

# *WEAC REGION 2 -REPORTER* Volume 2, No. 2–November 2015

*WEAC Region 2 - Protecting Rights  
Providing for Professional Growth  
Promoting Public Education*



From the President:

I hope that your school year is off to an excellent start and that you are finding time to enjoy this beautiful time of year in Central and Northern Wisconsin.

This year in celebration of American Education Week from November 16-20, and I would like to challenge locals across Region 2 to be a part of our *Support our Public Schools Initiative* to draw attention to how much We Love our Public Schools. We all know they are not only the center of student growth but are also at the heart of our communities.

On Wednesday, November 18, all across Region 2, we are asking locals to celebrate their Love for their Local Public School. Region 2 local leaders and members are meeting in front of their buildings as a group with their colleagues, principals and community members to Walk-in to School Together. Show your support and love for your Public School by sharing these pictures on your preferred social media.

In Wisconsin, we are proud of our long standing tradition of strong, locally controlled public schools. Unfortunately, that local control is in jeopardy in parts of the state. If you have followed what is happening in Milwaukee, a proposal passed last spring as part of the state budget to remove the control from the locally elected school board and to hand control of a few schools to an appointed commissioner. I don't know about you, but I believe the power should rest with a local school board that has been elected by the community in which they serve. Our public schools belong in the hands of our own communities. Approach your local school board and ask for their support in signing our resolution opposing any takeovers of our schools.

Please join us in our work to draw awareness to this and other issues facing education today. Join your colleagues, community members, parents, and friends to celebrate American Education Week. Show your Love and Support for your Local Public School. I am proud to be a Public School Teacher, and I am Proud of my Local Public School.

In solidarity,

*Peggy Wirtz-Olsen*



## REGION 2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

In an effort to keep you informed, here are the highlights from the WEAC Region 2 October 1<sup>st</sup> Board of Directors Meeting:

- Region 2 “branded” apparel was discussed. Brent Dickinsen and Shari Wendland will work with Ann Swenty on this topic and report back.
- The future of the Region 2 building was discussed. By 2016-17, all Region 2 expenditures must be supported by dues collected. That may have an impact on what, if anything, happens to the building.
- Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup> is a multi-session workshop date. Region 2 members are reminded to attend.
- Membership and membership retention was discussed. Ways to communicate with colleagues about the union was also explored.
- Members that choose to opt-out and cancel their membership will be required to contact their local president or designee with written notice of cancellation. That notice will then be forwarded to the Region 2 office and to WEAC.
- The 2016 Region 2 Representative Assembly date and location was discussed. The RA will be held in Merrill on May 19<sup>th</sup> at Les & Jim’s.
- A new law passed last year enabling the Milwaukee County Executive to appoint a commissioner to oversee the takeover of three Milwaukee Public Schools and eliminate local control. To protest that kind of action, it was suggested that on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, members meet in their school parking lots and WALK IN to school TOGETHER as a positive, non-threatening show of support.
- The WEAC Pre-RA meeting will be held on April 7<sup>th</sup> at the Eagles Club in Merrill for Region 2 active member-delegates.
- Schedules for PDP Workshops, EE Workshops, and National Board Certification Workshops have been developed for 2015-16. PDP Workshops are posted on the Region 2 website. EE workshops and NBCT workshops will be announced.
- In the WEAC Board Report Peggy Wirtz-Olsen shared that the NEA will early endorse Hillary Clinton for President. WEAC voted to put the WEAC building up for sale. Wirtz-Olsen will be running for WEAC Vice-President in the upcoming spring election
- Staff reports were distributed.
- The next Executive Committee meeting is November 23<sup>rd</sup>.



## Region 2—Working With YOU—On Both Union and Professional Development Issues

October provided multiple opportunities for Region 2 members to connect. October 1<sup>st</sup> was the first meeting of the Board of Directors. Two PDP Workshops were offered on goal writing, followed by a workshop on completing your PDP. An Educator Effectiveness Workshop was held for SLO goal writing and PPGs. An informational and support workshop was held for candidates working toward National Board Certification. Member Recruitment, Changes in Health Care and the Affordable Care Act, plus Legal Issues in a Post Act 10 Environment were the topics of a Saturday Workshop. Three Regional Organizing Council meetings were held during the month providing comparability statistics, upcoming Supreme Court election information, legislative updates on the WRS and DPI, as well as local updates including sample membership opt-out forms. Was your local there? Were you represented? If not...why not?

Region 2 continues to work hard to meet the needs of its constituency as quickly, thoroughly, and economically as possible. It is unrealistic to think that only ONE person...like the local President...should be attending all the opportunities offered. In most cases, all members are invited and welcome to attend. Obviously, PDPs may not be relevant to your own personal situation, but are you a new teacher mentor? Have you encouraged all new teachers to become union members? Have you considered attending a PDP workshop with them so you are more aware of the process and can offer help and professional suggestions?

Everyone is busy. Life is a rat race...and often the rats seem to be winning! We can, however, help each other. Divide up the work to be done...the meetings to be attended. Many hands make the work so much lighter. More active and engaged members build local union strength. A stronger local union will get things done! We're hoping to see you, or someone else representing your local, soon!



# Union Recertification Elections

The Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) will begin holding union recertification elections for preK-12 teachers support personnel in November.

Members of locals that filed petitions by September 15<sup>th</sup> to recertify their unions have from noon on November 4 until noon on

November 24 to vote in their recertification elections. Walker's anti-union Act 10 legislation mandates that 51% of the total population of all eligible voters must vote YES...whether they are dues paying members or not...for a recertification election to be successful. Be sure to prepare member and non-members alike.

There are two ways you will be able to cast your ballot...either online (Voters who choose to vote online will do so by logging on to <http://www.aaaelections.org/WERC> ) or by phone. (Voters who choose to vote by telephone will do so by calling toll free 1-866-458-9862.) Midpoint counts should be [available on the WERC website](#) the afternoon of November 13<sup>th</sup> under [Representation Election Updates](#). The total number of votes cast is the only information available at that time.

**1-Prepare for success!** Divide up the names and have a union member personally talk with each eligible voter! Remind your colleagues that **you are counting on them!**

**2-Plan a voting event!** **Be sure to keep a list** and check off people as they step up to vote! Be sure to give them privacy as they vote! Circle back to colleagues that couldn't attend an event to verify that they voted. Remember that any ballots not cast will be counted as voting no.

**3-Draw for a prize!** Have each individual that votes...both members and non-members...turn in a signed card to their building rep. After the vote is over, randomly draw from those turned in to award door prizes.

**If you have questions about your local's recertification contact your local leadership or the Region 2 office.**



# A Report from the Wisconsin Budget Project...

## Proposed Limits Would Make it Harder for Voters to Approve New Resources for Schools

State lawmakers have proposed making it more difficult for school districts to go to referendum, a change that would have reduced or delayed new resources for schoolchildren by nearly \$200 million in recent years, according to a [new analysis by the Wisconsin Budget Project](#).

Under a proposal advanced by state lawmakers, school districts would be prohibited from asking voters for new resources for a period of two years after a referendum failed to pass. School districts go to referendum to get voter approval to borrow money for large projects such as the construction of new schools, and to raise the spending limits imposed by the state.

The Wisconsin Budget Project [reviewed the results of school referenda](#) since July 2011, and determined that if the proposed restrictions had been in place:

- 36 referenda in 31 different districts would not have been able to pass when they did;
- Those referenda represented \$196 million in new resources for children in public schools: \$143 million in borrowing for large projects, and \$53 million to lift the spending caps; and
- School board members and other representatives from several of the 31 districts said that without a successful referendum, officials would consider dissolving the school district or combining it with another district.

[We also put together an interactive map that shows the geographic location of the school districts](#) that have passed successful referenda within two years of an unsuccessful referendum in recent years. Use the map to see how different areas of the state would have been affected by the changes.

Wisconsin residents who value their public schools should have the opportunity to vote for new resources for schoolchildren. Tying voters' hands reduces local control over public schools and makes it harder for communities to invest in educating their children.

Read the new analysis here: [Proposed Limits Would Make it More Difficult for Voters to Approve New Resources for Schools](#).



[Wisconsin Budget Project](#)

An initiative of the [Wisconsin Council on Children and Families](#)

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American Education Week...

**DAY OF ACTION**

American Education Week is November 16-20. Demonstrate your support for local public schools. Join with your colleagues and local communities on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup> as a day of ACTION! Gather as a group and WALK IN to your school buildings TOGETHER. Local Public Schools are the heart of their community and the people that work there as well as those that send their children there are the “beat” that keeps each heart healthy. Public Schools are NOT failing schools. Reject the “take-over” of public school buildings by private entities. Support public education during American Education Week and [WALK IN TOGETHER](#).

**Support**  
**Our Public Schools**  
**American Education Week**  
**Day of Action**

**Wednesday, November 18th**

WEAC Region 2 members join with parents, friends, and community to

 [Walk-in to School Together](#) 

Show Your Love and Support of Our Local Public Schools

Across the Region & Wisconsin



## Student Contests



### Art

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards, in cooperation with the Wisconsin Art Education Association, encourages Wisconsin students to submit a piece of artwork for the Wisconsin Art Exhibits and Awards. For more info, visit the [WASB convention site](#) and select "Call for Proposals."

### History

All Wisconsin high school students (grades 9-12) are eligible to participate in a High School Essay Contest conducted annually by the Wisconsin Labor History Society. The high school students are asked to write an essay of approximately 750 words on the following theme: "Unions have been important to my family and my community because ..." and up to eight cash prizes are awarded for the best. The prizes will include one \$500 first-place prize, one \$300 second-place prize, one \$200 third-place prize, and up to five \$100 prizes for honorable mention. (Information about the 2015-16 School Year Contest, rules and deadlines can be found by [clicking here](#).)



Happy  
Thanksgiving



