

# 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

# CONGRATULATIONS

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FINAL ASSIGNMENT:

## RETIREMENT PARTY!

PLEASE JOIN THE PEA & PPS AS WE CELEBRATE AND HONOR THEIR DEDICATION TO STUDENTS:

ELIZABETH DAWSON - VIRGINIA DOERFLER - DIANE GLASS  
 MARTINE GODDEYNE - RICHARD HAZEN - BONNIE HERBERT  
 SUE HOFFMAN - CARLA KELLY - KATHY MIRAKOVITS  
 JAMES MOILES - NANCY NOTT - TAMMY PATTERSON  
 MARY ROOBOL - SUSAN RUMORA - MARY SCOTT  
 DEB VANANTWERP - GRETCHEN WILSON - HELEN WYNKOOP

TUESDAY • JUNE 5TH • 5:30PM

BELL'S ECCENTRIC CAFE  
 355 E. KALAMAZOO AVE.  
 KALAMAZOO, MI 49007

FOOD & NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PROVIDED  
 COST IS \$20 PAYABLE TO THE PEA  
 RSVP VIA INTER-SCHOOL MAIL TO  
 KAT FRINK @ PCHS  
 BY FRIDAY, MAY 18TH



There's only a week left to RSVP for our retirement celebration! Join us as we celebrate with our retirees at Bell's Eccentric Café!

## From MEA:

Even though we have collective bargaining and local contracts, we know the struggles faced by our colleagues in Arizona, West Virginia, Oklahoma and everywhere else in the country where educators are rising up in protest. Stifling standardized tests. Aging textbooks and technology. Shrinking take-home pay for school employees. Lack of respect for our profession. And systematic shortchanging of students and their education.

Across the country, educators, parents and students are standing up in defense of public education. Here in the home state of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos – where we know how badly her policies have failed students – we must raise our voices to tell lawmakers three simple things: **Value Students. Respect Educators. Fund Our Schools.**

That's why, starting next week, **every Wednesday we're asking MEA members to [#WearRedForPublicEd](#).**

Working together – educators, parents, community members and students – we can start to raise our voices in defense of public education.

**Value Students. Respect Educators. Fund Our Schools.** We should demand nothing less for our students now as the school year winds down and Lansing lawmakers debate next year's education budget – and in November when we vote for new leaders for our state.

Arizona educators' decision to walk out of schools comes after weeks of [#RedforEd walk-ins](#) across the state and a disingenuous budget proposal from the governor, which was not supported by actual funding.

With demonstrations from West Virginia to Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Colorado, funding for public schools could become one of the top issues in this year's midterm elections.

In Arizona, teachers earn just 63 cents on the dollar compared with other college graduates—the widest pay gap in the nation. The gap is 79 cents in Kentucky, 67 cents in Oklahoma, and 75 cents in West Virginia. In Michigan, the figure is 83 cents on the dollar.

It's a gap that is abated by collective bargaining, according to a [2016 analysis](#) which found overall in 2015, “teachers not represented by a union had a 25.5 percent wage gap—and the gap was 6 percentage points smaller for unionized teachers.”

Parents and other concerned citizens are joining the movement, speaking out against the fiscal austerity that has for years robbed public schools and students of resources. In planning local walk-ins, MEA is encouraging that you work with local parent groups, as well as non-MEA employees and administrators to make events successful.

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## 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](#).

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## MEA State Budget Update

K-12 schools are expected to receive a per-pupil spending boost of approximately \$120-\$240 in next year's state budget, based on separate spending plans moving through the House and Senate which closely align with Gov. Rick Snyder's proposal for increased foundation allowances.

However, none of the budgets address the fundamental shortchanging of Michigan students as identified in the recent study by the [Michigan School Finance Research Collaborative](#). That study – on top of several prior ones – showed that Michigan is underfunding an adequate education for students by as much as \$1,959 per student, not including higher costs for special education, English language learners, career & technical education, and more.

In an election year, politicians like to be able to talk about providing increased education funding – and this would be the largest increase school districts will have seen in several years. But it doesn't correct the systematic underfunding of schools and our broken school funding system.

The increases proposed would provide more to districts currently receiving the lowest per-pupil foundation allowance of \$7,631. Over the next several weeks, differences in the budget versions will be worked out through the legislative process, with final passage expected by early June.

Beyond the K-12 foundation increases, there are other details and concerns worth noting in the education budgets under consideration in Lansing:

- Community colleges and universities would receive a 1 percent increase in funding under the House and Senate plans, not the 2 percent proposed by Snyder. Every state university would need to comply with a list of requirements designed to combat sexual assault or risk a 10 percent cut to operation funding.
- The Senate K-12 budget proposal includes provisions that could be damaging to schools in struggling communities which have entered into so-called Partnership Agreements with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). Partnership Agreements emerged in the last year to avoid the threat of school closures which loomed over districts and buildings where students' standardized test scores were in the bottom 5 percent statewide. The three-year agreements were intended to provide additional guidance, support, and resources to schools in those largely under-resourced communities. Instead, the Senate budget would require those schools to submit a plan for achieving "measurable outcomes" within 18 months or face a choice of closing or reconstituting the school. Under reconstitution, a new school board would be appointed, and teacher contracts in that school would be voided. The reconstituted school would then have five years to show improvement. The Senate budget has passed out of Appropriations Committee and is expected to be voted on by the full Senate this week. MEA is opposed to this language and is advocating for it to be left out of the budget by the House (and the likely conference committee that will work out differences between the budget versions).
- All three budgets include additional money for at-risk students, but the House and Senate versions lay out formulas for how the money must be spent on tutoring to raise test scores if fewer than half of at-risk students are considered "proficient" in English Language Arts.
- Neither the House nor Senate budgets follow Snyder's plan to cut per-pupil funding for cyber schools by 25 percent to account for lower overhead costs incurred by online schools. Snyder had proposed transferring money saved from the cyber schools cut to better fund initiatives in the Third Grade Reading law.

COME TO A SCREENING OF:

# BACKPACK FULL OF CASH

NARRATED BY MATT DAMON



STONE LANTERN FILMS AND TURNSTONE PRODUCTIONS PRESENT  
 "BACKPACK FULL OF CASH" NARRATED BY MATT DAMON PRODUCED BY SARAH MONDALE VERA ARONOW  
 EDITED BY VERA ARONOW MARIAN SEARS HUNTER CINEMATOGRAPHY BY ROGER GRANGE ORIGINAL MUSIC BY TOM PHILLIPS  
 CONSULTING EDITOR MARIAN SEARS HUNTER ANIMATION BY PATRICK SMITH DAVID GERLACH - QUOTED STUDIOS  
 IMPACT STRATEGY ELLEN SCHNEIDER CONSULTING PRODUCERS PATRICIA ROMEU ROGER GRANGE  
 EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SARAH PATTON WRITTEN BY SARAH MONDALE & VERA ARONOW  
 CONSULTING WRITER SHEILA CURRAN BERNARD DIRECTED BY SARAH MONDALE

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## ABOUT THE FILM

Narrated by Matt Damon, this feature-length documentary explores the growing privatization of public schools and the resulting impact on America's most vulnerable children. Filmed in Philadelphia, New Orleans, Nashville and other cities, **BACKPACK FULL OF CASH** takes viewers through the tumultuous 2013-14 school year, exposing the world of corporate-driven education "reform" where public education -- starved of resources -- hangs in the balance.

**6:00 PM – Thursday, May 31, 2018**

**Celebration! Cinema Crossroads**

6600 Ring Road, Portage, MI 49024

**RSVP at [kazoomea@mea.org](mailto:kazoomea@mea.org) - Seating is limited to 120**

**Please indicate the number of tickets (limit 4) you would like.**

**Screening brought to you by KCEA-5AB Coordinating Council, MEA-NEA**

<http://www.backpackfullofcash.com/>

## Proposed Evaluation Language Change

The percentage of a Michigan teacher's evaluation that is tied to student test scores would remain at 25 percent instead of jumping to 40 percent next fall, under legislation recently introduced at the recommendation of MEA.

House Bill 5707 was introduced by Republican Aaron Miller and referred to the Committee on Education Reform.

Contact your state representative today to support this important change to the evaluation system with our easy-to-use Action Network page!

Education experts have long questioned the accuracy and fairness of judging educators based on student test performance. In addition, many parents are pushing back against policies that place a greater emphasis on test scores over creativity, problem solving, citizenship, and other important factors in students' education.

MEA lobbyists have been working with a handful of Michigan House Republicans to introduce several bills to fix problems in the state's teacher evaluation system.

Two related bills have been introduced in recent days, and others are in the pipeline. HB 5688 would bar an evaluator from conducting the evaluation of a family member. HB 5689 would remove the existing limit on the number of teachers that can be rated as highly effective in a school district.

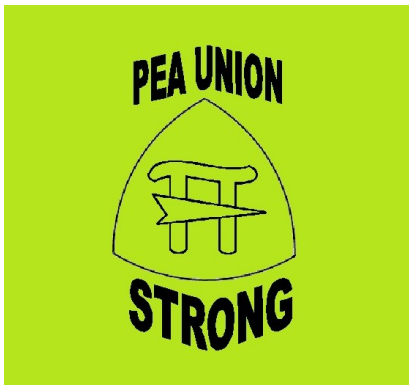
Many states are backing away from stringent requirements for documenting student growth as part of teachers' scores in formal evaluations, which play an increasing role in teacher layoffs and recalls.

These changes have been allowed under more flexible rules in the new federal law known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaced No Child Left Behind.

In fact, several states have backed entirely away from using student growth or standardized test scores in teacher evaluations, recognizing studies that have shown such inaccurate and punitive approaches have not resulted in higher student achievement.

**Contact your state representative now and share YOUR story on why we need these important changes to the evaluation law!**

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**DAYS UNTIL JUNE 14TH!**

**Putting Kids First**

**[ www.portageea.org ]**

**Know Your Contract!**

## **Article 21—Professional Compensation**

**Section 16:** New teachers are required to complete eighteen (18) credit hours over and above their bachelors. The District shall reimburse such teachers One Hundred Fifty (\$150) per course.

You must fill out a form for pre-approval of courses and then submit your transcript after you successfully complete the class.

The form can be found [here](#).

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

**Chris Furlong:**

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