestic partners, and financial dependents.

Eastern Gateway Community College in Steubenville, Ohio, is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, so credits are transferable. Programs are available in the following areas:

Business Management with concentrations in Human Resources, Healthcare Management, Marketing and Finance

- Accounting
- Patient Home Navigator Certificate
- Associate of Arts
- Criminal Justice
- Paralegal
- Early Childhood Education
- Individualized Study

Free college offers amazing opportunities, said MEA Secretary-Treasurer Brett Smith. “We are an education union and providing free education is yet another example of how MEA works to make our members’ lives better,” he added. **Go to www.MEA.org/Free-College for more information.**

MEA Scholarship—Deadline is February 22, 2018

Educational Opportunity

Provided by the Members, Staff and Friends of the Michigan Education Association

The Scholarship

The amount and number of scholarships offered each year shall be determined by the trustees of the MEA Scholarship Fund. Such scholarships may be offered on a renewal basis limited to four times in a five-year period.

Deadline is February 22, 2018 ([click here for application](#)).

Eligibility Criteria

- Dependent of MEA member or MEA-Retired member in good standing.
- Graduate of a Michigan public high school or private high school that has an MEA bargaining unit.
- Will attend or is currently an undergraduate student of a Michigan public community/junior college, four-year degree-granting institution, or vocational training institution that grants a degree, certification or license. Those attending the following private institutions ONLY are also eligible: Baker College-Flint/Owosso; University of Detroit–Mercy; Adrian College; Finlandia University; and Albion College. (The aforementioned private institutions are existing local MEA affiliates.)
- Note: Children of MEA officers, fund trustees, and MEA staff are not eligible.(A child of an MEA, MESSA or MEA-FS staff person is eligible if the other parent is an MEA member in good standing).
- The scholarship will not be awarded for the purpose of working on a post-baccalaureate degree.

Selection Criteria

Priority is given on the basis of:

- Academic achievement
- Extra-curricular activities
- School and community service
- Students from lower income households.

In addition:

Scholarship determination will be made strictly on the merit of the applicant's performance against the above criteria. The selection and award of scholarships is a nondiscriminatory process.

MEA Scholarships will be awarded by the trustees of the MEA Scholarship Fund. This body is composed of MEA members and persons appointed from the general public. The fund is financed through the voluntary contributions of the members, staff and friends of the Michigan Education Association.

Method of Application

Eligible students seeking the scholarship must complete the application form found at: <http://www.mea.org/mea-scholarship>

Funding

The “MEA Scholarship Fund” is financed through the voluntary contributions of the members, staff and friends of the Michigan Education Association.

Such contributions may be made by check or money order payable to the “MEA Scholarship Fund” and mailed to:

MEA Scholarship Fund
Michigan Education Association
P.O. Box 2573
East Lansing, MI 48826-2573

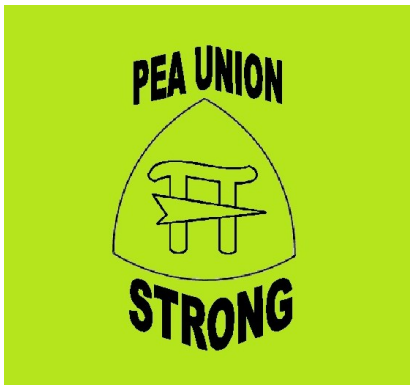
Your contribution is tax deductible and you will receive a written receipt and acknowledgment.

The **Michigan Education Association** is an organization dedicated to the principles of public education, advancement of quality education, and security of the rights of education employees. There are approximately 140,000 members of MEA, who are public K-12 teachers and education support professionals; higher education faculty and educational support personnel; employees of intermediate school districts; and MEA-Retired members.

Founded in 1852, the MEA was organized initially as the Michigan State Teachers Association, with 200 members. By the 1920s, local teacher organizations generated increased activities by the association to improve the welfare of the profession. It was at that time that the name was changed to Michigan Education Association.

During the 1950s and 1960s the MEA became an aggressive statewide force for teacher rights and welfare, as well as other professional concerns. In 1984, active membership was expanded to include education support professionals. This brought together one of the largest single unions representing education employees.

Throughout its long history, MEA has remained committed to quality education and retains a prominent leadership position as a strong advocate for public education. As one means of demonstrating its commitment to public education, the MEA has established and offers the MEA Scholarship.



Portage Education Association

The Atriums North Ste 1210
4341 S. Westnedge Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 373-3913

Putting Kids First

www.portageea.org

Know Your Contract!

ARTICLE 10 – MOVING TEACHER MATERIALS

Section 1: When a teacher transfers from one building or room to another, the School, under the supervision of the principal with the collaboration of the teacher, shall move all teaching materials and supplies which may transfer with the teacher. Teachers transferring may supervise the moving of all applicable material and supplies.

ARTICLE 21 – PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION

Section 11: Grant Writing Compensation Concept

Any individual(s) who successfully write(s) a grant pre-approved by the Superintendent or designee which is funded in all or part and maximizes indirect costs to the District shall be entitled to an amount equivalent to ten (10%) percent of the funded indirect costs not to exceed \$5,000. A second year application of a similar grant shall be entitled to an amount equivalent to five (5%) percent of the funded indirect costs not to exceed \$2,500. All grant applications must be pre-approved by the Superintendent or designee and have a positive net impact on the bottom line of the District.

Has there been a violation of your contract? Contact your building rep and/or

Chris Furlong:

Office (269) 373-3913

Cell (269) 506-2669

mea.peapresident@gmail.com